

(e) Summary

"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)." (Concise Theology, p149).

2. Applying the doctrine of predestination**(a) It gives hope to the evangelist**

Acts 18:9-10, "One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent.¹⁰ For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city."

(b) It's a basis for godly living

Colossians 3:12, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."

(c) We are humbled... God is exalted

Deuteronomy 29:29, "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law."

(d) Comfort

John 6:37, "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out."

Recommended reading: R.C. Sproul, *Chosen by God*

Predestination

John 6:35-44

Discuss

Read Ephesians 1:3-14.

- What do Christians contribute to their salvation?
- What reasons do you have for your answer?

1. Understanding God's work in "predestination" & "election"

Definition: "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."

A work of our *sovereign* God (e.g. Ephesians 1:11)

(a) What? Before the foundation of the world God chose a people and gave them to His Son

John 6:37-39,

Ephesians 1:3-5, "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will..."

2 Thessalonians 2:13, “But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.”

Acts 13:48, “When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.”

(b) Why? For his own glory, and because of his love,

- “Praise...” (e.g. Ephesians 1:6)
- ... but not for us: no boasting (Eph. 2:9, 2 Timothy 1:9)
- The Father’s love... for the Son (John 6:37, 17:6)
- The Father’s love... for us: “mercy”, “grace” (Rom. 9:15, Eph. 1:6)

(c) Why? God chose... NOT because of anything in us

- Not because we are numerous, wise, influential or noble (Deut. 7:7-8, 1 Cor. 1:26-31).
- Not because we are naturally holy:
 - Yes: chosen to BE holy... (Eph. 1:4)
 - No: chosen BECAUSE holy
- Not because He knew that we’d have faith in him
 - Total depravity & bondage of the will
 - we CANNOT choose to believe without the Spirit *enabling* us to choose.
 - = key difference between Calvinism and Arminianism.

(d) What about those who God purposes not to save?

- “Reprobation” = God’s eternal decision concerning those sinners whom he has not chosen for life. It is a decision not to change them. But to leave them to sin as they already want to.
- Romans 9:14-24
- Also 1 Peter 2:8, Proverbs 16:4, John 6:64-65, 12:40, Romans 1:24, 11:7-8, Mark 4:12, Deut 2:30, Acts 2:23, 4:27-28, Luke 22:22