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## The Calling of God

2 Peter 1:8-10, *“For if these qualities [the dramatic seven chorus line] are yours and keep on increasing [are ready for action], they prevent you from being useless [ineffective] nor unfruitful [unproductive] in the epignosis knowledge [metabolized doctrine] of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these qualities [fails to develop these virtues, the dramatic seven chorus line] is mentally blind or short-sighted [unaware of the true meaning of life], having forgotten his purification from his former [past] sins. Therefore, brethren, be motivated even more to make your calling and election a spiritual reality.”*

The calling of God is an invitation whereby grace can change you; however, you must respond to the invitation. The calling of God simply means that God broke the silence between God and man; He reached out to us. The call of God reveals the mechanics of salvation and is the divine invitation to participate in the greatest victory ever won. The Lord Jesus Christ invites us to “Come to Me” in Matthew 11:28; John 5:39-40, 6:37,44-45, 7:37-39. “Come to Me” is a very important phrase; this refers to believing upon the Lord Jesus Christ, not asking Him to come to you. The unbeliever responds to God’s invitation; he does not invite God anywhere.

**No one has ever been saved by “inviting Christ into his heart.”** We do not invite the Lord Jesus Christ into our heart because our heart is deceitful and wicked, Jeremiah 17:9. Apostate teachers propose substitutes in place of faith, such as “inviting Christ into your life,” which an unbeliever could never do, because he has an old sin nature and has not yet been regenerated by God the Holy Spirit, Ephesians 4:22. He invites us to come to Him; we do not invite Him to come to us. This is a vital matter of accuracy, as we are dealing with salvation itself. Throughout His Word, God demands accuracy, and demands what is right. In Galatians 1:6 Paul says, “I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel.” The “different gospel” was faith plus works, instead of faith alone in Christ alone.

The invitation is from God to us, not from us to God when we are still spiritually dead. He initiates to us; we do not initiate to Him. We must be accurate in every phase of understanding the grace of God, or else a little deviation will apply some form of human power to being saved, Romans 11:6, “But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.” God does all the work, and that is grace.

When you respond to the invitation and believe in Christ, God provides everything you need in salvation, 1 Thessalonians 5:24. You must realize the calling of God upon your life—the divine invitation to participate in the greatest victory ever won.

The call of God includes 2 concepts:

- The invitation of God the Father to believe in Jesus Christ
- The election of the believer

The invitation of God the Father to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is the logical and inevitable result of the doctrine of common grace. Once a person listens to the Gospel, God the Holy Spirit makes that information understandable. Therefore, once the Gospel is presented, the invitation from God the Father is given to the spiritually dead person to believe in Jesus Christ. The scripture calls this the “calling of God.” The call of God follows the ministry of God the Holy Spirit in common grace. The call of God is said to originate from God the Father in Romans 8:28-30, and from both God the Father and God the Son in Romans 1:1-7. And we read in Romans 11:29, “The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.” Even though God knows who will respond and who will not, He still sends out the invitation, in the doctrine of the unlimited atonement.

Paul wrote in 1 Colossians 1:23-29, “But we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, that no man should boast before God.” We should think about and consider the calling of God upon our life and the privilege of receiving the divine invitation.

What you were before is not the issue; what you are now as a Christian is what matters. You are a new creature in Christ, and the only issue now is your spiritual life, which is based on divine policy of grace. As a part of our calling we need to understand that we are now Royal Family of God, and the issue is Bible doctrine, not human achievement. In Ephesians 4:1, Paul said, “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called.” He goes on in Ephesians 4:4, “There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling.” The “hope of your calling” is the absolute confidence that when you believe in Jesus Christ you have eternal life and tremendous blessings designed personally for you by God in eternity past.

Paul wrote about our calling again in 2 Thessalonians 1:11a, “To this end also we pray for you always that our God may count you worthy of your calling...” The “calling of God” is the doorway into election, where the believer has the opportunity to receive God’s highest and best. The word “worthy” is the Greek verb *axios*, meaning to be

deemed worthy, due something, fit for something, or suitable for something. This cannot be talking about salvation because in Ephesians 2:8-9 we read, “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works that no one should boast.” Then what are we to be deemed worthy, due, fit, or suitable for? To be counted “worthy of your calling” means to receive the highest and the best that God has elected you to receive, beginning experientially the moment that He called you into the kingdom of His Son. Your calling is the doorway into election, where you have the opportunity to receive God’s highest and best, therefore 2 Thessalonians 1:11 continues, “...fulfilling every desire for goodness and the work of faith with His power.” You have the opportunity to participate in the greatest victory ever won, which is the result of the greatest battle ever fought in Colossians 2:14, “Having cancelled out the certificate of debt which was against us by means of the decrees, and which was hostile to us and He [by means of the divine decrees] has taken it out of the way having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.” The Lord has overcome Satan, sin, and death, and we have been called to live the spiritual life through the fulfillment of the dramatic seven chorus line, whereby our personal drama brings glory to God.

The means of God calling you is through the Gospel, to receive the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, “But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. And it was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” We are called through the Gospel, and the calling of God has many purposes attached to it:

- **We are called into fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.** 1 Corinthians 1:9. This fellowship is to take place in time when we “make our calling and election a spiritual reality.”
- **We are called into His kingdom and glory.** 1 Thessalonians 2:9-12. When we make our calling and election a spiritual reality, we receive what it means to be a part of His kingdom and receive His glory. His kingdom on earth is found in the predesigned plan of God for your life. His kingdom in heaven is the perfect place where we will live forever with Him. His glory is manifested by His character and nature, as well as all the divine blessing that comes from participating in the greatest victory ever won.
- **We are also called into eternal life.** 1 Timothy 6:12. We are to take hold of this life now, not just in the eternal state. This refers to an extraordinary peace that God desires for us to experience even in time.
- **We are called to enjoy eternal life.** When we make our calling and election a spiritual reality, we enjoy the spiritual life (which is eternal life), in this life, Philippians 3:10-11. We can experience resurrection life now in time, Romans 6:4. If you stick with the plan of God, you will go through times when you will experience death to the self-life, and then experience the newness of life, resurrection life. We do not always understand the will of God, but to trust His sovereignty completely is another matter, and this leads us to take hold of the eternal life to which we are called. The issue is “His will or yours?” To take hold

of eternal life will allow us to experience fantastic inner happiness, in Philippians 4:4. It will stop us from worrying and give us fantastic inner peace, Philippians 4:6-7, a fantastic positive attitude toward life, Philippians 4:8, total contentment in any and every circumstance of life, Philippians 4:11-13, and phenomenal confidence that no matter what the odds, God will supply all our needs, Philippians 4:19. We will experience deliverance from the bondage of the world and the stronghold of the cosmic system.

- **We are called into His sufferings.** 1 Peter 2:21.
- **We are called to inherit blessings** 1 Peter 3:9.
- **We are called into eternal glory,** 1 Peter 5:10.
- **We are called into liberty and freedom,** Galatians 5:13.
- **We are called into peace,** Colossians 3:15.
- **We are called out of darkness,** 1 Peter 2:9.
- **We are called according to a predesigned plan,** Romans 8:28.
- **We were called to receive an inheritance,** Hebrews 9:15. Again, 2 Peter 1:10 exhorts us, “Therefore, brethren, be motivated even more to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble.”

The Greek word *eklogen*, translated “choosing,” means election the act of God picking you out. It is specifically used for the act of God’s sovereignty by which, before the foundation of the world, He decreed his blessings to believers. This does not just refer to salvation, which is just the beginning of election. It was God the Father who elected us, and He willed the highest and the best for each one of us. Therefore, He has given us equal privilege and equal opportunity to receive His highest and best and to participate in the greatest victory ever won.

Our study has now led us to a technical subject that makes our Christian life very meaningful. As a part of the motivation behind the dramatic seven chorus line, we need to understand the doctrine of election. You have been elected, and the question you should have is “elected to what?” You have been elected to receive God’s highest and best.

## **The Doctrine of Election**

Election is the expression of the sovereign will of God in eternity past, before the universe existed and before mankind lived on the earth. Election is the sovereign, absolute right that God has over His creation. Election is one of two important principles originating from the sovereignty of God (the other being predestination). Election, along with foreknowledge, predestination, justification, and glorification, are all “printouts” from the doctrine of the divine decrees and the sovereign will of God.

Foreknowledge is the aspect of God’s omniscience in which all things, past, present, future, eternal, material, intellectual and spiritual, and actual, are known by Him. His foreknowledge simultaneously knows every situation as well as every actual decision made by all His people.

Predestination is the provision of the sovereignty of God for you in eternity past to provide for you God's plan, purpose, and will for your life.

Justification is a judicial act of vindication, since we are born under condemnation, being spiritually dead. Justification is an official judicial act that occurs every time a person believes in Jesus Christ. The justice of God acts on our behalf, pronouncing us justified, which means having a relationship with God forever, and having the perfect righteousness of God imputed to us. Justification means that God recognizes His perfect righteousness in us.

Glorification is the act of God whereby ultimately the believer is conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

These fantastic benefits, direct from the sovereignty of God, belong only to believers and should give us tremendous confidence that God is with us.

Election applies to believers only (there is no such thing as double election, in which some are predestined to heaven and others predestined to the lake of fire), Rom 8:28-33, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called and elected; and whom He called and elected, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things [such as election]? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies." Like predestination, election is for believers only, Ephesians 1:4.

There is no election for an unbeliever; election deals exclusively with the blessing of God for the believer, Ephesians 1:3-6, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved."

In Matthew 22:14 the Lord Jesus Christ said, "For many are called, but few are chosen." The adjective *polloi*, translated "many," is used from a Jewish perspective which connotes both quantity and totality; therefore "all" would be an appropriate translation. This same word is used to mean "all" in Mark 10:48; Luke 10:40, 18:39. This comes out in Romans 8:29, "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren." The Lord Jesus Christ is not just the firstborn among many of the brethren; He is the firstborn of all brethren!

Polloi appears several times in the book of Romans, as in Romans 5:12, "Therefore, just as through one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and spiritual death through sin, and so spiritual death spread to all men, because all sinned." Romans 5:15-18 continues, "But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died [referring to "all men" in verse 12], much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. For if by the transgression of the one, death reined through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men." All men have been reconciled to God and have the opportunity, through faith in Christ, to be justified before God, Romans 5:19, "For as through the one man's disobedience the many [the entire human race] were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous."

Therefore, Matthew 22:14 reads, "For many [the entire human race] are called, but few are chosen [eklektoi, meaning elected]." The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. The Lord Jesus Christ paid the price for the sins of the entire human race on the Cross, and God extends the invitation to all, under the doctrine of the unlimited atonement. Therefore, "the many" (all men) are called, but few are elected.

Election is a benefit which expresses the sovereign will of God for each believer in the Royal Family during the Church-age. Therefore, election is the expression of the sovereign will of God for your life, whereas predestination is the provision of His sovereign will for your life. Predestination refers to the plan God has provided for each believer the predesigned plan of God, your personal sense of destiny, participating in the greatest victory ever won, and the fulfillment of your very own personal drama. Under election, the sovereignty of God willed the highest and best for every believer, having previously deposited that highest and best into escrow for us in eternity past.

The election of Christ brought in the hypostatic union, which is undiminished deity and true humanity in one person forever, 1 Timothy 2:5, "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the God-man Christ Jesus." He had to become true humanity to be our Savior, our great high priest, and our mediator.

The election of the Church brought in the new spiritual species, called the Church or Royal Family of God. It is also called the "new creation" in the Bible, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15.

The unique election of history: the Lord Jesus Christ. We begin with our Lord Jesus Christ because He was the lamb slain before the foundation of the world, Revelations 13:8, "And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has

been slain.” Our Lord Jesus Christ was elected under the salvation plan of God; He was elected, or chosen, before the foundation of the world to leave Heaven and to come to planet earth to die for the sins of the entire world. Our election was to privilege and blessing; His election was to death and suffering. Is it any wonder why the Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 8:9, “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.”

Our Lord’s election under the salvation plan of God was visualized in water baptism. The baptism of Jesus Christ was unique in Matthew 3:13-14, “Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. But John tried to prevent Him, saying, ‘I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?’” John recognized Jesus Christ’s impeccability and at first refused to baptize Him. In Matthew 3:15, “But Jesus answering said to him, ‘Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’” The water represented something new—the Father’s plan and will for the dispensation of the hypostatic union. Our Lord was now to begin His public ministry and eventually to go to the cross and be judged for the personal sins of mankind. Matthew 3:16-17 continues, “And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.’”

The election of Jesus Christ was impossible without logistical grace support provided for Him. Logistics is a military term referring to the military science of supply, provision, and planning of troop movements, necessary to sustain military forces. Logistics always plays a vital role in warfare, but more importantly, it is essential to your life as a believer. Every believer is alive today because of logistical grace, which is defined as divine planning, support, provision, and blessing for the execution of predesigned plan of God by the Royal Family, for the fulfillment of God’s will, purpose, and plan for your life.

Election is closely related to logistics, for it is logistical grace support allows you to fulfill your election by becoming a spiritual champion. The Cross was the ultimate in logistical support. Jesus Christ was sustained and kept alive until He could bear all sins, Heb 9:14, “Through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God.” Had logistical support been withdrawn, there would be no salvation for us.

#### The Election of Israel.

Israel became the first client nation in history in 1441 B.C. In the Jewish age, there were four Jewish client nations:

1. The United Kingdom, 1440–926 B.C.
2. The two separate client nations of the Northern and Southern kingdoms, 926–721 B.C.
3. The Southern Kingdom, 926–586 B.C.
4. Judah, 516 B.C.–A.D. 70.

The function, prosperity, and perpetuation of a client nation always depend on a certain percentage of mature believers. The election of Israel, as with all elections, applies only to those who have personally believed in Jesus Christ, and our Lord Jesus Christ was very clearly revealed to the Jews in the Old Testament; therefore, those who believed in Christ had an election and a plan. An election from God plus a plan from God equals a destiny. The election of Israel began a new racial species, beginning with Abraham at age 99. "True Israel" refers only to those who were born again, Romans 9-11.

The Election of the Church. Like the other two elections, the Church was elected to execute a plan—the predesigned plan of God. Since A.D. 70, the Royal Family of God has produced invisible heroes for the Gentile client nations. The Church-age believer must not only understand his relationship to God, but his relationship to man and history as well. In fulfilling our relationship to God, we fulfill our relationship to man and history. Understand our election is necessary to glorify God, 1 Thessalonians 1:4, "Knowing, brethren, beloved of God, His election for you.

In fulfilling our relationship to God, we fulfill our relationship to man and history. Understand our election is necessary to glorify God, 1 Thessalonians 1:4, "Knowing, brethren, beloved of God, His election for you." To understand your election, you must function under grace orientation, Colossians 3:12. Understanding election is orientation to the plan of God for your life, 2 Timothy 1:9. Works have no relation to our election, Romans 8:33. Knowledge of doctrine is essential to fulfilling our election to privilege, Tit 1:1. Election means we are responsible to preserve the client nation by advancing spiritually.

You were designed for God's pleasure, Revelations 4:11, Psalm 149:4. God did not need to create you, but he chose to create you for his own enjoyment, and you exist for His benefit, His glory, His purpose, and His delight. Living for His pleasure is the first purpose of your election. Once you fully understand this, you will never again have a problem with feeling insignificant. If God considers you valuable enough to keep you with Him for all eternity, what greater significance could you have? The Bible teaches that because of His love He made us His children through His Son, Ephesians 1:5.

One of the greatest gifts God has given you is the ability to enjoy pleasure. He wants you to enjoy life, not just endure it. The reason you are able to enjoy pleasure is that God made you in His image. We often forget that God is a person, and although He describes Himself to us in anthropopathic and anthropomorphic ways, in His own way, He has feeling as well; He is not unsympathetic, or stone-hearted. He feels things very deeply as only deity can. The Bible tells us that God grieves, is jealous and angry, and feels compassion, pity, sorrow, and sympathy, as well as happiness, gladness, and satisfaction. God loves, delights, rejoices, and even laughs. Bringing pleasure to God is called "worship" in His Word, which says in Psalm 147:11, "The Lord is pleased only with those who worship him and trust his love."

Worship is a universal urge, placed in the heart of man by God, into the very fiber of man's being, Ecclesiastes 3:11. If we fail to worship God, we always find a substitute,



even if it ends up being ourselves. The reason God made us with this desire is that He desires worshipers, John 4:23. You may think of church services with singing, praying, communion, and hearing God's Word as worship, but, while worship can include these elements, it goes far beyond them. Worship is a lifestyle, and it is for our benefit, only because we worship for God's benefit. When we worship, our goal is to bring pleasure to God, not ourselves. Worship is not for us; it is for God. Our motive must always be to bring glory and pleasure to our Creator.

Election was provided before the creation of the world (Eph 1:4). As always, the kingdom of darkness has promoted false doctrine to blind believers from the real meaning that God intended. Election has nothing to do with God violating someone's free will (as hyper-Calvinism teaches); election relates to the experiential phase of God's plan for our lives. When the believer is inside the predesigned plan of God, the Holy Spirit controls his soul, and the old sin nature is restrained in his body.

Believers are commanded to make their calling and election a spiritual reality in 2 Peter 1:10-11, "Therefore brethren, be all the more diligent [more motivated, from your perception of doctrine and recognizing your invisible assets] to make your calling and election a spiritual reality. For as long as you practice these things [making your calling and election a spiritual reality through the perception of doctrine, resulting in the fulfillment of the predesigned plan of God], you will never stumble [become a loser in cosmic system]. For in this way [execution of the predesigned plan of God in time], your entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ [at the judgment seat of Christ, when we enter the state of ultimate sanctification in the resurrection body] will be abundantly supplied to you [conveyance of the escrow blessings to winners in the eternal state].

What does this all mean? This brings out a very important aspect of election—tapping into the eternal riches that God elected you to receive. There are three status quo's of the believer's existence. The first is the temporal state, from the time of salvation until either physical death or the Rapture. The temporal state is the time for the believer to choose the predesigned plan of God, for it is here that he either becomes a winner or a loser, either rich or poor. The conveyance of the wealth that God has elected you to receive in time means that you will be rich forever in a resurrected body. The term "loser" never means loss of salvation; it simply means spiritually poor in time and the lowest rank, with no rewards, in eternity. Winners will be spiritually rich in time and in eternity.

The second state of the believer is called the interim state. This is the state of the believer from physical death to the resurrection. After physical death, the believer is, in 2 Corinthians 5:8, "Absent from the body and face-to-face with the Lord." At this time, winners and losers are in a state of equality; both have interim bodies and great happiness, and no distinctions are made in the interim state. (The only generation of Church-age believers that will skip the interim state is the Rapture generation.)

The third state is the eternal state, which begins with the resurrected body at the Rapture of the Church. The eternal state is the status quo of a resurrected body, having great

decorations or having none at all. The judgment seat of Christ determines “rich and poor” and “winner and loser” in the spiritual realm. Under election, God willed for you to be a winner and be rich; however, you can reject that which God wills. God’s desire is to bless you, and He has; however, your desires can cause you to reject His blessings, 2 Peter 3:9, “The Lord is not willing for any to perish but for all to come to a change of mind [repentance].”

Our passage in 2 Peter 1:11 continues, “For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.” The Greek adverb *plousios*, translated “entrance,” means wealth and riches; it means to yield something abundantly, or to present in large quantity. Then comes the phrase “will be supplied,” which is translated from a verb we know well *epichoregeo*, meaning to furnish, supply, and provide, specifically to supply all that is needed to be successful. The future tense shows that some believers (at least a small minority) are going to make their calling and election sure and enter the eternal state rich. They will be winners with eternal rewards and decorations. They will have privileges that extend above and beyond the resurrected body and ultimate sanctification. The future tense also points toward the judgment seat of Christ and the rewards awaiting winner believers. This is the culmination of wealth and riches “exceeding abundantly above all we could ask or think” (Ephesians 3:20) being conveyed unto us. For those believers who fulfill their election and stay faithful the plan of God in time, there are fantastic blessings awaiting them, the continuation of their blessings in time.

Let us review several points: God has blessed us with every spiritual Blessing for life and godliness (function of spiritual life).

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Glorification is the act of God whereby ultimately the believer is conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Under election, the sovereignty of God willed the highest and best for every believer, having previously deposited that highest and best into an escrow account in eternity past. Not only do you have a magnificent destiny under the predesigned plan of God, but you also have the same privileges and opportunities as all other believers for the execution of that plan.

**There are three elections in history:**

- Israel under the ritual plan of God, Deuteronomy 7:6, Isaiah 45:4.
- Christ under the incarnation plan of God, Matthew 12:18, Luke 9:35, Isaiah 42:1.
- The Church under the predesigned plan of God, Colossians 3:12.

**Each election brought a new category of species into history:**

- The election of Israel brought in the new racial species, the Jew. God chose Abraham to become the father of the Jewish race, Genesis 18:19.
- The election of Christ brought in the hypostatic union, which is undiminished deity and true humanity in one person forever, 1 Timothy 2:5. He had to become true humanity to be our Savior, our great high priest, and our mediator.
- The election of the Church brought in the new spiritual species, called the Church or Royal Family of God. It is also called the “new creation” in the Bible, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15.

**The unique election of history: the Lord Jesus Christ:**

Our Lord Jesus Christ was elected under the salvation plan of God; He was elected, or chosen, before the foundation of the world to leave Heaven and come to planet earth to die for the sins of the world. Our election was to privilege and blessing; His election was to death and suffering.

**The Election of Israel:**

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### **The Election of the Church:**

Like the other two elections, the Church was elected to execute a plan, which we call the predesigned plan of God. There are several important principles concerning our election that we need to understand:

- There will be rich and poor believers forever in the eternal state. They will not be poor as we think of poor, but they will suffer the loss of rewards and privileges that they had been elected to receive.
- In the temporal state, the believer is either a winner or a loser, either rich or poor. You may or may not receive the wealth of your escrow account, depending on whether you fulfill the conditions, i.e., the predesigned plan of God.
- The conveyance of the wealth that God has elected you to receive in time means that you will be rich forever in eternity.
- Winners will be spiritually rich in time and spiritually rich in eternity. These are the phenomenal spiritual blessings provided for every believer, which include true love, peace, contentment, inner happiness, confidence, security, courage, freedom, and abundant life.
- God willed for you to be a winner and be rich; however, you can reject what God wills. God's desire is to bless you, and He has, but your desires can cause you to reject His blessings. The first conveyance, the "down payment," of these blessings and privileges occurs in time, and spiritual capacity and maturity are needed to experience and appreciate these blessings. The second conveyance occurs at the judgment seat of Christ, and it will be overwhelming to the winner believer. We refer to these blessings as crowns, decorations, rewards, and privileges, but those descriptions do not even begin to describe the fantastic things that God has elected every single one of us to have, 1 Corinthians 2:9, Ephesians 3:20-21.

Because all of us have a free will, there are differences among believers in time, and there will be even greater differences among believers in eternity. The concepts of rich and poor are simply a description of the difference that will exist between winners and losers, those who have shame and those who do not.

Why do they have shame? 1 Corinthians 15:33-34 says, "Do not be deceived: 'Bad company corrupts good morals. Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.'" The command to stop sinning is not a reference to sinless perfection, but to lack of knowledge of God, which is described as shameful and sinful. Self-motivation in the spiritual life avoids shame at the Judgment Seat of Christ, 2 Timothy 2:15, "Study to present yourself approved by God, a workman who does not need to be ashamed [at the judgment seat of Christ], handling accurately the word of truth."

The importance of fellowship with God in time to avoid shame at the judgment seat of Christ is brought out in 1 John 2:28, "And now my children, keep abiding in Him, that if He should appear [the rapture], we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him

in shame in His presence [Judgment seat of Christ]. To avoid shame at the judgment seat of Christ, the believer must use the invisible grace assets available to him.

You alone are the one who can live your spiritual life; your decisions right now in time determine whether you will be rich or poor forever. Shame for the believer is the embarrassment of failure to fulfill God's plan under the principle of equal privilege and equal opportunity and spiritual freedom. Believers become losers because they reject principles such as John 3:30, "He must increase, but I must decrease"; and Luke 14:26, "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate [love less] his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple."

Loser believers have the legacy of John 12:43, "For they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God." There will be perfect happiness and perfect contentment in heaven, but there will also be believers who suffered loss of rewards, a sign that they were losers in time. However, the very fact that the believer has eternal life in heaven in a resurrected body reveals that grace saved him, which in itself brings glory to God.

### **Election and the Believer's Escrow Account**

An escrow is a written agreement entered into by three parties called the obligor, the obligee, and the depository, for the transfer of certain privileges or benefits.

God the Father is the obligor, one who places himself under legal obligation. God the Father did so in eternity past when He provided both temporal and eternal blessings for every member of the Royal Family, and He made a promise, swearing by Himself (Hebrews 6:13).

The second party is the obligee, and the obligee is the Church-age believer. God the Father (the obligor) has placed Himself under obligation to the believer (the obligee). Therefore, God the Father is obligated to bless every believer who uses His invisible grace assets to advance to spiritual maturity. You are the obligee; your name is written in heaven. You have the same privilege and opportunity as every other believer, under the doctrine of election, of receiving your escrow blessings for time, and then for eternity at the judgment seat of Christ.

The third party is the depository; this is the person to whom all the deposits are entrusted. The depository is our Lord Jesus Christ in whom the blessings were deposited, in eternity past.

An escrow is a sealed agreement of the obligor (generally accompanied by the deed, bond, or possessions to be conveyed), made contingent on a certain future occurrence, or the performance of a specified action by the obligee. This agreement is delivered to the depository and held by him, pending the occurrence of the event or the required act of the obligee. When the conditions attached to the escrow have been fulfilled, the depository delivers the agreement and the promised wealth to the obligee.

The depository (custodian) is allowed no discretion; he must follow strictly the terms of the agreement as it concerns the other two parties. The depository and custodian is God the Son. In eternity past, God the Father deposited both temporal and eternal blessings with our Lord Jesus Christ in escrow, pending our future advance to spiritual maturity as the obligee, Ephesians 1:3, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”

Under the predesigned plan of God, and the sovereign will of God expressed in election, the Church-age believer is obligated to fulfill that plan, prior to receiving his blessings from escrow. Temporal blessings on deposit are transferred to the believer when he fulfills the predesigned plan of God in time (not to be confused with logistical grace blessings given to all believers, Mark 10:29-31, Luke 18:28-30). Eternal blessings are transferred to the mature believer after the rapture at the judgment seat of Christ, where the winner is awarded special decorations, 2 Corinthians 5:10. This sealed agreement including two categories of blessings (temporal and eternal) was delivered to Jesus Christ in eternity past by God the Father, even before He expressed His sovereign will in election, and before He designed the predesigned plan of God in predestination, Eph 1:3. Justification is the mechanics for the transfer of temporal blessings; glorification is the mechanics for the transfer of eternal blessings, Romans 8:30.

Under the principle of election, God the Father is the author of the divine plan that reveals the fantastic things that He has prepared for those who love Him; He is the author of all worship, praise, honor, and adoration. Again, Ephesians 1:3-4 declares, “Worthy of praise and glorification be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He elected us in Him before the foundation of the world.” The word for “blessed” is the Greek adjective *eulogetos*, meaning “worthy of praise and glorification.” It has the connotation of appreciating God the Father for His fantastic plan, which staggers the imagination. The verb “has blessed” is translated from the aorist participle form of the Greek verb *eulogesas*, which means “having already blessed.”

In the Greek language, when there is more than one verb in a sentence, the action of the aorist participles always recedes the action of the other verbs. The aorist participle in Ephesians 1:3 is “having blessed,” which comes before “He elected us.” Therefore, the very first thing God ever did was bless us! “Elected” is the main verb, the aorist middle indicative form of *eklego*, which means to elect. Election is the expression of the sovereignty of God, who wills the highest and best for every believer in Jesus Christ.

Therefore, He decreed to provide a portfolio of invisible assets for every believer by depositing, in escrow, the greatest blessings for every believer, before the believer was even elected. God decided to provide His highest and best for anyone who would believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ. He ordained that, under election, whoever believed upon His Son would have fantastic privileges and opportunities, Ephesians 1:3-4. We have been chosen or elected “in Christ” and have been given every spiritual blessing” imaginable!

The term “spiritual blessings” points to God the Father as the source, for they include temporal blessings as well as blessings in the spiritual realm.