

Before the foundation of the world God chose

- Ephesians 1:3-5
- John 6:37-39
- If we are dead in sin, unable to save ourselves, God must choose who

God chose a fixed number of Individuals

Does God just choose a number of people to save, or does He choose specific people?

- No person is responsible for his / her salvation
- Named individuals – Jacob, Esau, Pharaoh, 7,000 in Elijah’s day (Rom. 9,11), those listed in the Lamb’s book of life (Rev. 13:8, 20:11-15, 21:27)

God chose some for salvation

“Those whom God applies the blessing of salvation to IN TIME, are those He has chosen BEFORE time.”

- Romans 9:23, Ephesians 1:5
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13 - *But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.*
- Acts 13:48 - *And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed.*

God purposes not to save others

God’s eternal decision concerning sinners whom He has not chosen for life

- Romans 9:22 – “prepared for destruction”
- 1 Peter 2:8 “They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.”

- Proverbs 16:4 – “The LORD has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble.”¹
- Judgment as God’s “strange” or “alien” work – Isaiah 28:21, Exodus 34

God chose for His own glory

If God is all good He must delight in what is excellent – not to do would be sinful

- Ephesians 1:5-6 “he predestined us ... to the praise of his glorious grace”

God chose because of His loving mercy, not because of anything in us

Calvinism = God’s election > faith// Arminianism = foreseen faith > election

Election is unconditional:

Romans 9:15-16 – “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy”
Deut 7:7-8, 1 Corintihans 1:26-31 – not because of anything in us
Ephesians 2:9, 2 Tim. 1:9 – I have nothing to boast of
Ephesians 1:4 – election causes holiness, not vice versa

Answering Questions

How is this fair? - Romans 9:14-18 – God is God, we are not.

What about free will? – John 8:34, 44 – Outside of Christ we are willing slaves of sin

Why does God chose A and not B? - We do not know. Deuteronomy 29:29

¹ Also see John 6:64-65, 12:40, Rom. 1:24, 11:7-8, Mark 4:12, Deut. 2:30, Acts 2:23, 4:27-28, Luke 22:22

So What:

- **Hope for our evangelism** – Acts 18:9-10 – we don't know and so we preach
- **The basis for godly living** – Colossians 3:12
- **We should be both humbled** - Romans 9:20 – God is God and I am not
and comforted - John 6:37 – my salvation depends on God
- **God is glorified** – God's electing work causes Paul to praise God

Things to think over this week:

Read and pray and seek to worship God in the light of the Biblical texts we have looked at today.

How does the doctrine of election we have looked at today give you comfort or assurance about your future?

How does the doctrine of election outlined positively effect our motivation for evangelism?

Supplementary material:

 (available online):

R. C Sproul Unconditional Election, www.ligonier.org/blog/tulip-and-reformed-theology-unconditional-election/

J Piper, Five Reasons to embrace unconditional election, www.desiringgod.org/articles/five-reasons-to-embrace-unconditional-election

M Barrett, Chosen by grace alone, in Credo Magazine online at www.credomag.com/the-magazine/archives/may-2012/

A summary of the Doctrines of God's grace can be found at www.calvinistcorner.com/tulip.htm

Key Doctrines #6

Doctrines of Grace – Predestination

If we are dead in sin, how is it that anyone is saved?

Read Romans 9:6-24 and 11:33-36

definitions: *election* – “to choose” so also *predestination* – “to chose or determine, specifically beforehand”

A definition of God's election or predestination:

“Before the foundation of the world God chose to save a fixed number of individuals. He chose them purely for his own glory, because of his loving mercy, and not because of their foreknown faith, good works, or perseverance.”

If God is sovereign, does His sovereignty extend to who gets saved?

Some preliminary thoughts:

(a) **Predestination and the sovereignty of God**

(b) **an issue that raises lots of questions** – intellectual and personal.

(c) **an issue in the historical church** – Calvinism and Arminianism

Predestination explained

“This divine choice is an expression of free and sovereign grace, for it is unconstrained and unconditional, not merited by anything in those who are its subjects. God owes sinners no mercy of any kind, only condemnation; so it is a wonder, and matter for endless praise, that he should choose to save any of us; and doubly so when his choice involved the giving of his own Son to suffer as sin-bearer for the elect (Romans 8:32).” (J.I. Packer, Concise Theology, p149).