

God's Chosen People

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Good morning, Lighthouse! Are you ready for the Word of God this morning?

Probably everyone here today has heard about the Jews as being spoken of as being God's chosen people.

The Apostle Paul told us what makes the Jews so special; at least the chief reason they are so special.

Romans 3:1-2

- 1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit *is there* of circumcision?
- 2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

In our world today antisemitism (which is hatred for Jews) is rampant to the point that, even in our country, there are protests and even riots in support of Israel's murdering enemies.

The Jews are indeed in many ways God's chosen people. I can't help but believe that much of the antisemitism we see going on is just plain jealousy.

Who are these "chosen" we keep hearing about?

I have some good news for us today. Because of Jesus, I AM one of God's chosen people... and because of Jesus, you can be as well.

We begin reading in:

Ephesians 1:3-7

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

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:

5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Can Gentiles like us actually become Jews in God's sight? The answer is in Christ: Yes, we can!

Romans 2:28-29

28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

29 But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God.

There are quite a few scriptures that relate to the idea of our being chosen and our being in Christ Jesus; here are some that we will be looking at today:

Romans 8:1-2

1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are **in Christ** Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:9-11

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but **in the Spirit**, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

10 And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Romans 8:28-30

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are **the called** according to *his* purpose.

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.

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

The Scriptures we are looking at today are, at best, confusing to a great many people.

For a lot of people, the idea of God having predestinated or predetermined what He has, indeed, done is tantamount to God having made all our choices for us; and thus eliminated any free will on our part. Their conclusion is that all our poor choices and the failure of so many to trust Jesus to save them has actually become God's fault.

From this camp of theology, you'll hear a constant blather about the sovereignty of God and how God has chosen everything the way He wants it because He is sovereign.

Sovereign is their favorite word, even though it is not in the Bible. It means 'supreme power' or 'authority', something God certainly is.

We know God is in charge; He is God, for heaven's sake!

Part of God's incredible, creative genius when he made us, was giving us the ability to make choices.

Another part of Who God is, is the ability to know what those choices will be.

It is called the foreknowledge of God.

Romans 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate...

προγινώσκω

proginōskō

prog-in-ocē'-ko

From G4253 and G1097; to *know beforehand*, that is, *foresee*: - foreknow (ordain), know (before).

God's ability to know beforehand, His ability to predict, is far greater than our earthly perspective of how that might work.

There is a professor named Alan Lichtman who has accurately predicted the outcome of every presidential election since 1984; I think his current prediction is due this month some time.

That is actually pretty impressive.

Men can make some accurate predictions.

You actually don't even have to be very smart to make some accurate predictions.

For example, if I see a young man covered in tattoos of skulls and demons with long dirty hair and his britches hanging halfway down, I can accurately predict that he is going to have a hard time holding a very good job.

This is nothing like the foreknowledge of God works, or how it works.

To understand the foreknowledge of God one must understand the matter of:

I. Perspective.

A. In order to understand the truth of this very controversial doctrine, one must realize there are two perspectives involved.

1. The first is the human perspective.

2. We live in time; there is the past, the present and the future. We can only exist in the present; we cannot go back; we cannot go forward. For us there is only now.

3. God is not limited to living in time like we are.

4. Time was created by God for man.

Genesis 1:5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

5. God invented time!

Genesis 1:14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:

6. Jesus said to the Jews in

John 8:56-58

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad.

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

7. John the Apostle was taken ahead in time by Jesus and shown what is to come in the latter days; then told to write what he saw. For example, the Book of Revelation is the record of what John saw when Jesus took him ahead in time.

B. God already knows exactly who will trust Jesus and exactly who will not because unlike us, His foreknowledge is not some educated prediction.

1. God is literally in the past, in the present and in the future all at once!

2. Why should that be hard for us to accept?

3. If we understand the timelessness of God, why should it be unreasonable for us to understand that He has predetermined wonderful things for those who He already knows will trust Him and become His children... as well as judgment for those who will not?

C. Just look at some of the things God predestinated (or predetermined) for us who are saved?

1. **Romans 7:6** But now **we are delivered** from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter. We are delivered!

2. **Romans 8:1** *There is* therefore **now no condemnation** to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

We are not condemned!

3. **John 5:24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and **shall not come into condemnation**; but is passed from death unto life.

We will never be condemned!

4. **Romans 8:14** For as many as **are led by the Spirit of God**, they are the sons of God. We are led by the Spirit of God!

5. **Romans 8:16-17**

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and **joint-heirs with Christ**;

We are joint heirs with Christ!

6. **Romans 8:26-27**

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession **for the saints** according to *the will of God*.

We are the saints of God with all the privileges and rights thereof!

7. **Romans 8:28-32**

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

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.

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Nothing can stand against us! We are on the winning team!

8. No matter what comes, no matter what we face, no matter how desperate circumstances get; our God has already provided for us everything we are ever going to need and far more!

9. We are in the process of being shaped and molded and conformed to the image of Jesus Christ!

10. Even though your flesh may want to rebel; do not resist the process; you are going to love the person God is re-making you to be!

Next, we see that there is an order in which the predetermination of God is set forth.

II. The Order.

A. The order as clearly laid out in scripture is the key to understanding the doctrine of predestination.

1. Romans 8:29-30

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.

8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

2. The order begins first with: For whom he did foreknow;

3. God has given every man light and both the opportunity and the ability to choose.

Romans 1:18-20

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed *it* unto them.

20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

4. Even though God did not choose or predestinate some to be saved and others to be lost (and no where does the bible teach that He did); He has always known who will and who will not.

5. He is God! Is there anything that God did not foreknow?

6. **Romans 8:29** For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, God has predetermined that you who He knew would trust Jesus will be re-made to be like Him; and with that remaking comes all the marvelous benefits we have read about and more.

7. **Romans 8:30** Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; those He foreknew and then predestinated to be like Jesus; them he called!

8. God has actually issued a plea to be saved to everyone; we, those who are saved, are those called who love God and are

living according to His purpose.

9. **Romans 8:28** And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

10. Have you experienced God's calling; inviting you to trust Jesus; drawing you to the Savior?

11. **Revelation 22:17** And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

B. The order of these events continue:

1. Everyone here who is saved has responded to God's calling the same way; you who God is calling now must also respond the same way.

Here it is:

2. Ephesians 1:12-14

12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

13 In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,

14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

3. You will hear and understand the gospel; how that Jesus died and was buried and raised again for you, for your sins!

4. Do you understand that He paid your debt in full? Yes?

5. ...after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, Your understanding of the Gospel means that you are ready to believe! The word is Gr. 'pisteuo': to put in trust with.

6. What does that mean? It means, "Yes Lord, I understand and I trust you; I place it all in your hands; thank you for saving me from my sins!" (you can use words or not, it makes no difference).

C. Once you say yes to the Lord by placing your trust in Him actually to save you...

1. At that very moment you ARE what comes next; you ARE justified! (Even though God knew about from before the foundation of the world and may have been treating you like one of His children all along.)

2. ...and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

3. Next comes our being glorified.

4. Our being glorified; most aspects of it have not happened yet.

5. Here, it is spoken of as though it was complete already; from God's perspective it is!

6. You and I are still waiting, but from God's perspective it is already done.

7. Our new glorified bodies; mine, yours; one for each and every believer, are already created and waiting for us in Heaven.

8. I believe that our rewards (or lack thereof) is already evident in those new bodies; something God foreknew as well.

9. Our glorification really is already accomplished; we're just waiting to slip out of this old body and put the new one on!

Then...

III. Someone is bound to ask:

A. Did God arbitrarily choose for you to go to heaven or to hell?

1. The answer to that question is a resounding NO!
2. There is not one phrase or verse or passage in the entire Bible that says or indicates that He did.
3. The only way doctrines like this are propagated are from those with a predetermined agenda looking to justify what they want to believe instead of simply accepting what God has to teach us in His Word.
4. If you are looking for a loophole, God will let you think you've found one.
5. But, if you simply want the truth, God will delight in opening your understanding.

B. Where do you stand today?

1. Do you want truth?
2. Or do you just want to justify what you have already decided to believe?
3. Some would say, 'I'm just not one of the chosen so what does it matter how I live or what I do?'
4. I thought that way myself once and man, was that ever wrong!

In Conclusion:

Romans 8:31-39

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.

34 Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If you will exercise the wonderful free will God gave you and place your trust in Jesus - or if you have done so already; you are one of God's chosen people; chosen in Him; so now every benefit and every blessing we have read about today is yours...

God has chosen you, now it's up to you to choose Him!