



Lesson 6: God's Salvation Applied Our Salvation Before Time "Chosen in Christ"

Theme:

God has revealed over and over that His children have been chosen by Him. Whether it is Jacob, Israel, Church, or the individual, God states that He has chosen people for salvation and service.

Theological Definitions of *election* or *chosen*:

J. I. Packer writes, "The verb elect means 'to select, or choose out.' The biblical doctrine of election is that before Creation God selected out of the human race, foreseen as fallen, those whom he would redeem, bring to faith, justify, and glorify in and through Jesus Christ (Romans 8:28-29; Eph. 1:3-14; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; 2 Tim. 1:9-10). This divine choice 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, Rom. 8:32." (J. I. Packer, Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs, Tyndale House, c. 1993, p. 149.)

Election is the sovereign act of God the Father whereby, in grace and from motives consistent with His own character, He has chosen from the ruined race some to be the recipients of His salvation.

New Testament terms for *elect* or *chosen*:

1. *Eklego*: to pick out, to choose; in the New Testament it is always in the middle voice, meaning to pick out or choose for oneself; John 6:70; 13:18; 15:16, 19; Acts 1:2; 1 Cor. 1:27; Eph. 1:4.
2. *Eklektos*: an adjective describing the chosen. It is used of Christ (Luke 23:35; 1 Peter 2:4, 6) and of holy angels (1 Tim. 5:21). It is used of men in the following places: Matt. 22:14; 24:22, 24, 31; Mark 13:20, 22, 27; Luke 18:7; 23:35; Rom. 8:33; 16:13; Col. 3:12; 2 Tim. 2:10; Titus 1:1; 1 Peter 1:2; 2:9; 2 John 1, 13; Rev. 17:14; 2 Thess. 2:13.
3. *Ekloge*: refers to the choice itself and is always used of the divine choice. It occurs in the following: Acts 9:15 (God "chose Paul to be His vessel—a vessel of election/chosen); also, Romans 9:11; 11:5, 7, 28; 1 Thess. 1:4; 2 Peter 1:10.

The Scriptures Teach That God Chooses or Elects:

Deuteronomy 10:14-15: “. . . Yet the Lord set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them. . . .

Psalms 65:4 “Blessed is the one whom you choose. . . .”

Matthew 11:27 “No one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

Matthew 24:22, 24, 32

Luke 18:7

Romans 8:28-30, 33

Colossians 3:12

Titus 1:1

1 Peter 1:1-2

2 Thessalonians 2:13

A Closer Look at Ephesians Chapter One

1. The **source** of our election – God the Father; v. 3; 2 Tim. 1:9.
2. The **fact** of our election – according to His purpose; 1:11.
3. The **sphere** of our election – in Christ; vs. 3-7, 9, 11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9.
4. The **time** of our election – before the foundation of world; v.4; cf. 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 1:9; Acts 13:48.
5. The **objects** of election – saved individually and part of church; v. 7 *we* or *us* v. 3-6, 8-9; both corporate and individual.
6. The **motive** for election – in love he predestined us; unconditional love; also see 1 Corinthians 1:24-31.
7. The **impartiality** of election – “in accordance with his pleasure and will;” v. 5; cf. Rom. 2:11; 11:34. No hint of favoritism found in God’s choice.
8. The **goal** of election – to be holy and blameless before Him; see 1 Cor. 1:29. Done in grace so no one could boast before God of any merit in himself; Titus 3:4-5; Eph. 2:8-9.

Observations of Romans 9:6-33

The Apostle Paul is seeking to show that just being a physical descendant of Abraham did not make one a true child of God. He shows how God chose Jacob over Esau. Both men were to become the family heads of two peoples.

Those who were Jews and said they had it made because of their ethnic identity with Israel are being told that they must put faith in Jesus Christ. Physical identity with Abraham is not enough. Even Esau could claim physical identity with Abraham but was not chosen.

Why did God choose Jacob and not Esau?

Why has God chosen the nation of Israel over the descendants of Esau/Edom?

Let the scriptures give the answer!

1. God’s choice was made because He had a plan/purpose; v. 11.
2. God’s choice would not be based upon any good works of the one chosen; v. 11.
3. God loved Jacob and hated Esau; v. 13.

Also see Malachi 1:2-3. The Hebrew for “love” is *ahab* and means *prefer*, while the verb *to hate* signifies to *value less highly*.

See Deut. 22:13, 16; Prov. 13:24; 14:20; Gen. 29:31-33; Deut. 21:16-17; Matt. 6:24; Luke 14:25; John 12:25.

Also see Bruce Demarest, The Cross and Salvation, who cites Th. C. Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology who says “The Hebrew word for *hate* often means *to scorn*, or to rank something lower than something else, while *to love* may mean to choose something and rank it higher than something else,” Demarest p. 123, and then Vriezen footnote 97, page 489.

Compare this to what Jesus said in Luke 14:26, “If anyone come to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.” The same God has told us to honor and obey our parents. How can we do both? It is a matter of priority – we are to put no other human relationship above our love for God. It does not mean to do them harm or withhold love.

4. God can never be unjust; v. 14.
5. God is free to show mercy to whomever He chooses; v. 15-18 also Exodus 33:16.

Justice is due all. All will be justly and righteously dealt with by God. But no one can force God to have mercy upon anyone.

Mercy is God’s sovereign choice regardless of the merit of the one He chooses!

6. We have no right to judge the way God decides to act; v. 19-24.

The clay can never instruct or figure out the plan of the Potter. Does God have the right to do whatever He chooses with His creation? He answers to no one but Himself for He is God and God alone!

Biblical and Theological Conclusions

1. God chooses people, nations and even angels! 1 Thess. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13; Deut. 7:7-8; 1 Tim. 5:21.
2. God’s choice was made before the foundation of the world. Ephesians 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 1:9; Revelation 13:8; 17:8.
3. God chose those who are eventually saved and put their names in the Book of Life before the foundation of the world; Revelation 13:8; 17:8.
4. God’s choice was not upon any foreseen merit in those he chose; Romans 9:11-13, 16; 10:20; 1 Cor. 9:27-29.
5. Good works are the result and not the grounds of God choosing; Ephesians 2:10; John 15:16; Titus 3:4-5.
6. God’s choice was not based upon foreseen faith; Acts 13:48; 18:27 “who through grace had believed;” Philippians 1:29; 2:12-13. We will study this further in our next lesson as we look at *foreknowledge* and *predestine*; 1 Thess. 1:4-5; 2 Thess. 2:13; James 2:5.
7. Faith and good works confirm that one has been chosen and called of God; 2 Peter 1:5-11.
8. God has chosen as He pleased – all for His good pleasure; Ephesians 1:6, 11; Ps. 115:3; 135:6. “Whatever the Lord pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps;” Isaiah 14:24, 27; 46:9-11; 55:11; Jeremiah 32:17; Daniel 4:35.

Why Teach Election?

1. **God wants His people to know this truth!**

This truth was given to sheep among wolves and a church among the world and Israel among hostile nations. God is for His elect and who will be able to turn Him against them; Romans 8:33?

2. **This truth should encourage us to evangelize because we know that God is going to save.**

God’s elective choice of people is not known until they have put faith in Jesus Christ. Faith and a changed life prove one has been chosen of God, but none of us know who are chosen and who are not. The Apostle Paul was driven to evangelize “for the sake of those who are chosen;” 2 Timothy 2:10.

3. **This truth humbles the heart and excludes human boasting;** 1 Corinthians 1:24-32.
4. **This truth brings Glory to God;** Eph. 1:6, 12.
5. **We have been chosen to show off the excellent nature of God;** 1 Peter 2:9.

Next Week Lesson 7: We will continue to look at *election*, plus the meaning of *foreknowledge* in Romans 8:29-30 as well as *predestine*. Many do not know the meaning of these terms but have strong emotional reaction toward them. Pray that your heart and mind will be open to let God speak for Himself and let His Spirit be our Teacher.



Break Out Session – Lesson 6

Group Discussion Background

In each of our break out sessions we will probe three aspects of the truths presented during each class through a series of discussion questions as described below.

WHAT: What is the key informational content?

SO WHAT: What is the implication of this information? Or said another way, why is the truth of this information important?

WHAT NOW: How will you apply this truth or what will you do now that you know this truth?

Our goal for these classes is not simply to increase our knowledge, but for lives to be transformed by truth. (Romans 12:2)

Discussion Questions: (25 minutes)

Ask the group the following questions and allow the group to thoroughly explore and discuss each one.

1. What is meant when the term election is used?
2. According to Ephesians 1:3-12, when did God make this elective choice? What was his motive and what was the purpose?
3. When you think of God choosing people before the foundation of the world, how did he make that choice? According to Romans 9:13-18, did that choice have anything to do with our foreseen merit?
4. How does this truth exclude human boasting (1 Corinthians 1:24-32; Ephesians 2:8-9)?
5. If election is based on God's sovereign choice, according to 2 Timothy 2:10, Acts 13:48, 1 Corinthians 9:22, what should a believer's attitude be toward evangelism and reaching a lost world?
6. How will the truth of God's mercy in election affect your worship, your walk and your witness this week?

Time to Care – Share – Bear (15 minutes)

During this time, the group is encouraged to share in each other's lives and demonstrate care for one another by bearing one another up through prayer.

Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

Answer any remaining questions and clarify the homework for the following week.



Lesson 6 Homework

1. Using a Bible dictionary write out the definitions of “foreknowledge” and “predestine.”

2. Using a Bible concordance list the scriptures that mention “foreknowledge” and “predestine.”

3. What practical values do you see in knowing these truths?

4. Why is Romans 8:28 true?