

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Ephesians 1:4-6

Lesson #3

Predestination

08/13/2017

Identity in *Action*

EPHESIANS

A STUDY THROUGH THE EPISTLE OF EPHESIANS

1

Ephesians 1

“⁴ just as He **chose (elected)** us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love. ⁵ He **predestined** us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.”

This raises some questions:

- Does God choose us or do we choose God?
- Is our response to the Gospel predestined?



2

Points of tension



1. O.T. hope vs. **N.T. hope**
2. Divine sovereignty vs. **human freedom**

3

Major texts used to support “unconditional election” of individuals to salvation:

John 6:44

“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him,”

Romans 9:16

“So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.”

Ephesians 1:4

“He chose us in him before the foundation of the world.”

4

Major texts used to support “unconditional election” of individuals to salvation are open to **differing interpretations.**

John 6:44 (the remnant of Israel)

“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him,”

Romans 9:16 (Jew and Gentile)

“So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.”

Ephesians 1:4 (in Christ the elect)

“He chose us in him before the foundation of the world.”

5

Some Christians believe and teach that

Election is individual and unconditional.

Step #1	Step #2	Step #3	Step #4
God sovereignly & unconditionally chooses who will be saved.	Christ is sent to redeem only the elect (those God has chosen) .	The Spirit is sent to convict and give new birth to the elect.	The elect are identified by faith and obedience.
Eternity past	1st century	Pre conversion	Post conversion

They believe that “This is the ONLY narrative that fully respects God’s GLORY and GRACE!”

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Some concerns with this teaching

- Does the Scriptural picture of God **emphasize** His sovereign CONTROL or His loving COMPASSION?
- Are the **implications** consistent with God’s JUSTICE, MERCY, & LOVE.
- Does the Scripture **clearly** teach this?
- What does **Jesus** display?



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Other Christians believe and teach that

Election is corporate and conditional.

Step #1	Step #2	Step #3	Step #4
God’s chooses Christ and (all who would believe in him)	Christ is sent to redeem the sins of all humanity.	The Spirit is sent to convict the world of its need for Christ.	All who believe are justified by being united with (in) Christ
Eternity past	1st century	Pre conversion	At conversion

They believe that “This is the ONLY narrative that fully respects God’s LOVE and JUSTICE!”

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Two ways of reading vs.4

*He chose us **TO BE** in him (**BEFORE** we believed).*

“just as **He chose us** in Him **before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love.”

*He chose us **WITH** him (**WHEN** we believed).*

“just as He chose us **in Him** before the foundation of the world, **that we should be holy and blameless before Him** in love.”

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Ephesians 1

“4 just as He **chose** us **in Him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love. 5 He **predestined** us to adoption as sons **through Jesus Christ** to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us **in the Beloved**.”

Note the link to “In Christ”

- The theme of Ephesians and Colossians is the **supremacy of Christ** (not the sovereignty of God).



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Note the stated purpose:

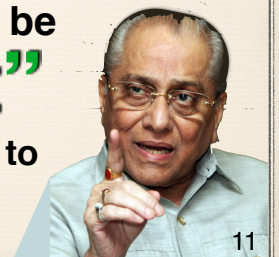
- We have been chosen for **holiness** and predestined to **adoption**. (not faith)

The real question:

What does it mean to be

“in Christ”

(not how did we come to be “in Christ.”)



11

Looking ahead in Ephesians 1

What does it mean to be “in Christ”?

- You are chosen to be **holy**.
- You are predestined to **adoption**.
- You are **redeemed** from your sins.
- You are **made aware** of God’s will.
- You have an **inheritance**.
- You are **sealed** with the Holy Spirit.

12

And how does a person come to be “in Christ” - by election or by faith?

Ephesians 1

“¹³ In Him, you also, **after listening** to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, **and believing** you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is given as a pledge of our inheritance,”

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And how does a person come to be “in Christ” - by election or by faith?

Colossians 2:6

“⁶ Therefore as you **have received Christ Jesus** the Lord, so walk in him, . . . ,¹² . . . you were also raised up with him **through faith**”

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And how does a person come to be “in Christ” - by election or by faith?

- By **faith** in Christ.
- By **repentance** from hope in anything other than Christ.
- By the **indwelling** of the Spirit of Christ.

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1 Corinthians 15:22

“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.”



Ephesians 1:4-6

Interpretive Paraphrase taking into account the opening words of Colossians.

“From the very beginning God had planned for us to share His nature and showcase His grace and love to the world. His chosen Son is the key to this plan. And we were included with him through adoption when we believed. This is a testimony to God’s grace.”

17

Jesus is the chosen one

Isaiah 49:5

"And now says the Lord, who formed me from the womb to be **His Servant**, to bring Jacob back to Him, so that **Israel might be gathered to him.**"

Isaiah 42:1

"Behold, **My Servant**, whom I uphold; My **chosen** one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations."

Luke 9:35

"This is My Son, My **chosen** one;"

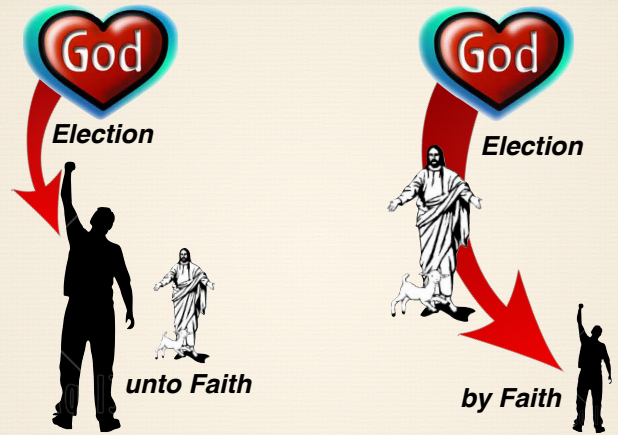
1 Peter 2:4

"And coming to him as to a living stone which has before the foundation of been rejected by men, but the world, but has is **chosen** and precious in the sight of God,"

1 Peter 1:20

"For he was **foreknown** before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you."

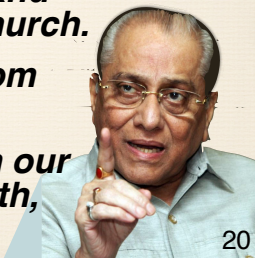
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The chosen (elect)

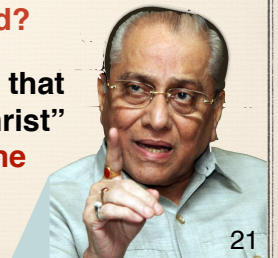
1. **Jesus** is the chosen (elected) one.
2. Believers are **corporately elect** as the body of Christ (the church).
3. Individuals are elect **as they receive Christ by faith** and become a part of the church.
4. This was **God's plan** from before creation.
5. Salvation is focused on our **union with Christ** by faith, not individual election.



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Take home

1. **Predestination to sanctification** (not salvation) is being addressed in Eph.1:4-6.
2. We are united "in Christ" through faith. The subject at hand is - **What does that union consist of and what are its implications going forward?**
3. In Ephesians one we learn that God has chosen us "in Christ" to be like him - **radiating the light of his love.**



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Philippians 2:15

"that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, **shining as stars,**"

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Our purpose in life is to be true to ourselves as image bearers of God.

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