

CHAPTER 17 - SANCTIFICATION

The words "sanctification," "sanctify" and "saint" in the Bible all come from the same root word. So too do the words "holy" and "holiness." They are the English translation of a single word-group in both the original Hebrew and the original Greek languages that the Bible was written in. Members of the Hebrew word-group appear nearly 1,000 times in the Old Testament. Members of the Greek word-group appear nearly 300 times in the New.

To be holy means to be "set apart" from common use, to be different. It originally didn't mean moral purity; it meant to be set apart for God's use instead. But because God is morally pure, it gradually came to include moral purity in its meaning. Sanctification, then, is the process of becoming like Christ. Sanctification reflects the character of God, who is both set apart, and morally pure.

A saint, according to the Bible, is someone who is set apart from the world to God, and undergoing this process of sanctification. A person becomes a saint the instant he or she receives God's grace and is regenerated, reconciled, redeemed, justified, adopted and united with Christ. It is not something we look forward to at some future date. But the process of conforming a saint to the image is ongoing, and not completed until death, or until Jesus Christ comes a second time, whichever comes first.

This is completely different to the Roman Catholic understanding of what a saint is. Catholic doctrine confuses justification and sanctification, making justification an ongoing process of faith plus works, which can be lost at anytime by sin. At the risk of being simplistic, according to Catholic doctrine, saints are believers, who led particularly holy lives, and by this, have died with more merit than they require to be saved, and therefore have extra merit which can be granted to the living in answer to prayer. So, in Catholic theology, saints are all dead people.

But Paul addresses many of his letters to the saints at a such-and-such a place (see Rom 1:7, 1Cor 1:2, 2Cor 1:1, Eph 1:1, Phil 1:1, Col 1:2). There are sixty-one references to saints in the New Testament, with only two of these referring clearly to dead people, and a few more that are unclear about the status of those called saints.

So, we can safely conclude that Scripture understands saints to be first and foremost living believers, but does not exclude dead believers from that description. "The New Testament does not say that Christians must lead holy lives in order to become saints; instead, it tells Christians that, because they are saints, they must henceforth lead holy lives!"¹

JI Packer warns of the dangers of misunderstanding this doctrine, "It is to be feared that our unbalanced preoccupation with this one theme, taken out of context, has tended to produce an unbecoming lop-sidedness of character and outlook. Christian people seeking holiness have become self-centred, small-minded and conceited, through thinking too much about themselves and too little about God. Many have succumbed either to a priggish asceticism which equates holiness with mere abstinence from this and that (sex, alcohol, jeans, jazz, jokes, rock music, long hair and sideburns, live theatre, depilatory treatment, political interest or whatever), or else to the cult of some special experience, identified with holiness ('the second blessing', 'the fullness of the Spirit', 'Spirit-baptism', 'entire sanctification', etc.), which they have pursued sometimes to the neglect of common-or-garden Christian morality. 'When people talk,' wrote Bishop Ryle in 1879, 'of having received "such a blessing," and of having found "the higher life," after hearing some earnest advocate of "holiness by faith and self-consecration," while their families and friends see no improvement and no increased sanctity in their daily tempers and behaviour, immense harm is done to the cause of Christ' (Holiness, 1879)."²

As we have seen from previous studies, the Bible sometimes refers to the various aspects of salvation (e.g. redemption, adoption, reconciliation, etc) in the past tense as something we already have, in the present tense as something we are currently experiencing and also in the future tense as something we will one day receive. Sanctification is no exception to this.

And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified (past tense), you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1Cor 6:11)

And by that will we have been sanctified (past tense) through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (Heb 10:10)

For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified (present tense) all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, (Heb 2:11)

For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified (present tense). (Heb 10:14)

¹ JI Packer, *18 Words – The most important words you will ever know*

² JI Packer again

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification (future tense) and its end, eternal life. (Rom 6:22)

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely (future tense), and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1Thess 5:23)

A natural outworking of the whole of salvation is sanctification. We have also seen in previous studies that a change is wrought in us that naturally leads to a desire to live for God and obey Him. One text we have frequently gone back to in this course for confirmation of this is Ezek 36:27:

And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

With this verse in mind, consider this passage from Paul's writings:

But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 6:17-23)

The free gift of God is eternal life in union with Christ Jesus, but the process of achieving that eternal life is righteousness (that is, justification, which is a gift from God) which bears fruit³ leading to sanctification, which then secures the goal of eternal life.

³ See Matt 7:17, 13:23, John 15:4 & 16, Rom 7:4-5, Gal 5:22-25, Phil 1:9-11, Col 1:9-11, Heb 12:11

1. People sometimes confuse Justification and Sanctification. What are the differences?

Justification	Sanctification
<i>An act</i>	<i>A process</i>
<i>A one off event</i>	<i>Ongoing, lifelong process</i>
<i>Perfect now and forever</i>	<i>Imperfect until we meet Christ</i>
<i>External – happens to us</i>	<i>Internal – happens in us</i>
<i>Act of a judge</i>	<i>Work of a surgeon</i>
<i>Deals with guilt</i>	<i>Deals with corruption</i>
<i>Immediate imputation of righteousness</i>	<i>Gradual impartation of holiness</i>
<i>Us in Christ</i>	<i>Christ in us</i>
<i>Monergistic</i>	<i>Synergistic</i>

2. Think about John 17:17 & 19. What is the connection between sanctification and truth?

Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth... And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. (John 17:17 & 19)

The Word of God (the Bible) is true. It reveals the truth about God, about man, and about God's plan of redemption. It reveals the only way of salvation, and what is expected of those who are saved. As we study the Bible, and submit ourselves to what we see there, our lives, our attitudes, our thoughts and our behaviour will gradually become more Christ-like.

Martin Lloyd-Jones says of this sanctifying process,

"It is rather this continuous, steadily advancing work that God does in us. We do not grasp the whole of truth at once; we go through stages, from babes to full matured age, from being a child to being an old man, as it were, in terms of faith... This is a phenomenon with which we are familiar in many other realms. It happens to us with regard to secular knowledge. How often have you been struggling with a problem for a very long time and then suddenly you see it, and it is solved? In spiritual things we realise certain things perhaps suddenly or perhaps gradually; the realisation may be sudden, but that is not the sanctification. Rather, the realisation of some truth leads to the application of that truth, and the application of that truth may cause a sudden jump forward, a sudden advance in this process of sanctification... And surely it is exactly like that in this whole question of sanctification. I am sure that any Christian looking back across life can testify to the same

*thing. You can see certain landmarks, certain special periods, certain times when things seemed unusually clear and you seemed to make an advance. Then there seemed to be times when things remained dormant and nothing happened until again, something happened. That is the process of sanctification. It is not sudden. The experience and the realisation may be, but the thing itself is progressive.*⁴

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Rom 12:1-2)

As we work with the Holy Spirit to conform our lives to the image of Christ, we become both salt and light in the world (see Matt 5:13-15). This increasing, and increasingly visible, sanctification will have two effects on those around us. It will cause some to reject us, and even persecute us (Matt 5:11-12). For others, it will cause them to glorify the Father in heaven (Matt 5:16). Both effects are intended by God as part of the process of sorting out the wheat from the chaff.

But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? (2Cor 2:14-16)

God uses this "aroma" that we give off to repulse those whose hearts are set against Him, and by this to justly establish their condemnation. He also uses it to attract those whom He is calling (or has called) to salvation. By the way people respond to this "aroma," we can often tell whether they are genuinely Christian. You will recall the words of the apostle John:

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us. (1John 2:19)

What aroma, do you think, we give off if there is no evidence of the likeness of Christ in our lives?

3. Gal 5:19-23 gives us a brief checklist to measure our lives by. Php 2:12 tells us to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." How are you doing this in your own life? What changes can you see in your life over the last 2 months, 12 months, 5 years?

⁴ Martin Lloyd-Jones, *Alive in Christ*

The root of sin is our desires (Jas 1:13-15). When we desire anything more than we desire God, then that is sin, and it leads us into sins. We will go after the things we want the most, and be shaped by those things. Therefore, if we make Jesus Christ our greatest desire, we will go after him, and be shaped by Him instead. This will form us into the image of Jesus Christ, and effect sanctification.

How to make Him our greatest desire? Dwell much on Christ crucified. Dwell much on why He had to come, and why He had to die. Personalise it; don't generalise. He died for me, because of my great sin. I was an enemy of God, totally opposed to Him, and fully deserving of eternal punishment and death in Hell. Jesus suffered everything that I should have suffered, so that I would not need to suffer it. He has chosen me, called me, justified me, regenerated me, reconciled me, redeemed me, accepted me, adopted me; He has saved me, eternally.

The Atonement purchased for us our sanctification, bringing us into a right relationship with God, and setting us apart to Him (see Heb 10:10 and Heb 10:14-17). Now, because of this, we are to be holy in our behaviour (see Rom 6:19-22, 1Thess 4:3 and Heb 12:14). We are sanctified, now we must be sanctified. This will mean a lifelong battle against sin.

Having been regenerated and adopted, we become children of God and members of His household. In sanctification, then, we show the family resemblance. We "look like" our heavenly Father, and Christ, our brother (see Matt 5:43-48, Heb 2:11).

Sanctification is synergistic.⁵ JI Packer says of this, "... it is an ongoing cooperative process in which regenerate persons, alive to God and freed from sin's dominion (Rom 6:11, 14-18), are required to exert themselves in sustained obedience. God's

⁵ Synergism is the working together of two things to produce an effect greater than the sum of the parts. It comes from two Greek words *sun*, together, and *ergeo*, to work. Thus, the word, and related words, is often translated "fellow worker" (see 2Cor 8:23 for an example), or "work together" (see Rom 8:28). The opposite of synergism is monergism, from the Greek *monos*, alone, and *ergeo*. As we've seen so far, Atonement, Regeneration, Reconciliation, Redemption, Justification, Adoption and Union with Christ are all *monergistic* acts; that is, they were God's work alone and without our help.

method of sanctification is neither activism (self-reliant activity) nor apathy (God-reliant passivity), but God-dependent effort (2Cor 7:1, Phil 3:10-14, Heb 12:14). Knowing that without Christ's enabling we can do nothing, morally speaking, as we should, and that he is ready to strengthen us for all that we have to do (Phil 4:13), we "stay put" (remain, abide) in Christ, asking for his help constantly – and we receive it (Col 1:11, 1Tim 1:12, 2Tim 1:7, 2:1).⁶

Sanctification speaks of "a divinely wrought character change freeing us from sinful habits and forming in us Christlike affections, dispositions, and virtues." He goes on to say, "Moral renovation, whereby we are increasingly changed from what we once were, flows from the agency of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Rom 8:13, 12:1-2, 1Cor 6:11, 19-20, 2Cor 3:18, Eph 4:22-24, 1Thess 5:23, 2Thess 2:13, Heb 13:20-21). God call his children to sanctity and graciously gives what he commands (1Thess 4:4, 5:23)"⁷

We have contrary urgings within us. On the one hand, we have a new spirit within us, and God's Spirit within us, giving us the desire to obey God. On the other hand, our fallen, Adamic instincts (what the Bible calls "the flesh"), which are dethroned but not yet destroyed, constantly try to entice us from the path of God's will and personal holiness. We will endure this conflict for as long as we are in these bodies, and won't achieve complete holiness this side of heaven. But there are a number of things we can do that will help us achieve victory over the flesh and over sin.

- a) Watch (Matt 26:41) – be aware of situations that contain the potential for temptation to sin.*
- b) Pray (Matt 26:41) – call on the Holy Spirit for assistance. God is at work to make you more holy.*
- c) Know yourself (Matt 26:41, Rom 12:3) – recognise the weakness of the flesh.*
- d) Submit to God (Jas 4:7) – make a conscious decision to obey God regardless of the consequences.*
- e) Resist the devil (Jas 4:7) – recognise that he is your enemy, not your friend, and his desire is your destruction. Recognise also that you are in a war.*
- f) Consider yourself dead to sin (Rom 6:11-14) – we no longer have to obey sin, since we are no longer slaves of it.*
- g) Understand that you are in the world, but not of the world (John 17:11, 14, Heb 11:13-16) – you are a stranger and an alien in this world. This will involve separation from the sinful things of the world, but, like Jesus, also requires association with the*

⁶ JI Packer, *Concise Theology*

⁷ Packer again

sinner's of the world, so that they may hear and see the good news.

- h) Feed the godly desires (Phil 4:8-9, Eph 5:9, 2Pet 1:5-7) – as you feed your godly desires by thinking about godly stuff, you will starve your sinful desires.*
- i) Walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16) – notice that if you are walking in the Spirit, you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. He doesn't say that if you don't gratify the desires of the flesh, you will be walking in the Spirit. The order is important.*
- j) Change your clothes (Rom 13:14, Col 3:5-15) -*
- k) Put on the armour of God (Rom 13:12, Eph 6:11-18, 1Thess 5:8) – you are in a battle to the death, and need all the offensive and defensive weapons available to you.*
- l) Cultivate intimacy with God (Jas 4:8) – time spent in worship and in the Word will strengthen you to resist sin.*
- m) Avoid situations that put you in harm's way (1Cor 6:18) – learn to recognise the situations and places that provide opportunity for temptation and avoid them.*
- n) Transform your mind (Rom 12:2) – again, time spent in worship and in the Word will strengthen you to resist sin.*
- o) Return to God the instant you sin (1John 2:1) – there is nothing more sure than that we will sin. But we have an advocate in heaven, forever presenting His blood as a covering for our sin, that we may return with confidence to the grace and mercy of our loving Father.*

Never make the mistake of assuming you are safe (and saved) just because you have said the "sinner's prayer" at some point in the past⁸. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling," Paul wrote to the church at Philippi (Phil 2:12). "Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall" (1Cor 10:12). According to the New Testament, holiness is neither a feeling nor an experience, but a kind of living in which the character of the Father and the Son is mirrored in one's outlook and conduct. Since this is so, we ought to be wary of any claim to salvation that is not substantiated by increasing levels of

⁸ I am *not* saying that people who have said the Sinner's Prayer are not saved. Many have said it as part of the process of genuine repentance born of the conviction of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and salvation. Many more, however, have merely mouthed the words in response to an invitation to receive Christ, and been told that they are now saved, when in actual fact, the Holy Spirit has done no regenerating work in their heart, and their subsequent life shows little or no evidence of the change we should expect to see in someone who is genuinely saved. (2Cor 13:5-6) *Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?-unless indeed you fail to meet the test!*

Christ-likeness, especially when we are making the claim about ourselves.

At the same time, we can take comfort in the knowledge that God Himself is at work in us to bring about the change He seeks. Christ-likeness is not an instant thing, like justification is. It grows over time as we cooperate with the workings of the Holy Spirit within us to conform us to the image of Christ.

... for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. (Phil 2:13)

For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. (Rom 8:13)

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (2Cor 3:18)

Are you that stupid? Having begun with the Spirit's power, do you think you can reach the goal under your own power? (Gal 3:3)

... to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph 4:22-24)

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil 1:6)

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1Thess 5:23)

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. (2Thess 2:13)

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. (Heb 13:20-21)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (1Pet 1:3-5)

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine

nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. (2Pet 1:3-10)

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. (1Cor 10:13)

Michael Horton warns,

"Some Christians so emphasize a "let go and let God" passivity that even after conversion they act as though they believe they are still "dead in trespasses and sins" and do not "understand the things of the Spirit of God." Wanting to attribute everything to grace and God's work, they confuse justification and sanctification just as surely as those who want to underscore human involvement. In our initial conversion we are passive: acted upon rather than active, as Luther put it. We are justified through receiving what someone else has earned for us. But we grow in sanctification through living out what someone else has earned for us. Both are gifts we inherit from someone else, but the former is passively received and the second is actively pursued."⁹

Thomas Boston, writing in the 18th Century, said,

"It was also necessary that provision should be made for the sanctification of the sinner, the repairing of the lost image of God in him... Thus was the groundwork of man's salvation laid in the eternal counsel; the sanctification of the sinner, according to our author, being as necessary to his salvation as the satisfaction of justice; for indeed the necessity of the former, as well as of the latter, ariseth from the nature of God, and therefore is an absolute necessity."¹⁰

Boston raises an aspect of sanctification which we have not considered yet, and will consider only very briefly here. That is, that part of the underlying purpose of sanctification is to restore the image of God in man that Adam lost in the Garden of Eden when he sinned.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits

⁹ <http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/questions/horton/union.html>

¹⁰ Thomas Boston's notes in *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, by Edward Fisher

with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. (Rom 8:18-23)

John Piper confirms this idea in his book on the subject of Regeneration, "God's purpose is that the entire creation be born again. That is, the whole universe will replace its futility and corruption and disease and degeneration and disasters with a whole new order – a new heaven and a new earth... The newness that we have by virtue of our regeneration is now the firstfruits – the down payment and guarantee – of the greater newness we will have when our bodies are made new as part of the universe being made new... So when you think of your new birth, think of it as the first instalment of what is coming."¹¹

When we think also about our sanctification, it can be a reminder that something better, something more complete, is coming. In the meantime, our increasing sanctification in this world provides us with the means and the opportunity to be both salt and light to a dying world (Matt 5:13-15). In this way, God is glorified (see also Phil 2:15 and 1Pet 2:11-12).

God is at work in the world and in humanity to restore all things.

Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago. (Acts 3:19-21)

This process of restoring all things begins with mankind, in the salvation of sinners, the renewal of their spirits, and the sanctification of believers, conforming them to the image of Christ, and will be completed when Christ returns, believers are perfected, and creation itself will be renewed.

¹¹ John Piper, *Finally Alive*

CHAPTER 18 - ELECTION

We now come to what may be one of the most troubling, and misunderstood doctrines in all of the Word of God. Peter Jeffery opens this chapter with this statement, "The subject of election and predestination is undoubtedly one of the most controversial among Christians. Some believers love and treasure it as the most thrilling and humbling of doctrines; other believers will not tolerate it at any price and regard it as totally wrong."

He is not exaggerating when he says this. Unfortunately, the misunderstandings about this doctrine have caused much tension, even hostility, among believers. This ought not be so.

J.I. Packer warns, "We have all been caught up in arguments about election, and we know from experience how they go. Texts from Paul are waved like banners; the words 'Calvinist' and 'Arminian' fly like bullets; people blink and go red; everyone ends up flustered and hot under the collar. Sometimes, looking back on these unhappy exchanges, we find ourselves resenting the very existence of the doctrine which occasions such high feelings... At such times, we see it as a mere useless encumbrance, serving no purpose save to divide Christians who are otherwise united, and to give agnostics ground for criticising the Christian view of God, and to put distraction and stumbling-blocks in the path of those whom we seek to point to Christ. We could almost reproach God for having put it in the Bible at all, and we feel sure that our wisest course for the future will be to put it out of our minds, and to try to stop others from thinking or talking about it any further. Having reasoned from the fact that our arguments about election are not edifying, to the conclusion that the doctrine itself is not edifying, we feel certain that it is part of our Christian duty to play it down: to insist that it is not a doctrine that matters much, and that we should all be well advised to give our minds to something more profitable."¹²

While election may be controversial, it is difficult to read the Bible and deny that it reveals election. Almost every reference to "choose, chosen, choice, elect, election" in the New Testament are all translations of the same Greek word group, and have reference to God's choice of certain individuals.

Before going too much further, we should point out that election and predestination, while technically and theologically not identical, are very similar, and can be used almost interchangeably. Election is the act of choosing someone for salvation, while predestination is the act of

¹² J.I. Packer again

determining in advance who will be saved.

The disagreement primarily lies in the reasons behind why God chose some to be saved, and not others. Popular modern theology would hold that God foresaw who would believe, and chose (elected, predestined) them to salvation on the basis of their faith. We should not draw too many conclusions about the matter until we have seen what Scripture itself says about it.

1. Explain Election in your own words, and find at least 4 Scriptures that clearly teach it.

See attached sheets.

2. If God has already decided who will be saved, what incentive is there to evangelise?

Mat 28:18-20 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Mar 16:15-16 And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Act 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Acts 13:46-48 And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, ""I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."" 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.

Act 28:25-28 And disagreeing among themselves, they departed after Paul had made one statement: "The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet: "'Go to this people, and say, You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive. For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.'" Therefore let it be known to you that this

salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen."

Rom 10:13-17 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

The most important reason to evangelise is that God commands it. Scripture clearly tells us that we are to go out and preach the gospel. It is not up to us to decide who should hear it, and who should miss out, but we are to preach it "indiscriminately," so that as many as possible get the opportunity to hear it. We should need no other reason, but God graciously provides more for us.

Another valid and important reason to evangelise is to win people to Christ (see John 17:20, Acts 13:48, 16:14, 18:9-10 & Rom 10:14-17). The doctrine of election guarantees that our preaching and evangelising will bring results. God has ordained that certain people will be saved, but He has also ordained the means of bringing about that salvation – evangelisation, preaching the gospel, and prayer.

These two reasons lead to a much misunderstood idea. We commonly think that evangelism is the act of sharing the gospel with others so that we can make sheep, that is, so that we can convince people to accept Christ and become Christians. The Bible reveals the purpose of evangelism differently. Rather than making sheep, evangelism is all about finding sheep.

The shepherding process in Biblical times differed dramatically to the method our sheep farmers use here in Australia. Our farmers will round up sheep on motorbikes and with yapping dogs, and push them from behind to get them into the next paddock. But in ancient times (and still in some countries and cultures), the shepherd would call out to his sheep, who would recognise his voice, and follow him wherever he went. If a straggler got left behind or lost, the shepherd would leave his sheep somewhere safe, and go out looking and calling for the lost one. Remember Jesus words,

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not

follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”... I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. (John 10:1-5, 11-16)

Evangelism is finding the sheep who belong to the great Shepherd. When we share the gospel, some recognise the voice of their Shepherd calling them, and respond. Others do not recognise the voice, so do not follow. Many of the Jews challenged Jesus, and would not accept His call. He replied to them,

... you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.” (John 10:26-30)

Some will never respond because they are not part of His flock. Notice that Jesus was not talking about people who are already Christians in verse 16, but people who are not yet part of His flock because they have not yet heard His voice, but they will respond when they hear it. And, incidentally, those who are part of His flock have His guarantee of security and protection.

3. Tell us about your personal process of understanding and accepting or rejecting the doctrine of Election. What struggles did you have (or still have) accepting it, and how does this doctrine affect you now?

Some who claim to hold this doctrine dear have done great harm to it, to themselves, and to others, by having an arrogance, an air of superiority, which this doctrine means to demolish. In fact, arrogance about being “elect” reveals quite clearly that the person hasn’t understood the doctrine, any more than the person who rejects it out of hand has understood it. Both have failed to understand one of the most important, and most liberating doctrines, one which in fact goes back to the Garden of Eden. More on this later.

Martin Luther described the doctrine of election as “strong wine.” He clearly understood the dangers in delving too deeply into this teaching too early. In the early 1500’s, he wrote his ‘Preface to the Letter of

Saint Paul to the Romans,' an introduction to the book of Romans.¹³ In it, he gives an overview of the Book of Romans, showing the purpose for which it was written, and the development of Paul's argument. He wrote,

"You, however, follow the reasoning of this letter in the order in which it is presented. Fix your attention first of all on Christ and the Gospel, so that you may recognize your sin and his grace. Then struggle against sin, as chapters 1-8 have taught you to. Finally, when you have come, in chapter 8, under the shadow of the cross and suffering, they will teach you, in chapters 9-11, about providence and what a comfort it is. [The context here and in St. Paul's letter makes it clear that this is the cross and passion, not only of Christ, but of each Christian.] Apart from suffering, the cross and the pangs of death, you cannot come to grips with providence without harm to yourself and secret anger against God. The old Adam must be quite dead before you can endure this matter and drink this strong wine. Therefore make sure you don't drink wine while you are still a babe at the breast. There is a proper measure, time and age for understanding every doctrine."

Luther was wise. There is no doubt that this is a difficult doctrine to properly digest, and those who conclude too quickly that they understand it tend to cause themselves and others much harm. It is wise to walk carefully as you study it.

The apostle Paul never made an issue of election, but he never got embarrassed and tried to hide from it either. He was never ashamed of it, but simply accepts it and expounds it as an integral part of his gospel. When Paul teaches it, it is for the purpose of edifying believers, for keeping them firmly grounded, and for stirring them to respond to God in worship and in life.

The effect on a believer of understanding this teaching should be profound. The first effect of understanding election as the Bible reveals it should be a sense of utter devastation that our own sinfulness should demand the death of the only perfect, sinless human being who ever lived. This should break our hearts, and leave us humbled and weeping before God. There is not the slightest room for boasting and superiority in the doctrine of election.

Following on from this sense of unworthiness should be exultation¹⁴ that this merciful God has chosen such an undeserving sinner, and the

¹³ This document was being read out at a meeting that John Wesley was attending. He later reported that during the reading, he felt his heart "strangely warmed" and was born again.

¹⁴ Joy, delight, excitement, euphoria.

exaltation¹⁵ of Jesus Christ. It is a strange blend of crushing brokenness and heartache, mixed with overwhelming joy and worship, that is difficult to explain to those who have never experienced it, but an absolute delight of those who have. There is possibly no doctrine that reveals the infinitely vast gulf between sinful humanity and the perfections of God better than the doctrine of election does.

Perhaps, at this point, we should look at the Biblical revelation of this doctrine, starting at the beginning. As mentioned earlier, it goes back even to the Garden of Eden. Keep in mind the imagery of a bride that we looked at in session 8 – Union with Christ. This imagery helps to understand the doctrine of election also. Our concept of “choosing” for marriage is based (to some extent) on our Western perspective of how a man meets his wife and gets married. We fall in love, then for ask her hand in marriage. She, in turn, considers the proposal, and decides whether she wants to do it, ultimately saying “Yes” or “No,” and thus deciding whether the marriage goes ahead.

The Biblical concept, however, is based on a Hebrew mindset and pattern (which really is God’s idea, originally). In this pattern, which is still common in many cultures today, the children don’t choose their partner, but the parents decide for them. The children merely accept and submit to the decision of the parents. Normally the decision is made by the father.

So then, back to the Garden of Eden. Neither Adam nor Eve were involved in the choice of a partner (see Gen 2:21-24). God Himself decided on Eve to be Adam’s bride. Later, we see Abraham sending his servant (who is a type¹⁶ of the Holy Spirit) to choose a bride for his son, Isaac (Gen 24:2-4). Judah selected a wife for his son, Er (Gen 38:6). God betrothes a wife to Himself, not implying any activity or choice on her part (Hos 2:19-20).

In Gen 28:8-9 we see a good example of what happens when the choice of a bride is left up to us. Esau chose a wife (to add to his collection of wives) as a deliberate act of rebellion against his father. Jacob also chose a wife for himself, and served her father for seven years to get her, only to be deceived by her father and end up with her sister instead. He had to work another seven years to get his first choice (see Gen 29:16-31).

¹⁵ Adoration, worship, magnifying, lifting up.

¹⁶ A type in the Bible is real, living person who symbolises, in part, something future; a symbolic foreshadowing.

There is more to the Biblical development of this doctrine than examples of marriage though. We see it in God's choice of Abraham. Abram (as he was then known) was an idolater, not a follower of the Lord (see Josh 24:2-3). God chose Abram from among his own people (Neh 9:7, Gen 18:17-19).

We see it in God's choice of Isaac, not Ishmael (Isa 41:8-9), even though Ishmael was the first-born, and therefore entitled to the double portion of the inheritance. It is then revealed in God's choice of Jacob, not Esau (Gen 25:21-23), and is explained by Paul in Rom 9:10-13).

It is further shown in God's choice of Israel, the descendants of Abraham (Deut 10:15, 14:2, 1Chr 16:13, Isa 44:1-2 & 21) over any other nation to be His people. Scripture makes clear that God's selection of the Jewish people was out of His own free choice, and not on the basis of anything within the people which should attract God. In fact, the opposite is true:

"For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. (Deut 7:6-8)

We can see it in God's choice of the tribe of Levi to be priests (Deut 18:5, 21:5, 1Chr 15:2), and in His choice of David to be king (1Sam 16:1, 6-13, 2Sam 6:21, 1Ki 11:34), then His choice of Solomon, before his birth, to succeed him (1Chr 22:9-10).

Tragically, when the choice is left up to us, we choose other gods, not the true God (see Judg 10:14), and kings who are not the King of Kings (1 Sam 8:18).

Scripture reinforces it with God's choice of Zerubbabel to be His "signet-ring" (Hag 2:23, compare Jer 22:24). A signet-ring was the equivalent of a seal (see Eph 1:13-14), and represented the master's authority, power, wealth, majesty, protection and ownership.

It supremely shown in God's choice of Jesus Christ (Luke 9:35).

And, thank God, it is shown in His choice of certain individuals to be saved, not on the basis of any foreseen faith, or any merit, or any obligation, or any other reason except for His grace, His mercy and His good pleasure (Acts 15:13-14, Eph 2:8-9).

Election is absolutely necessary. If God were not to elect individuals to salvation, then no one would be saved. It is certain, as we learnt from our study of sin, that we would never choose to submit to God and believe in Jesus Christ of our own accord. Scripture is clear, from start to finish, that no one deserves God's grace. This is what makes the doctrine of election such a God-honouring teaching. It gives every ounce of glory to God alone for our salvation, and strips every ounce of glory away from man.

Peter Jeffery makes an important point, "The elect are no better than anyone else. They are not chosen because they deserve something. So they can never feel superior to any who are not elect. The non-elect only get what their sin deserves so they can never complain that they are being treated unfairly." Sin has corrupted every aspect of our being, and set us against God. What does anyone have to be arrogant about?

One of the primary objections to the doctrine of election is that if election is true, then God is unfair. This objection betrays a very man-centred understanding of salvation, and a basic belief that man is at heart either morally neutral and is therefore able to please God, or morally good and is therefore already pleasing to God.

In a sense, election is unfair, but not for the reasons most people imagine. If God were to be fair with all of us, we would all get exactly what we deserve – eternal punishment and separation from God. No one could ever point the finger at God on Judgment Day and accuse Him of being unfair for giving them exactly what they deserve for their sin. What is unfair about election is not that any should be passed by, but that any should be chosen at all. This can't be stressed too much – no one deserves to be saved, therefore God can never be unfair if He decides to save some. In fact, according to Romans 9, He deliberately operates this way in order to show that He alone is the ruler of the universe, and He alone is the decider of the fates of men. No wonder this grates against human nature!

Another objection often raised is that God is unjust if election is true. The apostle Paul answers this objection also in Romans 9, with the basic argument that since God is the Potter, He has every right to do what He wishes with the clay He is working with. And the clay has no right to demand it be formed in any particular way. God has multiple purposes in the uses He puts the clay to. For some, He intends to show His wrath against sin and His power by making vessels for destruction. For others, He intends to show the riches of His glory in making them vessels of mercy.

So, in election, God reveals His power, His wrath, His mercy and His sovereignty. Few doctrines show God so clearly in such distinct but complementary facets of His nature.

Even amongst those who believe the doctrine of election, there can be disagreements. One common disagreement is about the basis for election. As mentioned earlier, it is popularly held that God foresees those who would have faith, and elects them on the basis of that foreseen faith. One of the of verses commonly interpreted this way are:

Rom 8:29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.¹⁷

The argument raised is that God knew in advance (foreknew) who would have faith, and predestined them to be saved. In essence, people are elect because they will believe. Contrary to popular belief and much modern theology, this is not the historic understanding of the church. The early church, Augustine in the 5th Century, the Reformers of the 16th Century¹⁸, the framers of the Westminster Confession of Faith in the 17th Century, and the majority of the most important theologians, preachers and church leaders¹⁹ of the last four hundred years have held to the reverse of this – that people will believe because they are elect.

The modern interpretation has its roots in the early 17th Century with a group of believers who held that election or condemnation are dependent on the foreseen faith or unbelief of men. This view, among others, was carefully considered by a church council attended by church leaders from several different countries, and rejected as unbiblical.

Famous proponents of the modern understanding are Jacob Arminius, John Wesley, Charles Finney²⁰, DL Moody, Billy Graham, most Pentecostal, Charismatic and mainline evangelists.

The implications of this doctrine are many, and unfortunately far too complex to go into detail about here. I will merely mention them, as it

¹⁷ In fact, the Living Bible actually paraphrases this verse to reveal the translator's understanding by putting it, "For from the very beginning God decided that those who came to him – and all along he knew who would – should become like his Son, so that his Son would be the first, with many brothers." I am not aware of any other translations or paraphrases that do this.

¹⁸ Ulrich Zwingli, Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon, John Knox, John Calvin, Martin Bucer, Francis Turretin,

¹⁹ Matthew Henry, John Foxe, John Bunyan, John Owen, Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, Charles Spurgeon, BB Warfield, AW Tozer, Martin Lloyd-Jones, John MacArthur, RC Sproul, John Piper, Mark Driscoll, Tony Hodge

²⁰ Although Finney departs even from this theology into what is, at best, serious error, and at worst, absolute heresy.

is certain that you will ask all these questions as you think about it. Rest assured that there are Biblical responses to these questions, but history shows that those responses are not always satisfying to puny human intellects. Neither are the responses simplistic, but Scripture does respond to them. In some things we must be content to say with Paul,

"... who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me like this?" (Rom 9:20),"

and hear what God said to Job,

"Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty? He who argues with God, let him answer it... Dress for action like a man; I will question you, and you make it known to me. Will you even put me in the wrong? Will you condemn me that you may be in the right? (Job 40:2-8)"

Some questions raised by the doctrine of election:

If God decides who will be saved, doesn't this contradict human free-will?

If God decides who will be saved, how can anyone be held responsible for not being saved?

If God decides who will be saved, isn't that unfair?

If God decides who will be saved, doesn't that destroy any incentive to evangelise?

If God decides who will be saved, what point is there in praying for someone's salvation?

If God decides who will be saved, does that mean that there will be people who really want to be saved but get condemned anyway?

If God decides who will be saved, does obedience (or lack of it) make any real difference?

Maybe at some future time we can look at these objections, arguments and complaints, and see the Biblical responses to them. For now, we will have to acknowledge that these are very real questions raised by this doctrine, but ones that have good answers founded in Scripture, rather than human philosophies.

One response worth making comes from Charles Spurgeon. Preaching in 1855 on the passage:

But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: To which he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2Thess 2:13-14)

"But there are some who say, "It is hard for God to choose some and leave others." Now, I will ask you one question. Is there any of you

here this morning who wishes to be holy, who wishes to be regenerate, to leave off sin and walk in holiness? "Yes, there is," says some one, "I do." Then God has elected you. But another says, "No; I don't want to be holy; I don't want to give up my lusts and my vices." Why should you grumble, then, that God has not elected you to it? For if you were elected you would not like it, according to your own confession. If God this morning had chosen you to holiness, you say you would not care for it. Do you not acknowledge that you prefer drunkenness to sobriety, dishonesty to honesty? You love this world's pleasures better than religion; then why should you grumble that God has not chosen you to religion? If you love religion, he has chosen you to it. If you desire it, he has chosen you to it. If you do not, what right have you to say that God ought to have given you what you do not wish for? Supposing I had in my hand something which you do not value, and I said I shall give it to such-and-such a person, you would have no right to grumble that I did not give to you. You could not be so foolish as to grumble that the other has got what you do not care about. According to your own confession, many of you do not want religion, do not want a new heart and a right spirit, do not want the forgiveness of sins, do not want sanctification; you do not want to be elected to these things: then why should you grumble? You count these things but as husks, and why should you complain of God who has given them to those whom he has chosen? If you believe them to be good and desire them, they are there for thee. God gives liberally to all those who desire; and first of all, he makes them desire, otherwise they never would. If you love these things, he has elected you to them, and you may have them; but if you do not, who are you that you should find fault with God, when it is your own desperate will that keeps you from loving these things—your own simple self that makes you hate them? Suppose a man in the street should say, "What a shame it is I cannot have a seat in the chapel to hear what this man has to say." And suppose he says, "I hate the preacher; I can't bear his doctrine; but still it's a shame I have not a seat." Would you expect a man to say so? No: you would at once say, "That man does not care for it. Why should he trouble himself about other people having what they value and he despises?" You do not like holiness, you do not like righteousness; if God has elected me to these things, has he hurt you by it? "Ah! but," say some, "I thought it meant that God elected some to heaven and some to hell." That is a very different matter from the gospel doctrine. He has elected men to holiness and to righteousness and through that to heaven. You must not say that he has elected them simply to heaven, and others only to hell. He has elected you to holiness, if you love holiness. If any of you love to be saved by Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ elected you to be saved. If any of you desire to have salvation, you are elected to have it, if you desire it sincerely and earnestly. But, if you don't desire it, why on earth should you be so preposterously foolish as to grumble because God gives that which you do not like to other people?"²¹

²¹ *Election*, A sermon delivered on Sabbath morning Sept 2, 1855 at New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

God's election is not merely to heaven and to salvation. It is to sanctification and to faith. God has chosen His people to be holy and to believe. Those who do not desire holiness and faith can have no argument with election, or no complaint that God passed over them. In essence, the point Spurgeon was making is that if someone truly desires holiness, it is certain that they are elect. If they don't, they are not missing out on anything that they have any interest in or desire for, and so there is no unfairness in it.

In wrapping this up for the moment, there are a couple more comments that need to be made. You may have heard an illustration about election that goes like this, "God votes for you; the devil votes against you. You get the deciding vote." This illustration is used to support the theory that election is based on God foreseeing faith in a person. There are a number of significant problems with this illustration, however.

Firstly, it implies that the devil is equal with God, and that his vote carries as much weight as God's vote. But more than that, Scripture never suggests that the devil gets a vote in anything. In fact, according to the book of Job, he can't even touch you without God's express permission, much less vote in any election for your soul.

Another problem is that it implies we are morally neutral, so we can cast our vote either way. But when we looked at Sin in session 4, we established that this is not so. Because of our corrupt and sinful nature, our vote is always for our sinful self, and therefore by default, against God's desires. Here the illustration falls down again, because it suggests we are not voting for or against God, but for or against ourselves.

In this election, there is only one candidate, the guilty sinner. If it were a real election, the ballot paper may look something like this:

<p>Ballot Paper Electoral district of The Kingdom of Heaven</p>		
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 40px; border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="padding-left: 10px;">Me Guilty Sinner Party</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Me Guilty Sinner Party
<input type="checkbox"/>	Me Guilty Sinner Party	
<p>Place the number "1" in the square opposite the name of the candidate for whom you desire to give your first preference vote.</p>		

In any election, you can't actually vote against a candidate. You either vote for him, or you vote for another candidate, or you cast a "donkey vote" (that is, you don't fill in the form properly). But there are no other candidates on this ballot paper, so your vote won't count if it is not for the candidate on the form (same goes for the devil, assuming he was allowed to vote).

Another problem with this illustration; only citizens get to vote. Foreigners, infants and long-term prisoners have no voting rights. Neither the devil, nor the guilty sinner are citizens in the country holding the election. Therefore, we do not get to vote in this election.

Even if we were to grant that the devil is permitted to vote and therefore would vote against you, and on the basis of your sin, you would vote against yourself, God is a Trinity, so He gets 3 votes. So even on a count-back, the tally would be 3 votes for, 2 against. That is a landslide 60% of the primary vote, and would get any candidate elected.

This is such a vast subject that large books have been written about it, and still not plumbed the depths of it. Perhaps we should finish at this point, merely listing the Scriptures from the Bible which teach election and predestination, and with the reminder that election is always "in Christ."

Scripture verses for question 1:

Exo 33:19 And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The LORD.' **And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.**

Deu 7:6-7 "For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. **The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples**

Deu 10:15 Yet **the LORD set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them**, you above all peoples, as you are this day.

Psa 33:12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, **the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!**

Psa 65:4 **Blessed is the one you choose and bring near**, to dwell in your courts! We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, the holiness of your temple!

Psa 106:5 ... **that I may look upon the prosperity of your chosen ones**, that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation, **that I may glory with your inheritance.**

Mat 11:27 All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and **anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.**

Mat 20:15 **Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me?** Or do you begrudge my generosity?'

Mat 22:14 **For many are called, but few are chosen.**

Matt 24:22, & 31 And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. **But for the sake of the elect** those days will be cut short... For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as **to lead astray, if possible, even the elect...** And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and **they will gather his elect** from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Mar 13:20 And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, **whom he chose**, he shortened the days.

Luke 18:7 **And will not God give justice to his elect**, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them?

John 10:26-29 **All that the Father gives me will come to me**, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And **this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me**, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on

the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

John 6:37-40 I am the good shepherd. **I know my own and my own know me**, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life **for the sheep**. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

John 10:14-16 but you do not believe **because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me**. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. **My Father, who has given them to me**, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

John 15:16 **You did not choose me, but I chose you** and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

John 15:19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, **but I chose you out of the world**, therefore the world hates you.

John 17:2 ... since you have given him authority over all flesh, **to give eternal life to all whom you have given him**.

John 17:6-10 “I have manifested your name to **the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me**, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am praying for them. **I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours**. All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.

Jn 17:20-21 “**I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word**, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

Act 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**.

Acts 15:13-14 After they finished speaking, James replied, “Brothers, listen to me. Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, **to take from them a people for his name**.

Acts 16:14 One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The **Lord opened her heart** to pay attention to what was said by Paul.

Acts 18:9-10 And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, “Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, **for I have many in this city who are my people**.”

Act 18:27 And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped **those who through grace had believed,**

Acts 26:15-18 And I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand upon your feet, **for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness** to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles-to whom I am sending you to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

Rom 8:28-39 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. **For those whom he foreknew he also predestined** to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. **And those whom he predestined he also called,** and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? **Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?** It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died-more than that, who was raised-who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Rom 9:10-29 And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, **though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad-in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls-** she was told, "The older will serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." **So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.** For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills. You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?" But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me like this?" **Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use?** What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, **in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory- even us whom he has called,** not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? As indeed he says in Hosea, "**Those who were not my people I will call 'my people,' and her who was not beloved I will call 'beloved.'**" "And in the very place where it

was said to them, 'You are not my people,' there they will be called 'sons of the living God.'" And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved, for the Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay." And as Isaiah predicted, "If the Lord of hosts had not left us offspring, we would have been like Sodom and become like Gomorrah."

Rom 10:20 Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, "**I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.**"

Rom 11:1-10 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? "Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life." But what is God's reply to him? "**I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.**" So too at the present time **there is a remnant, chosen by grace. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.** What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. **The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened,** as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day." And David says, "Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them; let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs forever."

Rom 11:28 As regards the gospel, they are enemies of God for your sake. **But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers.**

1Cor 1:9 God is faithful, **by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son,** Jesus Christ our Lord.

1Co 1:27-29 But **God chose** what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; **God chose** what is weak in the world to shame the strong; **God chose** what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, **so that no human being might boast** in the presence of God.

Eph 1:3-14 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, **even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world,** that we should be holy and blameless before him. **In love he predestined us for adoption as sons** through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In him we have obtained an inheritance, **having been predestined according to the purpose of him** who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Eph 2:10 For we are his workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand**, that we should walk in them.

Eph 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, **so that he might present the church to himself in splendor**, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

Php 1:29 For **it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him** but also suffer for his sake,

Php 2:12-13 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, **13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.**

Col 3:12 Put on then, **as God's chosen ones**, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,

1Thess 1:3-4 ... remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. **For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you...**

1Th 5:9 **For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation** through our Lord Jesus Christ,

2Thess 2:13-14 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. **To this he called you** through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2Tim 1:9-10 ... **who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace**, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

2Tim 2:10 **Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect**, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Titus 1:1 Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, **for the sake of the faith of God's elect** and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness,

Jas 2:5 Listen, my beloved brothers, **has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom**, which he has promised to those who love him?

1Pet 1:1-2 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, **To those who are elect** exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, **according to the foreknowledge of God the Father**, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

1Pe 2:8-9 and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the word, **as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession,** that you may proclaim the excellencies of him **who called you** out of darkness into his marvelous light.

2Pe 1:10 Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to **make your calling and election sure,** for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.

2John 1:1 The elder **to the elect lady and her children,** whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all who know the truth,

2John 1:13 **The children of your elect sister** greet you.

Rev 13:8 and all who dwell on earth will worship it, **everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world** in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

Rev 17:14 They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and **those with him are called and chosen and faithful.**