

## Grace From Eternity

Numerous Bible passages (all in NASB unless otherwise indicated) indicate being elected/chosen to be justified by the grace of God. Some examples include:

- Matthew 24:31: “And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.”
- John 6:37: “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.”
- John 6:44: “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.”
- John 8:47: “He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them because you are not of God.”
- John 10:25-29: “Jesus answered them, ‘I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me. But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, 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.’”
- Acts 13:48: “When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.”
- Romans 8:29-30: “For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.”
- Romans 8:33-34: “Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.”

- Ephesians 1:4-14: "...just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on 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 on us. In all wisdom and insight, He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation--having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory."
- Colossians 3:12: "So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience"
- 2 Timothy 2:10: "For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it, eternal glory."
- Titus 1:1: "Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness"
- 1 Peter 1-2: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure."

- 1 Peter 2:9-10: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”

There are many more. So, what does it mean to be God’s chosen/elected? What are the implications? Let’s start from the beginning.

**1. All have sinned and have fallen short of divine requirement, and all are unprofitable, being wholly unable to seek or desire God, or do any good in the eyes of Yahweh. God, being eternal and outside of time, knew before He even created us that we would all sin.**

- This was OUR CHOICE (stemming from exercise of our free will), and we were wholly dead in it. Keep this in mind when reading onward-many people are antagonistic towards the concept of God choosing to justify people from eternity BECAUSE they confuse our modern society’s interpretation of ‘free will’ with that of TRUE free will. The free will to choose wrong OR good. We have ALREADY CHOSEN to sin, or to do wrong. So our choice to do RIGHT or GOOD is now NULL. We are dead in our sin, and UNABLE to choose to do right or good. But what does this mean? I know you are thinking, “What about when we do good acts? Or what about generally good people, who treat others well? I’m a generally good person. Surely we have free will when we do good acts or not? That is our choice, is it not?” ‘Free will’ in modern society means having the ability to make our own choices-that is true. But we can no longer make the choice to do TRUE good or right. Every good act we do as sinners ultimately has a higher serving purpose: to feel good about ourselves, or to serve or increase our self-image. This is pride. And it is itself sin. This is why Scripture states our righteous works are “as filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6). Ephesians 2:1-3 (see below) propounds on this-we walk according to the course of this world and in disobedience. We serve/glorify ourselves, even when

we do 'righteous works' in our eyes. God knows the heart (Proverbs 21:2). What we think is right in our own eyes-our 'righteous works'- are not to the glory of God, the ONLY one Who is good. We serve sin. What we think of 'free will' today is not TRUE free will no longer, for we are all dead in our trespasses, unable to CHOOSE to truly desire good for non-sinful purposes or out of non-sinful motives. Our TRUE free will-to have the genuine freedom and ability to choose to do right/good and without any sinful motive-died when we chose to sin. Now we walk in sin, and can only 'choose' to sin, for we are dead in it. **Do not confuse modern society's understanding of 'free will' with the lost TRUE free will to choose right or wrong we once had.** The 'free will' we think we have and are entitled to and defensive of is not true free will-does it not exalt our independence from God? Is this not sin? The 'free will' we think we have, once examined, simply proves how we walk in sin and can no longer freely choose to do right without any ulterior self-serving purpose. The point is this- many people may be, I think, antagonistic towards the concept of pre-election BECAUSE they still think they have the 'free will' to choose to accept salvation through Christ Jesus, and that pre-election removes that 'free will', when in fact that very antagonism and defensiveness of what they think is 'free will' reveals their true desire-to independently choose what they think is a righteous act (i.e., choosing to accept God of their own accord). This exalts the individual, rather than God, and puts an emphasis on it being THEIR choice. So, moving forward, understand-our TRUE free will to do right without any sinful motive died when we chose to sin. Any concept of 'free will' we currently have is not TRUE free will apart from sin, but walks in accordance to sinful motives and purposes. ERGO, we no longer have the choice or even desire to be saved, unless God has chosen to make us alive again in Christ (Ephesians 2:4-5). Salvation is not something WE choose, but something God GIFTS (this will be shown in detail later). Keep all of this in mind when continuing to read on.

-Isaiah 53:6: “All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.”

-Isaiah 53:8: “He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.” KJV

-Ephesians 2:1-5: “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our wrongdoings, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...”

-Isaiah 46:9-10: “Remember the former things long past, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, ‘My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure’...”

**2. The death of Christ was necessary to save and redeem sinners whom God, by His grace, has elected/chosen to justify. This displays the righteousness of God-His love, mercy, justice, and grace-in justifying by faith those sinners dead in sin that He has, by grace, elected/chosen. God planned the redemption of His chosen before the foundation of the world.**

- -Romans 3:21-28: “But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God

displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.”

**Note:** Per [desiringgod.com](http://desiringgod.com), if you believe Christ died for all in the same way (not just His elected) you would believe that the death of Christ did not **DECISIVELY SECURE** the salvation of anyone-it only made all men saveable so that something else would be decisive in saving them (namely, **THEIR** choice). If Christ died for everyone in the same way, He did not actually remove the sentence of death or guarantee new life for anyone-His death only created the possibility of salvation. Sinners in this scenario provide the decisive cause in actualizing the possibility of salvation from Christ through their faith. In this understanding of atonement, faith and repentance are not blood-bought gifts of God for specific, elected sinners but are rather acts of sinners that make Christ’s blood work to save them. However, there are two counterarguments to this position: 1.) Being dead in sin, sinners are unable to seek or choose anything to save themselves and 2.), if it is a choice on the sinner’s part, it is also therefore an act. That would make the sinner’s salvation a result of Christ **PLUS** our choice, when salvation is in Christ alone, offered by God alone. So, when Christ died, He did not simply create just a possibility or opportunity for salvation, but really purchased and infallibly secured for His elect all that was necessary to get them saved (repentance, faith, etc.). Those dead in their sins cannot self-generate faith, just as a dead man cannot raise himself. Christ had to raise Lazarus. Lazarus was dead- he had no will or desire to seek God. Likewise, mankind is dead in sin and cannot reach out to God. God-via Christ’s sacrifice-thus also

supplies the means to salvation in addition to salvation itself. He supplies the repentance, the faith, belief, and sanctification. It is entirely gifted by His grace, so no man can boast it is of his own choice, act, or merit.

- Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."

-But what about 1 Timothy 4:10?

1 Timothy 4:10 says, "For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers." Does this verse imply God saves all men? Or offer salvation to all men through Christ's sacrifice? By no means! Per John Samson from monergism.com, "all men", in this instance, likely refers to God extending "common grace" to all who live in the world. God preserves, delivers, and supplies the needs of everyone-He provides food (Psalm 104:27-28), sun and rain (Matthew 5:45), life, breath, and all things (Acts 17:25). "In Him we live and move and exist" (Acts 17:28). It is in this sense that He extends grace to everyone, saving them from destruction every day they live (see Psalm 18:3, Matthew 8:25, 9:22, James 5:15 to see this more general concept of 'saving' or 'delivering' unrelated to being particularly delivered from final judgement). All these mercies are "common grace" in the sense every living person receives them. Even this grace is quite shocking and amazing, as God is under no obligation to give them to anyone. God sustains the lives of even His sworn enemies, often even for decades at a time! However, it is only a temporal grace-all unregenerate sinners not elected eventually die and will face judgement (Hebrews 9:27). 1 Timothy 4:10 teaches that God is the Savior (preserver/sustainer/deliverer) of everyone (showing mercy to all, each and every day they live), but is especially so of those whom He has chosen and who consequently believe. Matthew 1:21 clarifies Christ died not for all sinners, but for those the Father elected: "She will bear a Son;

and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save HIS people from their sins (emphasis mine)."

-What about John 1:29?

John 1:29 says, "The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'" This verse is often used to prove that the Lamb of God died for every single human being. If that is the case, then one must believe in universalism, which is unbiblical. If we understand the word "world" to mean all people without exception, we create a problem, as Scripture indicates there remains punishment/judgement for sin, which would not be the case if Christ died for ALL sinners (see Matthew 3:12, 25:46; Jude 1:12-13). It is therefore unreasonable to think the "world" means everyone without exception here. It likely rather means humanity in general, which, according to thecalvinist.net, meant humanity in general-which in Jewish thought was composed of Jews and Gentiles. This is relevant to the situation as the Jews thought that the Messiah was Israel's Messiah alone and that He would come for her alone, not for the nations. Therefore John, by using the word "world," goes against their idea of Jewish exclusivity. John is saying that Christ, the Lamb of God, foretold and typified through the sacrifice in the Old Testament, is not only the atoning sacrifice for the Jews, but also for the Gentiles. There is no reason to think that the EXTENT of the atonement is to all people everywhere without exception when the purpose of the atonement is limited in SCOPE. It is perfectly fine to say that the Lord Christ died for the whole world if by that we mean that He is the only atoning sacrifice available and He died for particular people from everywhere (every tribe, nation, language, etc.) in the world (composed of Jews and Gentiles). The word "world" when referring to humans simply means people without distinction, rather than exception (see John 12:19, 14:17; Acts 19:27; Romans 1:8 for examples). This verse simply teaches that the Lamb of God was slain to take the sin of all kinds of people from the

world. To take the sin of the world, as in taking the sin of SPECIFIC people from every tribe, language, people and nation, and not only Jews.

-What about the big-hitter, John 3:16?

Keeping in mind what was just discussed about the meaning of the word “world” above, John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life.” According to thecalvinist.net, since the word “world” is used in this verse, many claim that this speaks of all humans without exception. Every last one of them. But look at the verse in context. Firstly, it begins with “For God so loved the world.” This does not only indicate how much God loved the WORLD, but also the WAY IN WHICH God loved the world. It was by giving His only Son that God demonstrated His love to the WORLD (Romans 5:8). God gave His Son to demonstrate His love, but there was also a purpose in all of this. Is God going to fail in that which He has purposed? If the “world” means “every single human being”, how has God accomplished His purpose? Let’s look at the word “whosoever”. It is said that the word from the KJV “whosoever” proves that people have free will and are able to believe in God from their own free will. But is that what it means? According to thecalvinist.net and Abarim Publication’s free online interlinear Greek/English New Testament, the Greek under “whosoever” is *πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων* (*pas ha pistuwon*), which, literally translated means “all the believing” or “everyone believing.” This verse therefore supports LIMITED ATONEMENT. The verse states that God loved the world (particular people from every tribe, nation, language, etc.) by giving His Son so that “all the believing” should not perish. This clarifies our understanding of the word “world” in the present context. God’s purpose was to give eternal life to “all the believing”. How does it make any sense to say that the motivation for His giving was His love for all people without exception if His purpose is limited to “all the believing?” Tying it all together, the message of John

3:16 and Romans 5:8 indicate God so loved the world (specific people from everywhere) that He demonstrated His love for us in giving His Son to die for us while we were yet sinners, so that all the believing (remember, belief is a gift for His elected) will not perish but have eternal life.

-The Bible DOES have clear passages indicating God's desire for all men to be saved, though. So, why aren't they? Why doesn't God choose to save everyone dead in sin?

1 Timothy 2:3-4 expressly states, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." According to John Piper, it is possible that careful interpretation of this passage would lead us to believe that God's desire for all people to be saved does not refer to every individual person in the world, but rather to all SORTS of people, since "all people" in verse 1 may well mean groups such as "kings and all who are in high positions" (verse 2). Still, other texts indicate God desires everyone to be saved (see Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11, and Matthew 23:37). In some inscrutable sense, God's DESIRE for the world's salvation is different from His eternal saving PURPOSE. It may be a hard truth for some, but God's will/desire to save all people is restrained by His supreme commitment or purpose to uphold and display the full range of His glory.

Let's explain. Taken from Gracetoyou.org, "We can understand this (God's desire being restrained by His higher purpose) to some degree from a human perspective; after all, our purposes frequently differ from our desires. We may DESIRE, for example, to spend a day at leisure, yet a higher PURPOSE compels us to go to work instead. Similarly, God's saving purposes transcend His desires. (There is a crucial difference, of course: We might be compelled by circumstances beyond our control to choose what we do not desire. But God's choices are determined by nothing other than His own sovereign, eternal

purpose). God genuinely **desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.** When God **desires all men to be saved,** He is being consistent with who He is. In Isaiah 45:22 God said, ‘Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth.’ Isaiah 55:1 invites ‘every one who thirsts’ to ‘come to the waters’ of salvation. Again, in Ezekiel 18:23, 32, God states very clearly that He does not desire that the wicked should perish, but that they would sincerely repent (Ezekiel 33:11).”

Yet passages such as Romans 9:22-23 state, “What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with great patience objects of wrath prepared for destruction? And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon objects of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory...” God’s will/desire to save all people already fallen and dead in sin, therefore, is restrained by His purpose in exalting His sovereign grace (see also Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14). Though it does not please Him, and it may be a hard truth for some to accept, God will receive glory even in His just damnation of sinners not elected to be shown grace (Romans 9:22-23). His plan from all eternity was to magnify His glory in creation and redemption. He aimed to make the glory of His grace the highest revelation of Himself (Ephesians 1:6). To that end, He sent His Son into this creation and made Christ-crucified for sinners and conquering death-the climax of the display of the glory of His grace. Scripture teaches God does not take pleasure in the damnation of the wicked-He desires everyone to be saved. But they also teach that God’s purpose for creation and redeeming it is for His glory. The wicked passed over will be justly condemned to show His power-for His glory. But they also teach the great truth that God has elected sinners from fallen mankind to show grace to and justified and saved them before the world began through Christ-for His glory. God is patient towards the wicked. But He will show His wrath towards the wicked to make His power known and to show the riches of His grace on those to whom He has

chosen to show mercy, to His glory (Romans 9:22-23). You don't know the richness of God's grace until you understand the depth of His wrath against wickedness; so, too, can you not understand the full range of His glory without both extremes.

- Revelation 13:8: "All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain."
- Ephesians 1:3-4: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him..."

**3. When Christ died, He did not die for all sinners, but for those the Father elected and Gave Him (John 10:25-29). In addition to purchasing the redemption of the elected to be justified through Christ, lest any man should boast, God also gifts the means of surety for salvation in supplying sanctification through the Holy Spirit, repentance, faith, and even belief itself.**

- **Repentance:**

-Acts 5:31: "He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."

-Acts 11:18: "When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, 'Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.'"

-2 Timothy 2:25: "...with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth..."

- **Faith:**

-Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."

-2 Peter 1:3: "Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and

Savior, Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.”

- **Belief:**

-Philippians 1:29: “For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake...”

- **Sanctification:**

-1 Peter 5:10: “After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.”

-2 Thessalonians 2:13-14: “But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

-Acts 26:18: “...to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.”

**Note:** This may explain why Jesus said it is best He go away, so that the Advocate, or Comforter, would come (John 16:7). Hebrews 11:1 says, “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” If He remained, there would be no reason for faith, as He would still be seen. The Holy Spirit witnesses to us via faith to give us comfort as to our sure justification and sanctifies us through the same (1 Corinthians 6:11, Galatians 5:5, 1 Peter 1:2, 2 Thessalonians 2:13). Christ going allows the Holy Spirit to be IN us, sanctifying and comforting us from within via faith gifted from our sure justification as elected by God, purchased by Christ. An example of this process of sanctification is found in 1 John 4:11-19:

“Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. We love because He first loved us.” That last verse, “we love because He first loved us”, by the way, only makes sense if we are elected by God to be justified and gifted faith, not if our salvation is secured by an act of faith on our part, for we cannot choose to love God as sinners dead in sin. His gifting us the Holy Spirit as a result of loving us and choosing to justify us so much as to send His Son to die for our sins is what allows us to love Him! Romans 8:28 affirms that we love because we are called by Him: “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”

#### **4. If God secures our justification wholly, then why not sin as we please?**

- If you misunderstand or believe it is YOUR act of faith that secures your salvation, you may be tempted to ask this. Let me explain: the person elected by God and GIFTED the Holy Spirit will increasingly not desire to do evil. Those who belong to Jesus crucify the desires of their sinful nature to His cross. That is not to say there won't be times when we sin—we will. But God has gifted His elect sanctification through the Holy Spirit, which continually works to conform us to the image of Christ. It is a sure thing. Contrarily, if you believe it is an act of your faith that

secures your salvation, then the surety of the Holy Spirit working in you to sanctify you is tenuous and contingent on your fallible faith. So, it is not so much a question of, “why not sin as we please?”, but more a fact that those whom God has chosen to justify receive the gift of sanctification through the Holy Spirit and are continually being conformed to the image of Christ. Those who belong to Christ Jesus ask less as to the license to sin and focus more on being led by the Holy Spirit and the freedom found therein. They focus less on the matter of keeping or not keeping the Law, and more on faith working through love. They increasingly express the image of Christ, not that of their sinful nature as the Holy Spirit sanctifies them- this is a sign and result of being elected. “Why not sin as we please?” seeks to use God’s grace as license to sin and indicates a lack of the gift of the Holy Spirit sanctifying the person. Those who act in accordance to sin will not inherit the Kingdom of God. Those that do inherit the Kingdom of God are those who have been sanctified: justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Holy Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit does not seek to sin.

-Galatians 5:5-6: “For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.”

-Galatians 5:16-26: “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience,

kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.”

-Romans 8:29: “For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren...”

-1 Corinthians 6: 9-11: “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.”

##### **5. Wouldn't “being chosen” create pride?**

- Keeping in mind the aforementioned discussion in point four (that if we are indeed chosen, the fruit/evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit in us conforms us to the image of Christ and would thus preclude pride), we must remember that we were dead in sin, completely unable to save ourselves. There is no reason beyond God's grace that we were chosen to be justified. And there is nothing on our part that makes us justified-it is entirely the work of God through Christ and the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, so that we may not boast! This is HUMBLING, not exalting!

##### **6. Is there injustice on God's part in electing to justify those whom He chooses from fallen mankind? By no means!**

- Romans 9:10-24: “And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; for though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to His choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls, it was said to her, ‘the older will serve the younger.’ Just as it is written, ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.’ What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! 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 does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, ‘for this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth.’ So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires. You will say to me then, ‘Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?’ On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, ‘Why did you make me like this, will it?’ Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use? What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.”
- It is important to remember that God says He hates evildoers (Psalm 5:5-6, 10:5; Leviticus 20:23). Still, God is good even to His enemies, and extends mercy and kindness generally to all until final judgement (Luke 6:35; Psalm 145:9; Matthew 12:36-37). While we may debate how God hates and what does it mean for God to hate, one thing is certain: it demonstrates that God does not love everybody equally.

The unrestricted glorious, gracious and redemptive love of God is restricted in Christ and to those who are His (Romans 8:39).

-In the words of Wade Burleson, “God decrees to save sinners, not damn innocent people.” Therefore, God is just to condemn those He has not elected to justify from fallen mankind. But to those He does, how great is that grace!

In summary, God, being eternal, knew all would sin-all mankind would fall. All have sinned and none can seek God or even desire to seek God; none can do good. Yet, from eternity (as God is eternal), God has elected a people for Himself-whom He loves-to have mercy upon, to show grace towards, and to justify. Christ’s sacrifice was necessary to redeem those whom God elected to be justified, and this proves just how righteous God is in His love, mercy, grace, and justice. Christ purchased the salvation/redemption of the elect chosen by God the Father to justify us, and the Father thus also gifts us the means of the surety of our salvation-repentance, faith, belief, and sanctification through the work of the Holy Spirit. The entirety of the justification, salvation, and sanctification of God’s elect is solely by and through the godhead in three persons: God justifies, Christ redeems, and the Spirit sanctifies through the gifts given to the elected justified and redeemed. Those gifted the sanctification through the work of the Spirit are continually conformed to the image of Christ and will produce fruit accordingly. God remains just in condemning those He did not elect, for they remain dead in their sin. But for those that are gifted belief, the reward is life eternal with Christ, to the glory of His grace.

**God alone, through Christ alone, through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit alone.**

Romans 5:8 says, “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” **THAT is grace from eternity.**

