

HERALD OF HOPE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q26) Who are the Elect?

Some teach that God predestinates Christians to be saved, and unless a person is one of the elect he cannot be saved. Isn't it true that God foreknows who will believe, rather than chooses some to be saved and some to be lost?

There are two extremes of theology taught, both of which are wrong. They are Calvinism and Arminianism. Calvinism is attributed to John Calvin (1509-1564) and Arminianism is attributed to Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609). Arminianism was a reaction to Calvinism. What many Christians fail to realize, is that the Biblical teaching is neither Calvinistic nor Arminian.

The view which is answered in this article claims that Christ died only for elected believers, and is part of **Calvinistic theology** held by Reformed theologians. It is a system of logic based on wrong assumptions. The system may be summarized under five points known as **TULIP**.

T- Total Depravity, or Total Inability, teaches that unconverted man has **no free will and cannot choose** Christ. It fails to understand that being dead in trespasses and sins does **not** mean that man cannot choose. The angels could choose to rebel against God when they were perfect BEFORE there was sin, and Adam could choose to sin when he was perfect, so **the will is NOT captive to the heart** and can act independently either for good or evil. Unsaved people **can** do good deeds, but these obtain no merit for salvation. It is *"not by works of righteousness which WE HAVE DONE, but according to his mercy he saved us"*(Titus 3:5).

U- Unconditional Election means that man has no free will, therefore one can only be saved if **God chooses to elect him UNCONDITIONALLY**. The unavoidable implication, however, is that if God does NOT elect him, then God is appointing him to hell. This system makes God responsible for sending every unsaved soul to hell, because He chose NOT to elect them. That makes John 3:16 meaningless. How can God love the whole world of sinners and deliberately choose to send most to hell? God said, *"I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live"*(Ezek.33:11). Many Scriptures teach that God loves sinners and is *"longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"*(2Peter 3:9). *"God so loved the world"*, that He gave His Son to die for its sin. That is not the material world, or the world system, but the world of individuals; **all sinners**.

It is no "straw man" to conclude that if God chooses a select number of persons to be saved then He, as Sovereign God, has deliberately chosen to reject the remainder. There is no other possible conclusion.

*"If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But **there IS FORGIVENESS with thee**, that thou mayest be feared"*(Ps.130:3-4).

If the majority of unsaved souls have no hope of salvation, then there is no reason for them to fear the LORD, because even if they do fear the LORD they cannot be forgiven. The doctrine breeds fatalism and rebellion.

L - Limited Atonement. Logic says that if only the selected are saved, then Christ could not have died for the unselected. But Scripture says that Christ is *"the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but ALSO for the sins of the WHOLE WORLD"* (1 John2:2). *"And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world"* (1John 4:14).

To say that Christ died only for the elect, makes it impossible for unelected to be saved even if they call on the Lord, but Scripture states: *"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely"*(Rev.22:17). And "whosoever" cannot be confined to the elect.

*"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have (desires) **all men to be saved**, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; **Who gave himself a ransom FOR ALL**..."(1Tim.2:3-6).*

I- Irresistible Grace. The logic continues: If salvation is by selection, instead of by faith, then when God chooses someone, there is nothing one can do to stop God saving one! Therefore grace is irresistible. Likewise, if a person is NOT selected, then there is nothing he or she can do to be saved. Calvinists believe that faith is a gift which God gives **AFTER** He has given eternal life to those selected. So logically, first we have to be selected, then given eternal life, and finally given faith to believe in Christ. Therefore, contrary to Scripture, we would have to be saved BEFORE we believe. The Bible says: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved"*. Faith must always be a **precondition** of salvation. *"By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works..."* The Greek

original indicates that the *"gift of God"* refers back to *"saved"* and NOT to *"faith"*. Salvation is the gift from God, NOT faith.

P- Perseverance of the Saints. The logic concludes that those selected cannot be lost but will persevere to the end. I rather believe in the eternal security of the believer and see it as the preservation of the saints by God. Those who truly believe are saved eternally, and God seals them until the day of redemption (Rapture). We are kept by the power of God.

God predestinates **to be conformed to the likeness of Christ** all whom He knows in His foreknowledge will believe. Predestination has nothing to do with my believing, but **guarantees my glorification**. I am eternally secure in Christ.