

God does the Choosing

Chapter 1.

(Verse by verse study.)

By Pastor Nick Bibile

Verse 4

Eph 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

There is so much damaged to done to this scripture as many play spiritual gymnastics with election and totally destroy the meaning. First I am going to take some time in repairing the damage done, and then honestly and truthfully we will not evade the issues but will face the scriptures head on and explain what it actually means.

We need to remember that verse 4 does not begin with a new topic but the continuation from verse 3 where we stopped before. Last week we saw from verse three that we are talking here to Christians truly blessed by God with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. We saw the word blessing is that the presence of God is with us, his face shines upon us and the opposite of the blessing is the curse, which a person is separated from God.

Now let me ask you the question. What is the greatest blessing you have received from God? Remember verse three is not talking on physical blessings but spiritual blessings, so what is the greatest spiritual blessing you have received? The answer is salvation. You were in the dark doing your own will, then God in his grace, his face shine upon you and suddenly when you heard the gospel, your mind that was blinded to God was opened, you were brought from darkness to the light of Christ. This was the greatest spiritual blessing you ever received. Keeping this in mind now let us go to verse four.

Eph 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Wow! God chose you before the foundation of the world. Isnt that a blessing or not? Now it does not say that you were saved before the foundation of the world. Because the word save or salvation has to do with saving from a danger. Before the foundation of the world there was no danger but we were chosen, means picked out.

The word before the foundation of the world is very important. As it means if you are a Christian God chose you before the creation of this world. That is the truth as that is what the word says.

Now let us look at the Creation. How powerful is God? Infinitely powerful. Who created Lucifer? God did. Did God know that Lucifer was going to sin? Yes. Who created man? God did. Did God know that Satan will tempt man and man will fall into sin? Yes. Does this make God the author of sin? Certainly not. God is infinitely holy. Now here is the million-dollar question. On what condition did God chose you before the foundation of the world?

Let me give the popular answer. What the majority of churches believe today. God, from the foundation of the world foreknew all men's believing or not believing. And according

to this, His foreknowledge, He chose or elected all obedient believers, as such to salvation. God looks into the future and see who will chose God, on a foreseen act of man and on the basis of man choosing God, God in return had chosen man before the foundation of the world. This is conditional election as election depends upon man and not from God. But this was not what the majority believed during the time of Protestant reformation.

Amazing Grace that saved an obedient faithful person like me! NO. NO. That saved a wretched, wicked person like me

This is a heretical doctrine that has crept into the pulpits and many are deceived by this kind of teaching. This kind of teaching did not begin recently but had lot of influence from Finney and the others.

The Word foreknowledge appears only a few times in the New Testament, and it is never used in connection with action of the person but to the person. God did not elect you because he foresaw of your repenting and believing. It is true that God knew that some would repent and believe on him, but that is not what the scripture is referring to Gods foreknowledge. God knew the persons who will be saved. He is not looking to the actions of the people in salvation. Let us look some scripture on foreknowledge and it will be very clear to you that the word foreknowledge refers to the persons and not to their works or actions.

A.W. Pink said: "It is individuals God is said to foreknow, not the actions of those persons." In the Scriptures to know or foreknow means to regard with favor, with special affection, to love intimately. It is an act of love on the part of God concerning His elect. The following scripture references will prove the point in question.

Acts 2:23 **"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain"** (Paul is not speaking of Gods foreknowledge of the action of crucifixion, but the person crucified: "HIM (Christ) being delivered")

Romans 8:29 **"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."** (Whom he foreknew referring to persons and not referring to their actions on what they did)

Romans 11:2 **"God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? How he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,"** (foreknew are the people and not referring to their actions on what they did)

1 Peter 1:2

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia,

2 who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us.

Who are elected according to the foreknowledge of the Father? The previous verse tells us, strangers scattered. **Again, it is referring to persons and not to their foreseen acts.**

The word foreknowledge means not a general knowledge but a special intimate knowledge of His

people.

Genesis 4:1 state: **"And Adam knew Eve his wife..."** Adam having a special love and affection only for his wife.

Ex 33:17 And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.

Moses did not have to introduce himself to God, but God knew him by name, God knew the person Moses and set his love upon Moses before the foundation of the world. Why because Moses was better than anyone, no. Moses was a sinner like anyone else, he was a murderer, he deserved the wrath of God like anyone else but instead he found grace in Gods sight.

God knew all the people of the earth, but to the chosen ones, he had a special affection for them, he was intimate with them, not because they were good, but because of his mercy and grace. The word foreknowledge does not appear in the Old Testament, but when the word, "know" is used in connection with God, it means to "choose" or "set favor upon" or "acknowledge It is those whom he chose or set his favor upon.

Jeremiah 1:5 states: "Before I formed thee in the belly **I knew thee**; and before thou camest out of the womb I **sanctified** thee, and I **ordained** thee a prophet unto the nations." Notice how closely the words knew, sanctified, and ordained are related to one another.

God has a special love for Jeremiah before he was born. He was set apart to serve God from the womb. It was Gods goodness, grace and mercy toward Jeremiah, so Jeremiah cannot boast of his ministry as God sanctified and ordained him before he was born.

Joh 10:14 I am the good shepherd, and **know my sheep**, and am known of mine.

Joh 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.

2Ti 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, **not according to our works**, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

If I say I chose God because of my obedience of faith, let me ask you the question, the people who got saved during Jesus time were, harlots, thieves, tax collectors, and murderers. What kind of faith did they have? How about you?

2Th 3:2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.

God chose Jacob over Esau. Was Jacob better than Esau? No. He was a deceiver, a crook, and cheater.

Ro 9:9 For this is the word of promise, at this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son.

10 And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;

How many people have a difficulty understanding simple English in the following scripture? Many. They try all kinds of spiritual gymnastics to protect God. God does not need any protection as he is the infinite holy God. What he says is the truth.

11 (For the **children being not yet born**, neither **having done any good or evil**, that the **purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth**;))

12 It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger.

13 As it is written, **Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated**.

14 What shall we say then? **Is there unrighteousness with God?** God forbid.

15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

16 So then **it is not of him that willeth**, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that replies against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?

21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?

Remember apostle Paul is not telling all the people in Ephesus that they are chosen by God. But whom is he talking here.

Eph 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints, which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.

He is talking to the saints at Ephesus, saints are the ones that are washed by the blood of Christ and being separated from the world to worship and serve God, the true Christians. So Paul is talking only to a minority who are called Christians.

God Chose you before the foundation of the world then when you were born to this world, you were born as a sinner. The wages of sin is death. Even though you were chosen before the foundation of the world you were sinful, salvation comes in our time here on earth.

There is a general calling where we are all responsible in preaching the gospel to all people. Jesus said, Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Mt 28:19)

Then also there is an effectual calling. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called. (Ro 8:30) You were chosen before the foundation of the world before time but in time you were a sinner God called you.

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." (Luke 19:10)

Let me ask you the question, what was lost? The chosen.

"He shall save His people from their sins." --Matthew 1:21

Who are His people? The chosen.

Matthew 22:14, " For many are invited (called) but few are chosen." The many refers to the general call of the gospel message. The few refers to the chosen ones, as the gospel message will be effectual to them, as they will be brought to repentance and faith.

The word effectual call has the meaning of "summons. It is a command by the authorities to appear in a court of justice.

Many will hear the gospel but all will not be saved.

1Co 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

The ones that were chosen before the foundation of the world will hear the gospel and will respond to the call.

Paul (Acts 9)

Paul was chosen before the foundation of the world.

Ga 1:15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace.

He was chosen but a born sinner.

Saul of Tarsus was an enemy of God. He did not have any power to obey God. He was hunting like a wild lion to devour the Christians. His heart was against Christ and he used his energy to destroy the Church. On his way to Damascus he heard a voice say, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" Then Saul replied, "Who are you, Lord?" Then the voice said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."

What was the result of this effectual calling? The same energy that he used to persecute the Church he used now to win souls for Christ. Paul was the hardest hearted man, but the effectual calling broke the hard heart, took away his spiritual blindness and became obedient to Gods call. We were all in darkness and God said, let there be light, and the darkness in vanish now we can see as we are in the light. The hardest sinner melts before the effectual call of God.

You cannot resist the effectual call, it is the summons.

Zaccheus (Luke 19)

Jesus entered Jericho. There was this chief tax collector by the name of Zaccheus. He was wealthy, sinner by all means, stingy a thief and a crook. There was a great crowd to see Jesus; Zaccheus being very short climbed a sycamore tree to see Jesus. He was pretty safe and secure up there. He wanted to see this great man, Jesus who was turning the world upside down. But he did not know that he was to be turn too. Jesus comes to the very spot, under the tree, looks up straight at Zaccheus, and calls by his name saying, "Zaccheus come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." The effectual call was so powerful Zaccheus like a bird in the tree fell into the arms of the Savior. There were many better people than Zaccheus, but why him? Zaccheus does not deserve anything. God is sovereign and he will choose whom he will.

Why Did God saved you and not your neighbor? Is it because you are smarter than him, better than your neighbor? Why is it that when two people are hearing the same gospel, one get saved and the other does not. Is it because the one got saved is more righteous than the other?

It is because of Gods GRACE!

But God chose me! If you are a Christian God chose you!

'Twas not that I did choose Thee
For Lord That could not be;
This heart would still refuse Thee,
Hadst Thou not chosen me.

The condition that God chose me was purely out of his grace.

There is not, perhaps, in the Bible a word more expressive, or, to the believing ear, one more sweet, than the word GRACE. "By grace you are saved;" "The grace of God that brings salvation;"

Does Ephesians 1:4 say that you were chosen in yourself, in your faith, in your good works, in your belief? No. **He hath chosen us in him.**

We are chosen in Christ. We are chosen in Christ means, Jesus works on the cross, which excludes all merit. We are saved by the righteousness of Jesus by the goodness of Jesus by him alone and in him alone. Its excludes us and include the grace of God in Christ.

The whole plan of salvation is based upon free grace, or, in other words, God's good will and unpurchased favor to sinners. We have to understand that God our unworthiness before God. If we say God knew that I would be saved because of my faith, well, you have a lot to boast on yourself. The result is you are worthy. Human merit, therefore, is entirely excluded when we use the word grace.

Ro 11:6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

Eph 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:
9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.
There is absolutely nothing good in you or in me. God chose us purely according to his free grace.

How do you know that you are really chosen by God? There is a new lifestyle, the word of God says if any man is in Christ he is a new creature the old has gone. You have a different lifestyle than the people in the world. The result of God election is **that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.**

Again many make fun out of the word holy. Beloved the word of God tells us to be holy. The word holy means consecrated to him, separated unto him.

1Th 4:7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

2Co 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Heb 12:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

Heb 12:10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

Here we see how our human parents who love their children corrects them by using discipline so they will know what is good and wrong. The reason why parents do this is because they want their children to be good citizens.

In the same way our Father who is in discipline his children whom he loves. The reason is that we may partake his holiness. We will not be conformed to the world but to God. People will see us as true Christians the way we talk, the way we live, the way we act as we are called to be godly partakers of his holiness.

Remember it is the Holy Spirit who brings regeneration, Holy Spirit lives in you and the Holy Spirit will guide you and reveal the will of God and keep you holy.

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