

# *deeper*

word faith life

## Season 3

The Doctrine of Man

The Doctrine of Sin

The Doctrine of Salvation

Eschatology

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## Episode 3 – The Doctrine of Salvation

The Doctrine of Salvation or Soteriology from the Greek word [SOTERIA] which means [SALVATION] from the word [SOTER] with means [SAVIOUR]. We will be looking at this subject from the outline we find in Romans 8:29-30 often referred to as the Order of Salvation or Ordo Salutis in Latin. These are the logical steps in the application of the saving work of Christ in the life of a believer.

Romans 8:29-30 - “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.”

We will have a look at Election, Effectual Calling, Regeneration, Faith and Repentance, Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, Perseverance, and Glorification.

What is \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Also called Predestination, this doctrine has seen much controversy over the centuries. Properly defined Election is an act of God before creation in which He chooses some people to be saved, not on account of any foreseen merit in them, but only because of His sovereign good pleasure. On the surface, this concept may seem unfair, but God is sovereign and has often made choices that we don't always understand. Election to salvation is God's choice based on His grace. But like many doctrines about God's ways, Election includes elements of mystery, there are areas that we simply can't fully understand from our earthly perspective. Let's have a look at some scriptures:

Ephesians 1:4-6 - “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 to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves.”

Acts 13:48 - “When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honoured the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.”

2 Timothy 1:9 - “He has saved us and called us to a holy life not because of anything we have done but because of His own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,”

God saved us and called us to Himself, not because of any goodness in us, but because of His own purpose and His unmerited grace, this He did in eternity past. What a glorious mystery! We don't know why He chose those He did, or why He chose some instead of all or none at all. The ultimate choice is God's alone, not ours, even though we do make a real decision to follow Him, to which He holds us responsible. As confusing as this sounds, those who come to Him are responding to HIS initiative and not their own.

John 15:16 - “You did not choose me, but I chose you...”

John 6:44 - “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them...”

Luke 19:10 - “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

From a human perspective, that may not seem fair. But God is not obligated to save anybody. God is not unjust by passing over some. He would still be just if He left us languishing in dirty swamp of our sin. If He only saved ten people out of the entire human race, this would be mercy and grace. His just demands against sin were met in Jesus' substitutionary death on the cross, and He is free to apply Christ's atoning work to whom He chooses, all, or none, or some. Whatever His reasons are for applying it to some, He is not unjust or unfair in doing so. The fact that He has decided to save a “great multitude from every nation, tribe, people and language”(Revelation 7:9) is mercy and grace infinitely beyond our comprehension.

Does God want everyone to be saved? Of course, the answer has to be yes. Paul states in 1 Timothy 2:4 that God “...desires all people to be saved and to come to the



knowledge of the truth.” And Peter states the same in 2 Peter 3:9 that the Lord “...is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”

The fact that not everyone will be saved is one of the most difficult doctrines for us to consider. God even says in Ezekiel 33:11, “Say to them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, people of Israel?’”

Jesus wept over Jerusalem in Luke 19:41 because they rejected Him, their saviour, their Messiah, their King.

In spite of all this, the punishment of sinners is a righteous outworking of God’s justice, and we shouldn’t think of it as wrong. It is important to remember that if you are saved you are of the elect. This is the greatest source of assurance a believer could have.

### What About Grace?

Grace is of vital importance in the doctrine of Election. It first appears directly after the fall in Genesis 3:15 when God promises a redeemer. In Exodus 34:6, God describes Himself as “the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.” Jesus becomes the full embodiment of grace in the New Testament. He is the promised redeemer. His death on the cross paid for our sins, opening up the way for God’s grace to be offered without compromising His justice and righteousness.

Theologians divide grace into two main categories; Common Grace and Special Grace.

Grace - Is common to all people on earth. It refers to God’s universal gifts such as providing basic needs, restraining evil, delaying His judgement of sin and maintaining order on earth and the universe.

Grace - Is given to God’s elect. It describes what God does to redeem, sanctify and glorify His people. It includes enlightening their minds to understand the gospel, convicting their hearts of the need to believe it, and softening their wills to accept it.

Theologians approach Special Grace from four angles;

Grace - God’s grace comes first, He initiates without our prompting or merit. He gives us the ability to believe in faith. This is the very point of grace.

1 John 4:19 - “We love because He first loved us.”

Grace - It accomplishes what God intended it to. Nobody can thwart or derail God’s plan to save. Jesus said that all those the Father gives to Him will come to Him. (John 6:37)

John 10:28-29 - “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.”

Grace - This proceeds from Effective Grace, it cannot be rejected forever. Despite a temporary resistance to God, He always wins the elect by the compelling work of the Holy Spirit.

Grace - It is sufficient to achieve God’s intention to save those He has chosen.

Hebrews 7:25 - “Therefore He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them.”

Being saved by grace does not legitimise a passive armchair type of Christian life, on the contrary, we require His grace everyday as we fulfill His purposes in our lives.

Philippians 2:12-13 - “...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose.”

Titus 2:11,12 - “For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say, ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions.”

The doctrine of Election demonstrates to us that God loves us not for who we are or for what we’ve done or will do, but simply because He decided to love us. Our appropriate



response therefore is to worship and praise Him for all eternity. Our appropriate response to others is humility, since we have no claim in and of ourselves on His grace, it's all an unmerited gift from Him.

What is \_\_\_\_\_ ?

God calls these elect to belong to Him in Christ Jesus.

Romans 1:6-7 - "And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be His holy people..."

Galatians 1:15 - "But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace,"

God who initiates the gift of election is the one who extends the invitation to respond. This calling that comes from God is fully effective, hence the term Effectual Calling.

The Bible differentiates between this type of Effective or Specific Calling and a General or Universal Calling.

General Calling simply refers to the basic proclamation of the Gospel whether people respond or not. We see this illustrated in the parable of the sower in Matthew 13. The sower sows seed, the proclamation of the Good News, in a generous way, far and wide. This is just like the General Calling that is given to all who come in contact with the Gospel. Out of the many recipients of the General Calling, some will hear an Effectual Calling. That's why Jesus many times used the phrase, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." The elect will receive and embrace the message as a call of salvation on their lives. All genuine born again believers have heard and responded to the Effectual Calling as the Gospel was preached or explained to them.

A great example of Effectual Calling is how Lydia came to faith in Jesus.

Acts 16:14 - "The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul."

It is so important that we boldly and clearly preach the Good News, because we never know who is listening or who it is reaching.

John 6:44,65 - "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them... This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them." The Effectual call results in us being convinced of our sin and hopelessness, having our minds enlightened, our hearts persuaded to the point of a surrendering of our will to embrace and receive Christ as our personal Saviour and Lord.

Not all Gospel calls are effective. Our job as believers, is to proclaim and explain the Gospel message, it is God's job to make that call effective.

What is \_\_\_\_\_ ?

The phrase "Born Again" comes from a conversation that Jesus had with man named Nicodemus in John 3:1-21. Jesus said to him, "No one can see the Kingdom of God unless they are born again."

The word Regeneration means a new beginning or rebirth. It is entirely God's work.

Ephesians 2:4-5 - "God...made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions, it is by grace you have been saved."

As in natural birth, we don't give birth to ourselves, so it is with rebirth, it's something that happens TO us, and not BY us.

John 1:13 - "children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."

After the invitation to respond to the gospel is given, God must bring about a change in a person's heart before they are able to respond in faith. That change, which is a secret act of God in which He imparts new spiritual life to us, is what we call Regeneration. We play no role in this Regeneration, it's completely a work of God. If it is God's work, then it cannot be our work.

We were spiritually dead, and dead people can't do anything. We didn't plan it, initiate it, or accomplish it. The same applies to our natural birth. The author John Murray asks: "How can a person who is dead in trespasses and sins, whose mind is at enmity



against God, and who cannot do that which is well-pleasing to God, answer a call to the fellowship of Christ?"

But don't we have to come to Christ and believe in Him to be born again? You might ask. Yes, we do, but how do we do this if we are dead in sin? Chronologically, from our perspective, being born again and believing are simultaneous. But logically our rebirth must precede our belief because you can't believe until you are alive. God sparks our spirit to life so that we can express the faith which He gives us in order to believe. This instantaneous event changes everything. Once it happens we are "a new creation. The old has passed away... the new has come." (2 Corinthians 5:17) Although not always immediately realised, this change results in a transformed heart that leads to a transformed character which produces a transformed life. All areas of life are changed. A regenerated person should expect a new love for God and His people, a willingness to surrender, a heartfelt desire to obey Jesus' commands, and to see the development of the Christ-like character traits that Paul calls the fruit of the Spirit.

New birth is the beginning, not the end of God's purposes for our lives. New life must grow, it must be nurtured through trusting the leading of the Holy Spirit in the formation of spiritual maturity. Growth requires the right environment, the right nutrients and the right root system. Let's grow taller and deeper together.

Memory Verse:

Romans 8:29-30

"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."

