

# Peace Adult Sunday School

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## *Chosen by God*

*Chosen by God* - R. C. Sproul

### Session 8 – Spiritual Death & Spiritual Life

A brief recap & context for today's session: Last week, we reviewed the Fall. We looked at some different views of the Genesis account: Mythological, Realist and Federalist. I argued that the Federalist best reflect the Biblical view.

So, now that we've established that it's real and affects us all, we'll investigate just how pervasive and penetrating the Fall is for us. I'll argue that it effects every aspect of our life (indeed, all life on earth) and it penetrated us to the point of spiritual death.

Given the degree and depth of the Fall, we'll see that there is no option for us to choose Christ but that he must turn our hearts to him before we can have saving faith.

First, however we'll have a brief additional apologetic for this study of predestination and then a refresher in some basis logic to help focus our discussion.

### ***An Apologetic: What benefit is there to studying the topic of predestination?***

In the first session, I provided some benefits to studying and adopting the doctrine of predestination (besides believing what is true) among which are comfort in knowing that my salvation depends on God, not me and likewise, while God chooses to use human agents in his work of drawing people to Himself (and I have a related obligation to share the gospel), the burden of evangelism isn't my ability to winsomely and clearly present the gospel, but on the Lord changing hearts.

Today, however, I want to step back and point out another dependence, namely, the emphasis our depending on God for our relationship with Him. It's not my cleverness or goodness that allows me to respond to God's call, but His power and grace. If we review the God's redemptive plan and interaction with His people, it is a story of our

# Peace Adult Sunday School

---

## *Chosen by God*

attempt to be independent of God and His work to recognize our dependence and live in it. I pray that I may fully lean into, embrace, and celebrate my constant, desperate need of Him. There is no plan of maturing to become less dependent on Him and leave the nest as we do with our earthly parents. Rather, we grow closer and enjoy the enfolding arms of His grace and strength as we mature. We can say with Paul, when I am weak, you are strong, not a lament of my weakness but recognizing that He makes me weak so that I will depend on Him. That is part of how we glorify and enjoy Him.

If we look at the first sin, we look at a sin of independence – I don't want to depend on God for informing and guiding me on good and evil, I'll pop this bit of fruit down and be able to do it myself – I'll be like God. (Genesis 3: 3-6). We see in the tower of Babel. We see God working to train His children, the Israelites, through daily manna rather than a weekly grocery store run. We see in being guided by the pillar of fire and cloud. We see it as the disciples wait in the upper room for the coming of the Holy Spirit before they can begin ministry. Jesus emphasizes our dependence in the parable of the vine in John 15:1-7.

Predestination says that we are completely, spiritually dead so that God needs to provide that spark of new life before we can even turn to Him. We are completely dependent on Him. It is in God that "we live and move and have our being" (Act 17:28).

### *A basic logic intermission*

Old school syllogism - All men are mortal

- No men are able to run 300 miles per hour.

Conditional logic - If p then q (if you live in Keflavik then you live in Iceland)

Necessary and sufficient conditions

Oxygen is a necessary condition for fire

As anyone who camps knows, it's not a sufficient condition.

# Peace Adult Sunday School

---

## *Chosen by God*

Playing a trumpet is a sufficient condition for being a brass player but it's not a necessary condition; you could play French Horn.

Joe will run the London Marathon if and only if he's paid 1 million dollars

- a necessary condition - 1 million
- a sufficient condition - 1 million

## *The Depth of the Fall*

Let's apply this logic to some passage about coming to saving faith:

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. (John 6:44 ESV)

[61] But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, "Do you take offense at this? [62] Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? [63] *It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all* [Emphasis mine]. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. [64] But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) [65] And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." (John 6:61-65 ESV)

None is righteous, no, not one;  
no one understands;  
no one seeks for God.  
All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;  
no one does good,  
not even one." (Romans 3:10-12 ESV)

[5] The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6:5 ESV)

But wait, what about Noah was his thought only evil? The Bible says:

# Peace Adult Sunday School

---

## *Chosen by God*

[8] But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

[9] These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. (Genesis 6:8-9 ESV)

Is he blameless because he didn't sin? No. it was because of favor (*hen* or grace) with God. Whenever you read that someone found favor in God's eyes, be it Noah or Abraham is finding grace. As Skip Moen puts it:

**Favor** – It comes as no surprise that the Hebrew noun translated “favor” is *hen*. Usually understood as grace, the word is crucial for recognizing that God's actions toward men are not motivated by Man's essential goodness but rather by the nature and character of God Himself. Favor (grace) is the demonstration of blessing toward another simply on the basis of the *need* of the other. Favor exhibits a heart willing to act with benevolence toward someone else regardless of the actual spiritual or moral condition of the other person. It is help motivated by compassion alone. - [The Backwards Man | Hebrew Word Study | Skip Moen](#)

Going back to 6:44 – how many people can come to the father without being drawn (dragged) to Him – none – zero. Being drawn is a necessary condition to coming Jesus (having saving faith in Him). It turns out that it's a sufficient condition as well, but this passage doesn't support that conclusion and it's a separate topic.

# Peace Adult Sunday School

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## *Chosen by God*

### **Regeneration must precede faith.**

The lovely things kept me far from you, though if they did not have their existence in you, they had no existence at all. You called and cried out loud and shattered my deafness. You were radiant and resplendent, you put to flight my blindness.

Augustine, Saint; Henry Chadwick. *The Confessions* (Oxford World's Classics) (p. 201). OUP Oxford. Kindle Edition.

[3] Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John 3:3 ESV)

We can't even see the kingdom of God, let alone enter it, without being born again. That is in the old man, the flesh.

For non-Reformed views the flesh not only profits something, it profits the most important thing a person could ever gain—entrance into the kingdom by believing on Christ. If a person who is still in the flesh, who is not yet reborn by the power of the Holy Spirit, can incline or dispose himself to Christ, what good is rebirth? This is the fatal flaw of non-Reformed views. They fail to take seriously man's moral inability, the moral impotency of the flesh.

Sproul, R. C.. *Chosen by God* (p. 55). Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.

### **TULIP**

T—Total Depravity

U—Unconditional Election

L—Limited Atonement

I—Irresistible Grace

P—Perseverance of the Saints

Total depravity (not utter) - “radical corruption” radical – root

# Peace Adult Sunday School

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*Chosen by God*

## History and Etymology for *radical*

### **Adjective**

Middle English, from Late Latin *radicalis*, from Latin *radic-*, *radix* root — more at [ROOT](#)

Merriam Webster Dictionary (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/radical>)

People do not seek God. They seek after the benefits that only God can give them. The sin of fallen man is this: Man seeks the benefits of God while at the same time fleeing from God himself. We are, by nature, fugitives.

Sproul, R. C.. Chosen by God (p. 86). Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.

By faith alone, by grace alone, to the glory of God alone (*sola fide, sola gratia, and soli Deo gloria.*)

Irresistible grace

Effectual grace

The term effectual grace may help to avoid some confusion. Effectual grace is grace that effects what God desires.

Sproul, R. C.. Chosen by God (p. 97). Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.