

Cure For The Calvinist Cancer

There is a principle in Scripture which would cure much heresy if people could only comprehend it. Once understood, this truth of God's Word would annihilate the TULIP of the Calvinist and would straighten out all false interpretations of Scripture concerning God's calling, election, predestination, and grace. What is the down side? Men who love their creed more than God's truth continue to close their eyes and minds to this principle and thus continue to spout their errors to lead astray and confuse the unwary.

So what is this miracle cure? Is it well established in Scripture? Does God make it really plain? Yes, indeed. God repeats this over and over in Scripture many times in many ways; and if men would just believe His testimony of His own character, they would not continually interpret the Scriptures contrary to it. Observe:

De 10:17 For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which **regardeth not persons**, nor taketh reward:

2Ch 19:7 Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, **nor respect of persons**, nor taking of gifts.

Ac 10:34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that **God is no respecter of persons**:

Ga 2:6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: **God accepteth no man's person**;) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:

Eph 6:9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; **neither is there respect of persons with him**.

Col 3:25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and **there is no respect of persons**.

1Ti 5:21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, **doing nothing by partiality**.

Jas 2:1 My brethren, **have not** the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, **with respect of persons**...**Jas 2:4** Are ye not then **partial in yourselves**, and are become **judges of evil thoughts**? ...**Jas 2:9** But if ye **have respect to persons**, ye **commit sin**, and are **convinced of the law as transgressors**. ...**Jas 3:17** But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, **without partiality, and without hypocrisy**.

1Pe 1:17 And if ye call on the Father, **who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work**, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

Now listen close to the apostle as he explains the impartial and perfectly just judgment of God. If men would simply believe what Paul is saying here, they would never interpret Romans 9 in their foolish and erroneous Calvinistic way.

Rom 2:5 ...the **righteous** judgment of God; **Who will render to every man according to his deeds**: 7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: 8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, 9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, **of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile**; 10 But glory, honour, and

peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: 11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

God IS A RESPECTER OF DEEDS – NOT PERSONS!

Rev 22:12 *And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*

Could God say this if some men received special help while others did not?? What does this mean? This means that men going to heaven or hell; having God's grace or wrath; being the elected or rejected; and men being saved or lost is wholly and completely dependent upon their actions and choices without any partiality on God's part – PERIOD! If God chooses to save or help one man over another man simply due to favoring the one over the other; then God is committing sin, transgressing His own Law, and His Word is a lie. When God determines who goes to heaven and who goes to hell it cannot be based on God making it easier for one person over another or helping one more than the other or choosing one over the other. This would be "respect of persons" and would be sin according to God's Law.

Listen close: Even if God knows what men will do before they do it, He cannot base any of His actions towards them on this knowledge or it is respect of persons in judgment -- prejudice. If God helped someone over another with partiality, then His foreknowledge could only be that they did better because He showed partiality – Thus God electing and helping someone due to foreknowledge is impossible! He can only have foreknowledge of what actually would happen not what never did happen! That means if he knows a man, like in Luke 8:13, is receiving the Word with joy; but will not endure to the end, God STILL TREATS HIM THE SAME AS ANY OTHER MAN WHO RECEIVES THE WORD WITH JOY AND DOES NOT WITHHOLD GRACE OR HELP JUST BECAUSE HE KNOWS THE MAN WILL FALL AWAY SOMEDAY AND NOT CONTINUE TO THE END. If God helped one endure whom "He knew would endure" then God only knew He would endure because God helped him endure because God knew He would endure.....So God chooses the elect based on what? On foreknowledge? Of WHAT? Foreknowledge that they endured because they were the elect? If they endured because they were the elect, then the only foreknowledge God could have is that they endured because they were the elect. God can only foreknow what really happened in the future. If God foreknew that I would endure, so He helps me more, then what did He foreknow? That I would endure without His help? Is that why He helped me? This is impossible, because if He helps me He changes the future and His foreknowledge was a myth ---- Do you see the impossibility of all this foolishness???? Can you see the foolishness in all this?

God gives more grace to every man who properly uses the grace already given and this is perfectly just; but God will not give grace to someone just because He "chose" or "elected" them to eternal life based on nothing of their own actions. That would be "respect of persons" in judgment. If God knows I will endure to the end, then He knows I will endure to the end without Him showing partiality or favoritism towards me and NOT BECAUSE HE DID. He is not a hypocrite or a liar. Why would God keep any man from falling away more than He did Adam and Eve? That would be respect of persons; and God would never do that. If God didn't keep Adam and Eve from falling, then He is not going to keep you and any other man from falling, except with the same degree of help He gave Adam and Eve.

God does not play “favorites”! It is indelibly written in the constitution of the universe that THERE IS NO RESPECT OF PERSONS WITH GOD. God does not show partiality in His judgment of men. Do you believe this? Do you understand this? Once you understand this, you cannot believe any of the concepts of Calvinistic election or predestination.

But what do the verses mean that men use to imply such actions on God’s part? There are clear explanations for all such verses which do not cause any contradictions. The Apostles were not senile; but inspired by the Father with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. An unchanging God is perfectly consistent throughout His revelation of Himself to man. Many times the Bible clearly says that God’s judgment is without partiality, so that must be our basis for belief in God’s judgment. If you interpret contrary to that principle, then you are slandering God and rejecting His clear Word concerning Himself.

Now, listen close: Notice in Romans 2, where God’s judgment is clearly explained, that it says, “To the Jew first and also to the Gentile” concerning both grace and wrath. What makes the distinction between Jews and Gentiles? It was God’s choosing Abraham’s seed as a special people to himself for His purpose of bringing the Messiah into the World for the redemption of all mankind. For God to make a covenant with Abraham to show special favor to his descendents because Abraham believed and obeyed God (Gen 26:5), is not “respect of persons” in judgment. Why? HOW? Because when it came to the salvation or damnation of individuals those with greater opportunity were also judged more harshly for not properly making use of their greater privileges. This is what Paul is clearly showing in Romans 2. Because of Abraham’s obedience, the Jews had greater opportunities to know and hear God’s Word; but they also had greater judgment for not taking this opportunity; which clearly shows God’s justice in His offer of salvation to man. Read it again:

***Rom 2:5** ...the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to **every man according to his deeds:** 7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: 8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, 9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of **the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;** 10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, **to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:** 11 **For there is no respect of persons with God.** 12 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; 13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. 14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) 16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.*

Jews and Gentiles both had light and could have received greater light. God’s judgment concerning salvation or damnation is based on “What you did with what you had from where you were at”. This is perfectly appropriate without any partiality. “What did you do with the light you had?” is the primary question in God’s judgment. God’s foreknowledge could not tamper with or affect this outcome at all; but God’s impartial judgment must allow all men to exercise their free will and eat the fruit of their own choices. They all have the ability to repent and walk in the light God has given them to the salvation of their souls.

Ga 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for **whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.** 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation **hath appeared to all men,** 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 **That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.** 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 **But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:**

This refers to Jews and Gentiles alike. They both could be saved; but one group had greater privileges due to being chosen as the vehicle through which the Messiah would come into the World.

Joh 3:16 For God so loved the **world,** that he gave his only begotten Son, that **whosoever** believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Since God promised Abraham that the Messiah would come through his seed, God also had the responsibility to pick which of Abraham's descendents would be used. Did this affect whether they could be saved or not? No, but it affected what opportunities and privileges they would have to know God. The greater the opportunity, the greater the judgment – why? Because this is what makes it perfectly just. If I improve my opportunities and seek God more than my neighbor, then I receive more grace and light to pass on to my children. My children then have a greater opportunity to know God than my neighbor's; but they are also more accountable to God to walk in the greater light they have. Salvation and grace will be to my children first, and also to my neighbor's; but judgment will be to my children first and also to my neighbor's – FOR THERE IS NO RESPECT OF PERSONS WITH GOD.

1Pe 4:17 For the time is come that **judgment must begin at the house of God:** and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? 18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? 19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God **commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing,** as unto a faithful Creator.

“Faithful” refers to His justice. Since God is no respecter of persons and does not play “favorites”, He must demand more from those to whom more is given. God is free to choose people; people groups; nations; etc. for special purposes in His redemption plan as long as “to whom much is given, much is required” so that God is no respecter of persons concerning individual people's salvation. This is perfectly fair and just.

In the Scriptures we find that God deals with nations and people groups in a similar fashion as He deals with individuals. We see God declaring this fact in Jeremiah 18.

Jer 18:1 ¶ The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 2 Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. 3 Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a

work on the wheels. 4 And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. 5 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 6 O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. 7 At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; 8 If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. 9 And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; 10 If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

In Romans 9 the Calvinists completely set Paul in contradiction to what he declared in Romans 2; but any honest Bible interpreter knows this is foolishness. God is not declaring his freedom to show respect of persons; but justifying His giving the special privileges promised to Abraham's seed to the Church in the light of the FACT THAT HE DOES NOT HAVE RESPECT TO PERSONS. He even refers to Jeremiah 18 and the principle there as part of his reasoning. In Romans 9 Paul is dealing with a completely different issue than in Romans 2. In chapter 2 Paul is dealing clearly with the salvation or damnation of individuals; but in chapter 9 Paul is dealing with God's dealing with NATIONS and PEOPLE GROUPS for God's redemption program. Every name given in Romans 9 is the head of a people group – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Esau, and Pharaoh – and they are clearly used in that sense alone.

Ge 25:23 *And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.*

Paul is using them in this way to show forth the principle spoken of in Jeremiah 18 which we just read. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" is quoting Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament and is only referring to the descendents – Edom and Israel. This means God chose to work through Israel and not Edom, but God did bless and look after Esau's descendents until they became wicked – Read Deuteronomy chapter 2. God gave them Mt. Seir and drove out the giants for them as He did for Israel; and did not allow Israel to take their land. Jacob personally never served Esau one day; but rather called him "lord".

Paul is explaining how God's promise to Abraham's seed and the privileges conferred thereby are being continued now through the Church of Jesus Christ (a people group) and no longer through the nation of Israel. God chose to work through the nation of Israel due to no righteousness or "works" of their own, but due to God's own mercy and promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – This is what Romans 9:11 is referring to and is speaking of the nations, not the "children" themselves – The word "children" is not in the Greek.

De 9:4 *Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee. 5 Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 6 Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people.*

The Church qualifies as the fulfillment of “in Isaac shall thy seed be called” because this promise was to those with the “faith of Abraham”, not just physical descendants. The Church is the Spiritual element of Israel with believing Gentiles grafted in. Jesus is said in Galatians 3:16 to be the “seed”, and thus all under His administration by faith in Him now qualify for the children of Abraham and the blessings promised. They are the “Israel of God” (Ga 6)

These privileges “pertained” to Israel the nation (Ro 9:4) – were predetermined for them as the elect of God; but they were unfaithful and so now the faithful remnant, who received Christ as Messiah, along with believing Gentiles are now God’s special people group to work through and Israel as a nation would soon be destroyed (AD 70). Individuals within these two groups can still be saved or lost; but a new people group and program is now in place. God told them that this would happen so that all those who really cared and loved God would be ready for it.

Rom 9:25 ¶ As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. 26 And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God. 27 Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, **Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:** 28 For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness [IMPARTIAL JUSTICE]: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. 29 And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. 30 **What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. 31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. 32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;**

Ro 9:32 above, is what Paul is referring to when he says, “So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy”. Israel willed and ran to establish their own righteousness just as Esau did to obtain a birthright which he had despised; but they were not in line with God’s mercy because they were going about to establish their own program and not submitting to God’s program (Ro 10:1-3).

Israel was at one time a vessel receiving God’s mercy and God used Egypt (Pharaoh) who became a vessel of wrath to birth the nation of Israel. In the same way God has endured Israel who became a vessel of wrath to birth the Church which is now God’s vessel of mercy. The Church is God’s people group including both Jews and Gentiles who believe and obey Jesus. The salvation or damnation of the people in these nations or groups is still individually determined with NO RESPECT OF PERSONS. Just as people in Egypt could be saved when Egypt was a vessel of wrath and people in Israel could be damned while the nation was a vessel of mercy; so people could be saved in Israel as a vessel of wrath and people in the Church could fall away and be damned though living in the privileged people group (Acts 5:1-11) – the Church – the vessel of mercy. Esau could have been saved as a circumcised son of Abraham as well as Ishmael or any of their descendents; but God’s choice for the nation which would birth the Messiah was through Isaac and Jacob. Did this ensure the salvation of all of Isaac and Jacob’s descendents? Of course not. We know many were not saved.

The Bible is very clear that God predetermined a program for the salvation of mankind from the beginning of the world. He knew that Adam and Eve could fall and considered what He would do if they did. He set up a plan of WHAT He would do and WHAT REQUIREMENTS WERE NECESSARY for Him to

righteously reconcile with repentant sinners. In the mind of God the over-all plan was laid; but there is no indication that God chose some people to salvation and some to damnation prior to their existence. So what do the verses mean that people use to teach this? Let's look at a number of verses that are misused in this way:

Joh 6:44 *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*

Men use this passage to teach that God MAKES some people come to Christ and neglects others; but any honest reader can see the verse 45 explains the justice of the situation. God is calling and drawing ALL men; but only those who HEAR and LEARN from the light God shines will actually come to Jesus as Messiah.

Those Jews whose hearts were keeping pace with the light God had shined on the whole nation recognized Jesus as their Messiah – came to Him. There is no RESPECT OF PERSONS in this scenario. Jesus declares the same thing in a couple of places:

Joh 5:46 *For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.*

Lu 16:31 *And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*

This is perfectly consistent with God's just dealings with man. This principle can be seen in another passage which people misuse.

Ac 13:48 *And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.*

The word "ordained" here simply means they were "predisposed" to believing due to "hearing and learning" of the Father. God "foreknew" them and their hearts because His Spirit had already been working with all of them since they came to the age of accountability. God's Spirit strives with all men. He even strove with those who died in the flood; but finally gave up on them (Gen 6:1-8). These people were "in line" to believe because they were not prejudiced against believing nor hardened against God's light as many of the Jews were.

- **ADAM CLARKE:** Verse 48. *[As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.]* This text has been most pitifully misunderstood. Many suppose that it simply means that those in that assembly who were fore-ordained; or predestinated by God's decree, to eternal life, believed under the influence of that decree. Now, we should be careful to examine what a word means, before we attempt to fix its meaning. Whatever tetagmenoi may mean, which is the word we translate ordained, it is neither protetagmenoi nor proorismenoi which the apostle uses, but simply tetagmenoi, which includes no idea of pre-ordination or pre-destination of any kind. And if it even did, it would be rather hazardous to say that all those who believed at this time were such as actually persevered unto the end, and were saved unto eternal life. But, leaving all these precarious matters, what does the word tetagmenov mean? The verb tattw or tassw signifies to place, set, order, appoint, dispose; hence it has been considered here as implying the disposition or readiness of mind of several persons in the congregation, such as the religious proselytes mentioned Ac 13:43, who possessed the reverse of the disposition of those Jews who spake against those things, contradicting and blaspheming, Ac 13:45.

Though the word in this place has been variously translated, yet, of all the meanings ever put on it, none agrees worse with its nature and known signification than that which represents it as intending those who were predestinated to eternal life: this is no meaning of the term, and should never be applied to it. Let us, without prejudice, consider the scope of the place: the Jews contradicted and blasphemed; the religious proselytes heard attentively, and received the word of life: the one party were utterly indisposed, through their own stubbornness, to receive the Gospel; the others, destitute of prejudice and prepossession, were glad to hear that, in the order of God, the Gentiles were included in the covenant of salvation through Christ Jesus; they, therefore, in this good state and order of mind, believed. Those who seek for the plain meaning of the word will find it here: those who wish to make out a sense, not from the Greek word, its use among the best Greek writers, and the obvious sense of the evangelist, but from their own creed, may continue to puzzle themselves and others; kindle their own fire, compass themselves with sparks, and walk in the light of their own fire, and of the sparks which they have kindled; and, in consequence, lie down in sorrow, having bidden adieu to the true meaning of a passage so very simple, taken in its connection, that one must wonder how it ever came to be misunderstood and misapplied. Those who wish to see more on this verse may consult Hammond, Whitby, Schoettgen, Rosenmuller, Pearce, Sir Norton Knatchbull, and Dodd.

To interpret this passage as the Calvinists do charges God with “respect of persons” and is a slander upon God’s justice and His testimony of His own judgment and character. Let’s look at another passage which has been misunderstood.

*Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places **in Christ**: 4 According as he hath chosen us **in him** before the foundation of the world, that we **should be** holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted **in the beloved**. 7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; 8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: 10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.*

Wow, that sounds like Calvinism, doesn’t it? Yes, if people are ignorant of the apostle’s subject and terms, it could easily confuse those who have already heard it used in that way. However, the careful and studied reader knows that the apostle is not speaking of individual’s salvation, but of the privileges provided to those in a special people group called the church. The “us” and “we” refers to “us the Bride” and “we the Bride” not as individuals. Notice carefully verse 12 and its connection to verse 13 about the Gentiles being grafted into the vine – “we” and “ye” referring to people groups.

*Eph 1:12 That **we** should be to the praise of his glory, **who first trusted in Christ**. 13 In whom **ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word** of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also **after that ye believed**, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*

Paul is speaking of the privileges of coming into God's VESSEL OF MERCY – the CHURCH. God's salvation plan from the beginning included the BRIDE of Christ and the blessings that would come upon this BRIDE.

Jesus **will have** a spotless BRIDE at the marriage supper of the Lamb; but the question is – **“Will you or even your church group be a part of it (2 Cor 11:1-4)?** When I become a part of this Bride, then I can say, “US” and “We” concerning God's predetermination that “We be conformed to the image of Christ” or that He *“hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”* This is all appropriate language for anyone who is presently a part of the Bride; but this language doesn't guarantee me to be a part, it just declares the blessings if I remain a part. This will be proven as we go along.

The privileged group will be there, but whether you will be a part of this privileged group is still dependant upon YOU hearing and believing to the end -- overcoming and being found faithful. As we said earlier, God having a privileged group doesn't ensure the salvation of the individuals unless they continue in the requirements and thus continue in the group in spirit and not just presence. The continuation and final victory of the group doesn't guarantee the continuation and victory of the individuals unless they stay in the group by meeting the necessary requirements.

God has designed the “Old Ship of Zion” to sail victoriously for the salvation of men; but will you get on? Will you stay on? That is the issue? The Bride will be pure and dressed in the righteousness of saints; but will you be of that number? Can you see the difference?

The churches of revelation were threatened with having their candlestick removed. Does this mean Jesus would not have a bride? NO, it means they would not be a part of it any more. The church members were separately charged with overcoming as individuals or having their names blotted out.

Listen to Paul throughout Ephesians and you will see the context of his words:

Eph 2:11 *Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past **Gentiles** in the flesh, who are called **Uncircumcision** by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath **made both one**, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;*

The “ye” and “us” are obviously in the context of “believing Gentiles” and “believing Jews”, not in the context of “you” and “me” simply as individuals. Paul is writing to a church concerning the privileges they now have entered into as one of God's churches. Ephesians 5:1-7 declares plainly that individuals are still in danger of falling back under God's wrath and only men with “deceitful vain words” would say otherwise. “Chosen in Christ” doesn't protect you as the individual from this reality.

Eph 5:1 *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. 3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 Neither filthiness, nor*

foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 **For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.** 6 **Let no man deceive you with vain words:** for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7 **Be not ye therefore partakers with them.**

Listen further:

Eph 2:18 For through him **we both have access** by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore **ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;** 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 **In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.**

The context is God's present administration of mercy containing both Jew and Gentile believers.

Eph 3:1 ¶ For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for **you Gentiles**, 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me **to you-ward:** 3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 **That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:**

Listen to the CONTEXT! If I joined the Marines I could declare that "WE are the greatest fighting force on the planet and WE have been chosen by God to protect human rights" or whatever; but that would only apply to me as a PART, and I could be kicked out or become a deserter. The group would still exist without me being a part; and the accolades would only cease to apply to me, not the group. Read Romans 11 and John 15 where individual "branches" can be severed, but the "root" still lives on with other branches. Let's continue looking at the context of Ephesians:

Eph 3:7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. 8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among **the Gentiles** the unsearchable riches of Christ; 9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, **which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:** 10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places **might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,** 11 **According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:.....5:25** Husbands, love your wives, even as **Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;** 26 **That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,** 27 **That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.** 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, **even as the Lord the church:** 30 **For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.** 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 **This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.**

All this is speaking of the PROGRAM, not the predestination of individual's salvation! Listen to James declare this explicitly:

Acts 15:14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the **Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.** 15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17 That the residue of **men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who**

doeth all these things. 18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. 19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:

Known unto God from the beginning is HIS PROGRAM, which included the open door to the Gentiles who wished to seek the Lord and be a part of His PEOPLE GROUP. The proper use of the term “foreknew” in this context is the word “envisioned”. God has envisioned a BRIDE or REMNANT people group who meet certain criteria (II Co 6:17-7:1). This quality or character of people He has predestined to conform to the image of Christ through a process and program consistent with His holy and just nature (Ro 8:28-30). We will see that this people group whom God foreknew and determined to save is the BRIDE of Christ; but whether I as an individual will ultimately be a part of this group is still up to my choices.

God predestined a program and my responsibility is to get in the program and stay in the program if I wish to be saved by the program. Nothing in this passage is promoting Calvinistic “Respect of Persons” which God clearly denies and abhors.

Consider the following verses:

De 4:20 But the LORD hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day.

De 29:13 That he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

- This is God’s purpose for this people group

De 32:21 They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

- This is God working with men who have free will. This is the preview and justification for the calling of the Gentiles.

2Sa 7:24 For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, LORD, art become their God.

Ps 95:10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

Jer 13:11 For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith the LORD; that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear.

- God’s purpose is hindered by free will. This doesn’t determine the salvation or damnation of all the people in the group as we are not speaking of individuals, but God’s dealing with a group.

1Pe 2:10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

- Now we see the Church as the privileged group (vessels of mercy) whom God has chosen to provoke Israel to jealousy and possibly save some of them yet (Romans 11:11-14).

Listen to a very clear passage which presents both the predetermination of a program and the free-will actions of the individuals within.

Acts 17:23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. 24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; 25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; 26 **And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; {PREDETERMINED}** 27 **That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, {NOT PREDETERMINED}** though he be not far from every one of us:

Nothing could be clearer to the honest and unbiased reader. God's Word is perfectly consistent and never contradicts itself. God is no respecter of persons; never showed partiality or favoritism; and is not a deceiver or a hypocrite. We don't know what God knows or doesn't know of man's future choices and actions; but He can only know that whatever a man does, he does without God showing partiality to him. There are a number of Scriptures that clearly indicate that God doesn't know all that individuals will do and choose. Here are a few.

Ge 2:19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam **to see what he would call them:** and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

Gen 6 " And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. **And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made**

Ge 18:21 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, **which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.**

Ge 22:12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: **for now I know that thou fearest God,** seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

Ex 16:4 Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, **that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.**

De 8:2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, **to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.**

1 Sam 15:11 **It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king:** for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments.

1Sa 15:35 And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and **the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.**

2Ch 32:31 Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, **that he might know all that was in his heart.**

These passages are God's Word and **choice of words** and are NOT meant to deceive, but rather to reveal the truth of God. The WORD is God's revelation of Himself to man. It would be hypocritical and

deceptive for God to say these things if they really were not true. If we speculate beyond what the Bible actually says, then we move into the realm of **imagination, not revelation**. **We don't know for sure what God foresees or doesn't foresee**. It is **sure** that God knows what HE will do in His program; but whether He knows all that men will do and who will ultimately be saved is uncertain if we limit our speculations to the realms of God's own revelation of Himself. To deny this is false piety rearing its ugly head, not a true love of God.

But what about **Mt 25:34**? *"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the **kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world**"*

Does that teach that our inheritance was all done from the foundation of the world? Listen to some similar expressions

***Lu 11:50** That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed **from the foundation of the world**, may be required of this generation;*

***Lu 1:70** As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been **since the world began**:*

***Ac 3:21** Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets **since the world began**.*

Do these verses say that the prophets were all martyred at the beginning of the world or that all the prophets prophesied at the beginning of the world? NO. It is simply saying this PROGRAM and PROCESS has been going on since that time. Jesus told his disciples "I go to prepare a place for you". Was this true or was it already done? The same language with the same meaning is being used in this verse:

***Re 17:8** The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, **whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world**, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*

Names were being put in and blotted out since the beginning of the world when men began making choices to be faithful or unfaithful to God's salvation program. Consider again how God uses expressions in the comparison of the next three verses.

***Re 13:8** And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of **the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world**.*

***Heb 9:26** For then must he often have **suffered since the foundation of the world**: but **now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself**.*

***1Pe 1:20** Who verily was **foreordained before the foundation of the world**, but was **manifest in these last times for you**,*

When did Jesus suffer? The obvious conclusion is that, though the plan and program was from the beginning, the suffering wasn't until it actually happened "in the end" or latter part of the world's existence. We must never put on God's expressions more than was intended. Gethsemane was not just a show; but a real struggle for Jesus to continue faithful to the end and overcome. Don't run to the mysterious when there is a logical and practical explanation which fits clearly with what the whole counsel of God teaches. Those who run to the mysterious interpretations are just trying to avoid

conviction and personal responsibility. They are feverishly trying to preserve their “security” in Christ; but are only “saving their life” which will cause them to “lose it” (Mk 8:34-38).

Regardless of what God knows, doesn’t know, foresees, doesn’t foresee, plans or doesn’t plan; He has clearly told us that with Him THERE IS NO RESPECT OF PERSONS. In the matter of election we are clearly told that we have a responsibility to “make our calling and election sure”. How does the Calvinist explain this? How could this fit with their false concepts of “foreknowledge” and “election”?

2Pe 1:10 *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for **if ye do** these things, ye shall never fall:*

We are told that individuals who were once elect in an elect people group were cut off due to unbelief and could later be grafted in again if they repented and believed on Christ – **Romans 11:13-23**. God’s program is certain, but my place in the program rests upon my daily faithfulness to the conditions God has set. One passage which speaks of God’s program and His faithfulness in it is often misused to teach “respect of persons”.

Rom 8:28 *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. 31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*

This passage speaks clearly that God will follow through faithfully; but it doesn’t contradict or change all the other passages which clearly teach that whether or not I have a part in this wonderful program is dependent upon my continuing in it. It can be easily proved from the same letter to the Romans that this “Goodness of God” is striving to lead men to repentance who can definitely resist (Ro 2:3-11); and this same “Goodness of God” must be continued in lest the one’s in it be cut off from it (Ro 11:22). Who can deny that this “Goodness of God” is the same program Paul is speaking of in Romans 8:28-30? No intelligent person can deny this fact. The “Goodness of God” leading men to repentance is for this very program of conforming them to the image of Christ; and those cut off from the “Goodness of God” in Romans 11:17-23 WERE IN this program already and ceased to be – but could actually get back in under certain conditions. Who can deny this?

Romans 8:28-30 does not declare the opposite of 2 Peter 1:10 above. It actually says nothing about a guarantee for me; but only that God will follow through faithfully on His end of the deal. It is the same as God saying, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee”; but we know that we can leave and forsake Him. We have proved back in Chapter 8 that many Scriptures clearly teach the possibility of men, who were once on their way to heaven, being lost and going to Hell. The warnings to “hold fast” and “continue in the faith” are everywhere throughout the Scriptures. Only willful ignorance would deny what we have clearly proven from the Word of God.

You say, “Yes, but what about John 6:39?” *“And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day”*

Let Jesus interpret His own meaning in John 17:12 *“While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture*

*might be fulfilled.” Who is he obviously referring to? He is speaking of His ministry among His apostles. Listen a few verses later: “15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them **(the apostles)** out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. 20 **Neither pray I for these (apostles) alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;”***

It is more than obvious that Jesus is speaking of the apostle’s free will, their danger of falling, and His ministry to establish them in the faith. He also prays for those who will be converted through the ministry of these apostles – all Christians. Nothing is spoken here of some “eternal security” or special election which removes the necessity of enduring to the end; but actually underscores that necessity.

If God had “elect” individuals whom He chose to save before they were even born, then He would never call anyone else whom He knew would not accept the call – for this would be hypocrisy and mockery on God’s part. But we see many instances where God called those who didn’t respond properly. How could God only call those whom He foreknew would respond? His foreknowledge would only be that they were the only one’s called, so how would He foresee that the other’s would not respond to the call that never happened??? Those who teach such nonsense are simply too shallow minded to think it through to the logical absurdity. Ask them if prayer really changes anything. Whatever God knows, we can be sure He knows that the salvation or damnation of men did not rest in any sense upon Him showing respect of persons or favoritism. Foreknowledge cannot change the future or it is not foreknowledge at all.

The Bible warnings are **not** saying to “make sure you really got it” but rather to “hold fast what you have” (Heb 3:12-14). If someone only has a “superficial” faith as some charge upon those who fall away, then they actually never fell away! Falling away from a superficial faith is a good thing; and telling these people to hold fast what they had would then be a bad thing. Just because the apostles said that certain false teachers left the church because they were really imposters from the start anyway (I John 2:19), does not mean this is the scenario every time someone falls away. This is sloppy Bible exegesis to an extreme. We have proved the opposite already for those with ears to hear.

Every man must be able to say at the end of his journey, “**2Ti 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous [IMPARTIAL] judge, shall give me at that day:”** ...Or else he will be lost, because this type of person is the only product the Bride, Vine, Shepherd, etc. will produce, and it is up to you if you ultimately end up being the “precious fruit of the earth” or not. Paul concluded his statement thus: “...and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” The crown of righteousness is being crowned as the “righteous” just like the “crown of life” is being crowned with “life eternal”. This is given without respect of persons to those who run their race with patience like Romans 2 and Hebrews 12 speak of.

Lovers of truth and righteousness have no problem seeing the truth when it is presented to them; but those with an ax to grind or sin to hide will never come to the truth until they repent of their self will. I say this confidently not only because the Bible clearly teaches it; but because I was raised in error through growing up in church, going to Bible Colleges, and in preaching the error as a associate pastor

and as a pastor in the Baptist Denomination - YET because I was willing to “hear” and “learn” of the Father, He led me out of that error. I didn’t have books like this to explain it all to me either. I know that my willingness to exercise “self-abandoning honesty” was a key to being able to understand truth and walk in it. It is the same for all men – **FOR THERE IS NO RESPECT OF PERSONS WITH GOD.**