

Ephesians 1:4 (NIV) says,

“For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will.”

This verse reveals the profound truth of divine election that God chose certain individuals to be His own before the world even existed. This is not based on human merit but on His sovereign will (Romans 9:15-16). The doctrine of election affirms God's ultimate authority over salvation (Isaiah 46:10).

Everything in the world was designed by God with purpose, even before creation. Nothing happens by accident or chance beyond His knowledge (Psalm 139:16). Many ask: *Does God know a*

person before they are born and their eternal destiny? The answer is an unequivocal yes (Jeremiah 1:5). God's omniscience means He fully knows each person's heart and destiny.

Some struggle with this, asking: *If God knows the end from the beginning, why create some who will reject Him and face judgment?* Scripture teaches that God's justice and mercy coexist (Romans 11:33-36). Humans are accountable for their choices (Deuteronomy 30:19), but God's sovereign plan includes vessels prepared either for honor or destruction (Romans 9:21-23). We cannot fully comprehend the mystery of God's will (Ephesians 1:11).

The Apostle Paul explains in Romans 9 that God prepared some vessels for destruction like Pharaoh and others for honor like Moses and Abraham. This is not arbitrary but purposeful within God's redemptive plan.

Romans 8:28-30 (NIV) outlines the order of salvation (*ordo salutis*) for the elect:

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of

those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.”

This passage highlights God’s eternal plan to transform believers into the likeness of Christ beginning from election, through calling and justification, to ultimate glorification.

The Three Steps of the Christian Journey

1) Called

Being chosen by God means hearing His call personally. Jesus said in John 6:44 (NIV),

“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day.”

This calling is a supernatural work of God’s grace enabling a

person to respond to Christ. Only those God chooses will hear and respond.

Jesus told the Pharisees in John 10:26-27 (NIV),

“But you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”

Those truly belonging to Christ recognize His voice because God has planted a new nature within them (2 Corinthians 5:17). This inward call leads to repentance and faith.

The rejection of Jesus by religious leaders contrasted with the faith of simple fishermen like Peter illustrates the reality of election. The elect are those drawn by God from the foundation of the world.

2) Justified

Justification is a legal declaration by God that a sinner is righteous through faith in Jesus Christ's atoning work (Romans 3:24-26).

This is possible because of Jesus' sacrificial death and shed blood (Hebrews 9:22).

After hearing the Gospel and responding in faith, believers are baptized as a public sign of their new identity in Christ. Acts 2:37-39 (NIV) records Peter saying,

“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Proper baptism is by immersion in the name of Jesus (Matthew 28:19) and symbolizes death to the old self and resurrection in Christ (Romans 6:3-4). Infant baptism or sprinkling is not supported by Scripture.

Justification brings peace with God (Romans 5:1) and initiates a new life empowered by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5-6).

3) Glorified

Glorification is the final step when believers receive perfect, resurrected bodies and eternal life with God (1 Corinthians 15:51-53).

Ephesians 4:30 (NIV) says the Holy Spirit is a seal an assurance of salvation:

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

Receiving the Holy Spirit is a transformative experience, often accompanied by spiritual gifts like speaking in tongues (1 Corinthians 12:7-11), but not everyone manifests the same gifts. The true mark of the Spirit's presence is a holy, godly life (Galatians 5:22-23).

Until glorification, believers live by faith, growing in holiness and awaiting Christ's return (2 Timothy 4:8).

So, dear brother or sister, reflect honestly: Are you among the sheep God chose before the foundation of the world, or among the vessels prepared for destruction? (John 10:27-28; Romans 8:9).

Remember, Scripture clearly divides humanity into two groups sheep or goats, chosen or not, destined for heaven or hell (Matthew 25:31-46). The Spirit of Christ within you is the evidence of your belonging (Romans 8:9).

2 Timothy 2:19 (NIV) assures us:

“The Lord knows those who are his, and, ‘Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.’”

Verses 20-21 teach that believers are vessels of honor, sanctified and useful to God, prepared for every good work.

My prayer for you is that you become a vessel of honor, fully chosen and prepared by God. The time is short Christ is at the door ready to return (Revelation 3:20).

May God richly bless you.

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