

WHEN ARE INDIVIDUALS CALLED, DRAWN AND CHOSEN BY GOD?

THE BIBLE IS A BOOK FOR ANY AND ALL INDIVIDUALS

The teaching that the Bible is not a book for those individuals who are not presently Christians is without basis. In fact, William Tyndale would have strongly disagreed with such a view because he died as a result of getting the Bible translated into the language that, as he famously said, “any ploughboy could understand.” So although the Hebrew Scriptures were written to and for Israel anyone of the Gentiles was invited to become a proselyte so that they, too, would become as Israelites and treat the Hebrew Scriptures as written for them also.

It is a fact that the letters of the Christian Scriptures were written specifically to the “holy ones” – the saints. Yet this does not mean that anyone else could not start to read the Bible and begin to understand it to some extent and be drawn to its message. Because Christ died for everyone, everyone is invited to benefit from his sacrifice. Some would respond and some would reject this offer. Indeed, one would not have to have been predestined before birth for this to happen, as we shall see later in this study. The key to our understanding is the fact that God has created humans with genuine free will. (Please see Volume 2, STUDY 10 ‘THE BIBLE TEACHES HUMAN GENUINE FREE WILL’).

THE HIGH QUALITY CALLING ENCOMPASSES ALL RACES

- ❖ “I press on toward the prize of the **high calling** of God...” (*Phil. 3:14*).
- ❖ “...you who share in a **heavenly calling**...” (*Heb. 3:1*).
- ❖ “His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who **called us by glory and virtue**” (*2 Pet. 1:3*).
- ❖ “...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...” (*2 Tim. 1:9*).
- ❖ “For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in **holiness**” (*1 Thess. 4:7*).

FOR ALL RACES

- ❖ “...even us whom he has **called**, not from the **Jews** only but also from the **Gentiles**?” (*Rom. 9:24*).
- ❖ “...but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (*1 Cor. 1:24*).

EVERYONE IS BEING CALLED TO REPENT NOW AND THEREFORE CALLED TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

Key Text — *Acts 17:30*

“...but now he [*God*] commands **all people everywhere to repent**”

Biblical repentance concerns the changing of one’s mindset **specifically in reference to the gospel of the Kingdom of God** (Mark 1:15, Matt. 4:17). So everyone who comes into contact with the gospel must respond with repentance by believing “in the gospel.” This is their being “called” – irrespective of how they respond.

So every person since the 1st century is invited or called to become a Christian – there are no exceptions. However, just because all are called does not mean that all will respond favourably. We might illustrate this with the idea that when a host calls the guests in for dinner only two respond positively, but the rest don’t respond because they are too busy with other things. The fact is they have

all been called. This is very similar to two of Jesus' banquet illustrations which indicate that the invitation or calling is made to all and that not all will accept the invitation or summoning to attend.

THE PARABLE OF THE GREAT BANQUET

❖ “But he said to him, ‘A man once gave a great banquet and **invited** (Gk. *kaleo*) **many** (see NOTE 2). And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to **those who had been invited**, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ But they all alike began to make **excuses** ...” So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and **bring in the poor** and crippled and blind and lame.’ And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges and **compel people to come in**, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, **none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet**” (Luke 14:16-18, 21-24).

NOTE 1: The word “called” in Greek is *kaleo*. This also means “invited” or “summoned.”

NOTE 2: The word “many” is a Semitism for “all” (see Word Biblical Commentary quotation below) or “multitudes” (See Daniel 12:2 in the NIV).

THE PARABLE OF THE WEDDING FEAST

❖ “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants **to call** (Gk. *kaleo*) those who were **invited** (from *kaleo*) to the wedding feast, but they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are **invited**, See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.’ *But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them.* The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but **those invited were not worthy**. Go therefore to the main roads and **invite to the wedding feast as many as you find**.’ And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, **both bad and good**. So the wedding hall was filled with guests. “But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For **many are called, but few are chosen**”” (Matt. 22:2-14).

When Jesus says “**many are called** (*invited*) but **few are chosen**.” he must mean that all are called because in John 12:32 we learn that he “will draw **all** men to” himself. So the *Word Biblical Commentary* notes regarding this parable:

14 This final logion ties in well with the preceding and especially the parable of vv 1–10. In πολλοί; γάρ εἰσιν κλητοί, “**for many are called**,” the πολλοί is probably to be taken as a **universalizing Semitism**, which can be translated “**everyone**” (cf. the same word in the same sense in 20:28; see J. Jeremias, *TDNT* 6:541–42). Thus in keeping with the opening of the **invitation to all**, “as many as you find” (v. 9), the point is that “**everyone is invited**.” Counterbalancing this, however, is the second half of the logion, ὀλίγοι δὲ ἐκλεκτοί, “**but few are chosen**.” The word ὀλίγοι, “few,” is here very probably also to be understood as a **Semitism** meaning “**fewer than**” in the sense of “not all.” The term does **not indicate the smallness** of the actual number of the chosen but merely that *in contrast to the scope of the call not all are chosen* (see esp. B. F. Meyer). The notion of election here works together with, rather than against, the reality of human responsibility constantly before the reader of Matthew. The mystery of election has already been presented in 11:27. The word οἱ ἐκλεκτοί, “**the elect**,” becomes

in 24:22, 24, 31 shorthand for the disciples of Christ. The statement here that only some are the “elect” describes from the divine perspective something very well known to Matthew’s readers: that not all are receptive to Jesus and his message and not all bring forth the righteousness of the kingdom (cf. 7:13–14). Tragically, the people who had long been known by the adjective “chosen” lose their privilege through their unresponsiveness to the invitation. Their chosenness was in the final analysis a calling—a calling to which finally they were not true. A similar distinction between the saved and the lost is found in 2 Esdr 8:3, 41.

This final parable of the series of three focuses on the general unresponsiveness of the people of Israel generally and not merely the leadership of Israel. Ironically, the “chosen people” show in their refusal of the invitation that they **are not all among the “elect”** but **only among the “called.”** Those initially invited are accordingly designated as “not worthy,” and the invitation is broadened to include all, the “bad” as well as the “good,” and by implication, finally, Gentiles as well as Jews. Those who would come must nevertheless respond appropriately, i.e., in a discipleship that produces the righteousness of the kingdom. In the end, **although all are invited, not all will show themselves to be truly among the “elect.”** The pericope thus contains not only the good news of an open, rather than a restricted, invitation but also the sobering reminder of the seriousness of discipleship for those who respond. Matthew never tires of the theme of the righteousness of this discipleship—that of the kingdom of God. It constitutes a dividing point for all humanity and is the sole demonstrating criterion for membership among the elect.

“THE WORD” IS THE MEANS USED FOR THE CALLING/INVITATION

- ❖ “So *faith* comes from hearing, and *hearing* by **the word of Christ**” (*Rom. 10:17*).
- ❖ “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who *hears my word*, and *believes* Him who sent me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgement, but has passed out of death into life” (*John 5:24*).
- ❖ “...God from the beginning **chose you for salvation** through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which **He called you by our gospel**, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (*2 Thess. 2:13-14*).

THE FOUR TYPES OF RESPONSE TO THE CALLING

NOT ALL “THE CALLED” BECOME OR REMAIN “THE CHOSEN”

Below, in Matthew 13:18-23, is given Jesus’ explanation of the parable of the sower and the four kinds of soil: “Hear then the parable of the sower:

1. ‘when anyone hears **the word of the kingdom** and does **not understand it**, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside **the road**.

Such understanding is not based on intelligence or lack of intelligence.

2. The one on whom **seed** was sown on the **rocky places**, this is the man who hears the word and immediately **receives it** with joy; yet he **has no firm root** in himself, but is only temporary, and when **affliction or persecution arises** because of the word, immediately *he falls away*.

3. And the one on whom seed was sown among **the thorns**, this is the man who hears the word, and **the worry of the world** and the deceitfulness of wealth **choke** the word, and *it becomes unfruitful*.

4. And the one on whom seed was sown on *the good soil*, this is the man who hears the word and *understands it*; who indeed *bears fruit* and brings forth, some a hundred fold, some sixty, and some thirty.”

This parable gives 3 key factors:

- The sower = Jesus
- The seed = the word of the kingdom
- The soil = each individual and their various responses

As noted in the earlier verses of the parable “the word” is “*the word of the kingdom.*” Also according to 1Peter 1:25: “this is ***the word which was preached to you***”. So “the word” is the specific message that Jesus preached of the coming Kingdom—the good news of the kingdom of God (Mark 1:15, Luke 4:43). So the parable of the soils is an additional demonstration that there is a calling or invitation made to all people. Yet the majority fail, over the long term, to become or remain as “the chosen”

ANYONE WILLING TO HEAR GOD WILL BE DRAWN BY HIM

The Greek word ***Helkuo*** = *to draw, lead or impel; yet not implying anything compulsory.*

❖ “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me **draws** (*helkuo*) him...” (*John 6:44*).

*All such drawing is done through the Scriptures because: “It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has **heard and learned from the Father** comes to me...” (*John 6:45*). So the *Word Biblical Commentary* notes that:*

44...only they whom the Father “draws” can come to him; in them the promise of Isa 54:13 is fulfilled—they are “taught of God.” This leads Bultmann to interpret the “drawing” by God as taking place **when man abandons his own judgment and “hears” and “learns” from the Father**, and so *allows* God to speak to him: “The ‘drawing’ by the Father occurs not, as it were, *behind* man’s decision of faith, but in it” (232). Like the related Jer. 31:34, the quoted prophecy relates to the knowledge of God in the last days. They have arrived! Those who listen to the Father “come” to the Son, since he, and he alone, has seen the Father (1:18).

THE INDIVIDUAL SEEKS GOD—THEN JESUS DRAWS HIM

❖ “...and I [*Jesus*], when I am lifted up from the Earth will draw **all** men to myself” (*John 12:32*).

❖ “...whoever would **draw near to** God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who **seek him**” (*Heb. 11:6*).

Yet scripturally not all men will be finally saved as in the false teaching of Universalism. (Please see Volume 2, STUDY 4). However, God and Christ “draw” individuals toward them by the invitations made in the Scriptures, but this is a far cry from any forcing of individuals. *Furthermore, this is not an irresistible drawing of only particular individuals because Jesus said that he would draw all men to him (John 12:32).*

THOSE FOR WHOM THE “CALL” WAS EFFECTIVE AND THOSE FOR WHOM THE “CALL” WAS INEFFECTIVE

Although in some cases *kaleo* is used in reference for some to be engaged in a particular work (Acts 13:2, Rom. 1:1), most usages refer to the call that has gone out for people to become Christians. So this is where **the calling has become effective** in contrast to those for whom the call failed to materialize as with the type of person represented by the “road” on which the first seed was scattered as Jesus explained: *‘when anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road.’* (*Matthew 13:19*). So the seed was sown - this person had still received the call. However, for the other three types of person in Jesus illustration the call was effective, either for a while, or permanently. So all of the passages given next concern specifically **the effective or effectual call** because these ones responded positively:

CALLED/INVITED OUT OF THE WORLD

- ❖ "...him who **called** (kaleo) **you out of darkness** into his marvellous light" (*1 Pet. 2: 9b*).
- ❖ "So, brothers, in whatever condition **each was called**, there let him remain with God" (*1 Cor. 7:24*).

CALLED/INVITED TO BE CHRISTIANS

- ❖ "To **those who are called**, beloved in God the Father and **kept for Jesus Christ...**" (*Jude 1*).
- ❖ "God is faithful, by whom you were **called into the fellowship** of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord"
(*1 Cor. 1:9*).
- ❖ "...including you who are also **called to belong to Jesus Christ**. To all who are in Rome, loved by God, **called to be saints**" (*Rom. 1:6-7*).
- ❖ "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were **called in one hope** of your calling" (*Eph 4:4*).
- ❖ "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were **called in one body**; and be thankful" (*Col 3:15*).
- ❖ "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting **him who called you** in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel..." (*Gal. 1:6*).
- ❖ "But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you" (*1 Pet. 5:10*).

So it is Christians who are designated, in these Scriptures, as "the called" because they have responded positively to the invitation. Theirs is **an effective calling**; whereas for others it proved to be an ineffective calling. As they remain faithful they are also described as "chosen."

- ❖ "...for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful"
(*Rev.17:14b*).

THE PURPOSE OF THE CALLING/INVITATION

- ❖ "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" (*Rom. 8:28-30*).
- ❖ "Only let each person **lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him**, and to which **God has called him**. This is my rule in all the churches" (*1 Cor. 7:17*).
- ❖ "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to **walk in a manner worthy of the calling** to which you have been called..." (*Eph. 4:1*).
- ❖ "...but as he who **called you** is holy, **you also be holy** in all your conduct..." (*1 Pet. 1:15*).
- ❖ "For **to this you have been called**, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you **might follow in his steps**" (*1 Pet. 2:21*).
- ❖ "...having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is **the hope to which he has called you**, what are the riches of his glorious **inheritance** in the saints..." (*Eph. 1:18*).
- ❖ "Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that **those who are called** may receive the promised eternal **inheritance**, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant" (*Heb. 9:15*).

ANYONE WILLING TO HEAR GOD CAN CHOOSE TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

- ❖ “God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him” (Acts 10:34).
- ❖ “If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me”
(Mark 8:34).
- ❖ “If anyone’s will is to do God’s will, he will know whether the teaching is from God...” (John 7:17
ESV).
- ❖ “...all who did receive him [Jesus], who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children
of God” (John 1:12).

ANYONE CAN CHOOSE NOT TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

- ❖ “...since you repudiate it [the word] and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are
turning to the Gentiles” (Acts 13:46).

So the teaching that, before the foundation of the world, God chose, from the whole human race, an
unstated number of particular individuals for redemption through Christ cannot be true.

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS AND THE RICH MAN

- ❖ “And behold, a man came up to him, saying, ‘Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal
life?’ And he said to him, ‘Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good.
If you would enter life, keep the commandments.’ He said to him, ‘Which ones?’” (Matt. 19:16-18).

Jesus did not say to this man: “well you haven’t been predestined as a chosen one so your question is
pointless,” but rather he tried to guide him into the course that would get him life in the coming age.
However, what is meant when the Scriptures speak of God’s “drawing” and “choosing” of individuals?
Can the individual resist God’s efforts?

THE CALLING AND DRAWING OF A CHRISTIAN IS NOT IRREVOKABLE OR IRRESISTIBLE

GOD’S OVERALL PURPOSE IS IRREVOKABLE AND CANNOT BE RESISTED

- ❖ “...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**”
(Rom. 9:11).

Here God’s calling is in connection with Israel for the furthering of His overall purposes. When verse
13 speaks of Jacob and Esau it is a reference to the nations that descended from them. So when Paul
talks of God’s irresistible will it is not about individuals:

- ❖ “You will say to me then, ‘why does He still find fault? (*in rejecting unbelieving Israelites*). For
who **resists His will?**’” (Rom. 9:19).

God’s “will” was **to bring the people of Israel out of Egypt**. It was this “will” that could not be
resisted by Pharaoh’s empire (vss. 17, 18) and makes the calling irrevocable:

- ❖ “For the gifts and the **calling** of God [*His overall purpose*] are **irrevocable**” (Rom 11:29)
This text refers to God’s irrevocable decree for the future salvation of “all Israel” (vs. 26). So, neither
of these texts refers to the calling or drawing of Christians either individually or corporately.

GOD DOES NOT FORCE ANYONE

- ❖ “Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s **kindness** is meant to **lead you** to repentance?” (*Rom. 2:4*).
- What would be the point of God exercising patience and forbearance with individuals if he is really forcing them to repent so that they may be saved.*

INDIVIDUALS CAN RESIST GOD’S WILL FOR THEIR SALVATION

This is just as many of the Israelites did in their rejection of the Messiah. God does not force anyone to become a Christian:

- ❖ “Yet **you refuse** to come to me that you may have life” (*John 5:40*).
- ❖ “You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears **always resisting the Holy Spirit**; you are doing just as your fathers did” (*Acts 7:51*).
- ❖ “But the Pharisees and the lawyers **rejected God’s purpose for themselves**, not having been baptized by John” (*Luke 7:30*).

This refusal and rejection would not be the case if such ones were irresistibly drawn. Some who have allowed themselves to be drawn may later draw back (*Heb. 10:38, 39*). Judas Iscariot was an example of this. So, as with *Romans 9:18*, verse 19 and *11:29* in no way provide any proof that humans do not have genuine free will as predestinarians would propose.

GOD CHOOSES THE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE BEEN
DRAWN BY HIM THROUGH JESUS

- ❖ “For we know, brothers loved by God, that **he has chosen you**” (*1Thess. 1:4*).
- ❖ “So I am willing to endure anything if it will bring salvation and eternal glory in Christ Jesus to **those God has chosen**” (*2 Tim. 2:10 NLT*).

WHEN IS THE CHRISTIAN CHOSEN?

From the above information it is clear that God makes available the kingdom message in His calling of all men. Those who **abandon their own judgment and “hear” and “learn” from the Father** are then drawn by Him to Jesus with Jesus himself also drawing them to himself. Because of their positive response these ones are then deemed to be chosen ones. They publically demonstrate this new position by undergoing water baptism.

CHOSEN IN JESUS’ LIFETIME NOT IN ETERNITY

- ❖ “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 15:19*).
 - ❖ “It is the same today, for a few of the people of Israel have remained faithful because of God’s grace—his undeserved kindness in **choosing them** ... So this is the situation: Most of the people of Israel have not found the favor of God they are looking for so earnestly. A few have—**the ones God has chosen**—but the hearts of the rest were hardened” (*Rom. 11:5, 7 NLT*).
- So this choosing by God is within the lifetimes of these faithful Jewish Christians.*

THE CHRISTIAN IS GIVEN TO JESUS BY GOD

The Greek word *Didomai* = to grant, give to one asking, let have:

- ❖ “All that the Father **gives** (*didomai*) to me will come to me...No one can come to me unless it is **granted** (*didomai*) him by the Father” (*John 6:37, 65*).

This is a very different aspect of God's work than is the calling of all men. This concerns those who have responded to God's love and are now given to Jesus. All of these factors still allow complete free will for the individual. No one is force-fed "the bread of life." On other occasions *didomai* is used to indicate something given by God which may or may not be received—He simply gives the opportunity. This makes men responsible for making their own choice as to how to respond. Certainly salvation is not something that anyone can demand—God is the One who gives it.

THE PROCESS OF CHOOSING INDIVIDUALS

- ❖ "For those whom he **foreknew**, He also **predestined** to become conformed to the image of His Son...and these whom He **predestined**, He also **called**; and these whom he called, He also **justified**; and these whom He justified, He also **glorified**" (*Rom. 8:29, 30*).

Therefore one is, only within the body of Christ, **predestined** to be **called** to become **conformed to the image of His Son** and not predestined to a final destiny. The predestination simply ensures that that will happen. It is not the result of God's sovereign will regarding any one individual from eternity, but of his foreknowledge of *a living individual* so as to predestine him to be called to become **conformed to the image of His Son**. Verse 28 shows that the context is with reference to "*those who love God*" They are therefore *living persons*. Verse 27 states that God is "*He who searches the hearts*" Why? If they are individually foreknown from eternity there would be no need to search hearts. Hence, God foreknew that *some men* would love Him; but He would have to search hearts to determine who particularly would become conformed to the image of His Son. Therefore they would have to be *living people* at the time they were predestined and called to such conformity.

CHOOSING OF THE BODY OF CHRIST IS NOT OF INDIVIDUALS

- ❖ "He **chose us in him** (whoever comes to be within the body) **before the foundation of the world**, that we would be *holy and blameless*...He **predestined** us to adoption as **sons through Jesus Christ** to Himself, according to the kind **intention of His will**...also we have obtained an inheritance, having been **predestined** according to his purpose who works all things after the counsel of his will" (*Eph. 1:4, 5, 11*).

Throughout Ephesians the individual believer gains blessings only because of his being a member of the body, the corporate group i.e. "*in Christ*", "*in him*" (verses 1 and 4). This is further shown in Ephesians 5:27 which says: "*that he might present to himself the church...holy and blameless.*" Such predestination to **adoption of particular individuals** comes "*through Jesus Christ*" that is through the **agency** of Jesus and therefore not "*before the foundation of the world*" as is the case with the corporate body of Christ because:

- ❖ "...you have been marked with the seal of the holy Spirit that was promised, which is **the guarantee** of our inheritance" (*Eph. 1:13, 14 S&G*). *Also see ESV*.

If one is predestined from eternity what point would there be in having a **guarantee**. So the Calvinist teaching blasphemously degrades the work of God's spirit.

NOT A PREDESTINED CALLING AND CHOOSING OF INDIVIDUALS

- ❖ "...be all the more diligent to *make certain about His calling and choosing you*; for as long as you practice these things you will *never stumble*" (*2 Pet. 1:10*).

Being called by God is simply the invitation by God because He has provided the atoning sacrifice and made available the Gospel of the **Kingdom message**. A number of parables show this calling to be a

bona fide invitation e.g. the parable of the invitation to the Great Banquet (Luke 14:15-24). The individual must then remain faithful so as to stay as one of “the chosen ones.”

THE CORPORATE CHOOSING OF “THE ISRAEL OF GOD”

Many translations use the words “elect,” “election,” “elected,” and “elect’s” in reference to “the chosen ones.” These terms occur 27 times in the Bible. However, the Scriptures never use these words in reference to a select group of particular individuals who alone have been unconditionally predestined as individuals to be saved. The “chosen ones” are those only within the context of **CORPORATE CHOOSING** or election of “the Israel of God.” They are those who, by faith, come to be **in “the body of Christ.”** They are “in him” (Eph: 1:4) and as branches must remain attached to the true vine (John 15:4, 5):

- ❖ “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 marvellous light”
(1 Pet. 2:9).

ELECTION/CHOOSING IS TO SERVICE

Individuals are chosen to fulfil responsibilities and a course of life to which they were called. They remain “chosen” only as they stay within “the body of Christ” with the predestined goal of **becoming conformed to his image**:

- ❖ “...in order that God’s purpose of **election** might continue...” (Rom. 9:11 ESV).
- ❖ “...so that God’s purpose according to His choice might stand” (Rom. 9:11 NASB).
- ❖ “So too at the present time there is a remnant, **chosen** by grace (according to the election of grace - KJV)” (Rom. 11:5 ESV).
- ❖ “For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has **chosen** you (your election of God – KJV), because our gospel came to you...” (1 Thess. 1:4 ESV).
- ❖ “Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and **election** sure...”
(2 Pet. 1:10 ESV).

If election is to salvation by irresistible grace without any choice on the part of the individual, it would be impossible for one to be sure of actual election.

IF PREDESTINATION OF PARTICULAR INDIVIDUALS TO SALVATION
WERE TRUE THEN:

- The many appeals made by God to respond to Him would be meaningless.
- There would be no point in God having provided the Bible for our guidance.
- There would be no point in God having provided the “word” kingdom message to invite and draw individuals to him.
- There would be no point in any Christian following the scriptural admonition to preach.
- What would be the point of God establishing standards of conduct for the Christian if he were already chosen before creation.
- If individuals were individually chosen as Christians “before the founding of the world” they could never fall away. Yet, the Scriptures show that some did fall away and it gives warnings to stay strong so that one would not fall away.

- Why does God not judge us until He has seen how we judge others? “Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge **you will be judged**; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you” (*Matt. 7:1, 2*).

Therefore there can be no predestination from eternity for individual salvation.

CONCLUSION

Acts 17:30:

“...but now he [*God*] commands **all people everywhere to repent.**”

The calling is by means of the message of the kingdom contained in the Holy Scriptures and by means of those who would take this message to them. By this means God patiently attempts to draw them to him—He invites them. Many will reject these attempts to draw them and so not all who were called will respond positively. The ones who **let God draw them** then become “the called and chosen and faithful” (Rev. 17:14b) simply meaning that they “belong to Christ” i.e. they are Christians. To continue as “chosen ones” they **must remain in the body of Christ** by **faithfully** living the Christian life that they were called or invited to, drawn to and are now chosen for.

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