

Concerning us trusting Christ for Salvation
...“because God hath from the beginning **chosen** you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: (2nd Thes. 2:13)

WHY does God choose and call people to Himself? For His own purposes and for His glory. “Who hath saved us, and **called** us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,” (2nd Timothy 1:9)

God says of those who are His chosen body of believers, His church... “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.” (Romans 8:28) “According as He hath **chosen us** in Him before the foundation of the world...” (Ephesians 1:4) “But you are a **chosen** generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people (people for God’s own possession)...that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath **called you out** of darkness into His marvelous light.” (1st Peter 2:9)

Why God’s sovereign control is best, both for His glory and our JOY...

1. God gets all the glory. No person will be in Heaven boasting of “their wisdom for choosing Christ.” Salvation is TOTALLY by God’s grace alone... from beginning to end, **so only God will get the credit, the glory and the praise.**

2. We should be encouraged to evangelism and missions... knowing God **is watching** and wants to show His saving grace through us believers. (2nd Chronicles 16:9) If we live obediently and give out His Word, God wants to give us “Divine Encounters” with people for their salvation for His glory and **for our joy. When we meet people who respond to the Gospel through our witness and they trust Christ for their salvation, they did so because God chose and enabled them to come to Him.**

3. God began and will complete His choice, His calling and His purposes for our lives. “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained (from before the foundation of the world) that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10) “Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:6)

Our Responsibilities...

1. All people are without excuse before God from the fact of creation alone. (Romans 1:20)

2. When people hear the Gospel, the Holy Spirit convicts them of their sin and they understand that Christ died to pay for their sins, they are responsible to respond. “He that believes in Him (Christ) is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already” (John 3:18)

Have you responded to God? Are you trusting the Lord Jesus Christ alone (100%) for your salvation? YES___ NO___

3. As believers, our complete trust should be in our MASTER POTTER... the Lord Jesus Christ. He knows what is best for us and we should never doubt His wisdom for us. Our responsibility should be our trust, obedience and **gratitude.** (1st Thessalonians 5:18)

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Clay in the Potter’s Hands



By Leon Bates

The Teacup *(Author Unknown)*

There was a couple who used to go to England to shop in the beautiful stores. They both liked antiques and pottery, especially teacups. This was their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. In this unique shop they saw a beautiful teacup. It was unlike any other they had ever seen. They said, "May we see it?" We've never seen one quite so beautiful." As the shop owner handed it to them, **suddenly the teacup spoke...**

"You don't understand," it said. "I haven't always been a teacup. There was a time when I was a piece of old, hard red clay. My master took me and rolled me and patted me over and over and I yelled out, 'Let me alone!' But he only smiled and said, 'Not yet.'"



"Then I was placed on a spinning wheel," the teacup said, "and suddenly I was spun around and around and around. 'Stop it! I'm getting dizzy!' I screamed. But the master only nodded and said, 'Not yet.'"

"Then he put me in the oven. I never felt such heat. I wondered why he wanted to burn me, and I yelled and knocked at the door. I could see him through the opening and I could read his lips as he shook his head, 'Not yet.'"

"Finally the door opened, he put me on the shelf, and I began to cool. 'There, that's better,' I said. Then he brushed and painted me all over. The fumes were horrible. I thought I would gag. 'Stop it, stop it!' I cried. He only nodded. 'Not yet!'"

"And suddenly he put me back into the oven, not like the first one. This was twice as hot and I knew I would suffocate. I begged, I pleaded, I screamed, I cried. All the time I could see him through the opening nodding his head saying, 'Not yet.'"

"Then I knew there wasn't any hope. I would never make it. I was ready to give up. But the door opened and he took me out and placed me on the shelf. An hour later he handed me a mirror and said, 'Look at you.' I did. I said, 'That's not me; that couldn't be me. It's beautiful... I'm beautiful.'"

"I want you to remember; then, 'he said,' I know it hurts to be rolled and patted, but if I had left you alone, you'd have dried up. I knew it made you dizzy to spin around on the wheel, but if I had stopped, you would have crumbled. I knew it hurt and was hot and disagreeable in the oven, but if I hadn't put you there. You would have cracked.

I know the fumes were bad when I brushed and painted you all over, but if I hadn't done that, you never would have hardened; you would not have had color in your life. And if I hadn't put you back in that second oven, you wouldn't survive very long because the hardness would not have held. **Now you are a finished product. You are what I had in mind when I first began you.**

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God knows what He's doing (for all of us). He is the Potter, and we are His clay. He will mold us and make us, so that we may be made into a flawless piece of work to fulfill His good, pleasing and perfect will.

There are some age old questions like: "Does God choose us?" or "Do we choose to accept or reject Christ as our Savior on our own?" "Is God sovereign, in total control of our lives?" If you've wondered about this, the following may help...

I've often asked audiences, "How many of you believe a person can be saved anytime?" Hands are always raised. (*Wrong answer.*) If I'd asked, "Can a person be saved anytime they wanted to?"... *that is an entirely different question.* **God has to put the "want to" into our hearts.** Jesus said, "All that the Father gives Me shall come to me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. **No one comes to me unless the Father who sent Me draws him.**" (John 6:37, 44)

It's clear from God's Word that unsaved people **can not and will not** seek God on their own apart from God's grace (*His unmerited, un-earned, un-earnable mercy to us.*)

The writer of the song, "Amazing Grace" must have understood this. Notice the words of verse two... "Twas grace that **taught my heart to fear** and grace my fears relieved."

LOGIC asks, "Is it fair that God **chooses** about our salvation and our lives?" That's where the issue is... between LOGIC (*human thinking*) and the Bible, God's written Word. What **does** it say?

God told Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." (Romans 9:15)

Clay in the potters hand... "... Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor (common use)?" (Romans 9:20, 21)

To Israel, God said, "For you are a holy people to the Lord your God: the Lord your God has **chosen** you to be a people for His own possession out of all peoples who are on the face of the earth." (Deut. 7:6)

Concerning Paul, God said, "Go, for he is a **chosen** instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel;" (Acts 9:15)