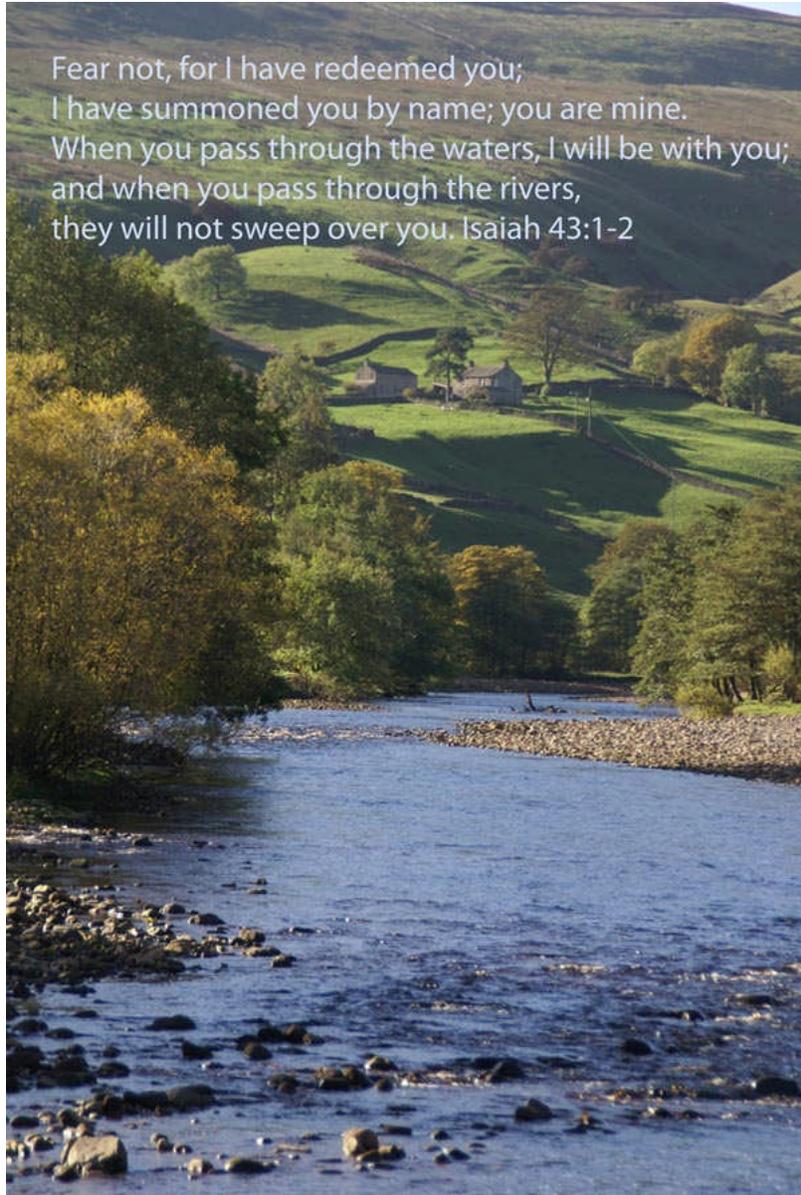


The Sovereign Grace New Testament in Summary

Dr. Stanford E. Murrell



“Oh, my brethern, you will not do better than to quote Scripture, especially in prayer. There are no prayers so good as those that are full of the Word of God.”

Charles H. Spurgeon

Doctrine	First Reference	
T = Total Depravity	Matthew	7:16
U = Unconditional Election	Matthew	11:27
L = Limited Atonement	Matthew	1:21
I = Irresistible Grace	John	1:12
P = Perseverance of the Saints	Matthew	18:12
S = Sovereignty of God	Matthew	11:25
B = The Bondage of the Will	John	1:13
W = The World for Whom Christ Died	Matthew	20:28
RR = The Romans' Road	Romans	3:10

Special Note.

This work is not to be read in the manner of a regular book but as an extraction of select verses from the New Testament (KJV) setting forth the doctrines of grace. In order to trace each of these doctrines in a chain reference begin with the first verse listed. By way of illustration, for the scriptural teaching on “Total Depravity” turn first to Matthew 7:16. The next reference will be marked by a “T” in the note at the end of the verse. By the “T” will be the next passage to turn to. If the Lord wills the complete Sovereign Grace New Testament will one day be printed.

Sovereign Grace New Testament

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NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

<i>The Gospels</i>	<i>Chapters</i>
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<i>History</i>	
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24. Second John	1
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26. Jude	1
<i>Prophecy</i>	
27. Revelation	22

260 Chapters / 7, 959 verses

A Historical Framework

On October 31, 1517, a thirty-four year old monk named Martin Luther (1483-1546) nailed a document to the castle Church door in the German town of Wittenberg. The objective of Luther in posting his document was to invite scholars to debate whether ninety-five specific teachings within Christendom were true. While Luther was immediately concerned about the sale of indulgences with reference to papal forgiveness of sins the conscientious priest was alarmed by other issues affecting the spiritual life of his parishioners. Of paramount concern was the way of salvation.

For many years Luther had questioned whether a person was declared righteous before God because of good works. Illuminated by God the Holy Spirit, Luther was led to understand that, "the just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17). The only basis for being justified before God is by His grace through faith apart from human merit (Rom. 3:10, 20; 6:23; Eph. 2:8,9). Once Luther understood the doctrine of justification he gave himself wholly to proclaiming the mercies of the free grace of God.

John Calvin and the Second Generation

Among those who came to understand the sovereignty of God in salvation and the affairs of the universe was John Calvin. Calvin was born in Noyon, France, on July 10, 1509. Though he was a boy when the Reformation began, Calvin was destined to become a leader in the world-changing movement. Reaching maturity and being a gifted writer, Calvin gave to the Church many literary works including the Institutes of Christian Religion which set forth in a systematic way the doctrines of the Christian faith from the perspective of the Reformers. This work stressed the sovereignty of God in all matters with special attention paid to the salvation of the Lord's elect.

The Influence of Jacob Arminius

A leading opponent to the teaching of sovereign grace as set forth by Calvin and other Reformation leaders was Jacob Arminius (d. 1609). Born in 1560, Arminius was an exceptional preacher and a capable scholar who struggled with the implications of the doctrine of predestination, election, the place of good works, and eternal salvation.

As a seminary professor at the University of Leiden, Arminius was able to vocalize his concerns to his students. They in turn discussed their ideas with others. Strong opposition began to spread within the Reformed Churches.

A Cry of Alarm

By 1610 in the Netherlands, the followers of Arminius (Remonstrants) had become confident of their theological position. They were also enjoying new political power. In 1610 some leading figures gathered at Gouda and drew up a document summarizing their fundamental beliefs in five main points. It was this document (called the Remonstrance), that was formally examined at an official Church council that met in the city of Dort in 1618-19. While the views of Jacobus Arminius and his followers were formally set aside by the Synod of Dort, the council was forced to crystallize what it believed the Bible taught on many issues. One result was an enduring acrostic (T.U.L.I.P.), which has been used to help Christians understand the doctrines of sovereign grace ever since.

The Greatness of our Gracious God in the Salvation of the Souls of Men

The graciousness of God in the matter of salvation is found in that He humbles individuals by revealing the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the desperate condition in which sin has left mankind.

Against the black backdrop of evil, the glorious gospel shines by proclaiming the good news that, despite the plight of man, the power of God to redeem is present. The Scriptures reveal that from the sea of fallen humanity God has selected precious souls to be the object of His redeeming grace.

While it is certain that some individuals such as Pharaoh and Judas Iscariot will be confirmed in their wickedness (Rom. 9:17; Jude 4), others will be set free from sin's bondage. These elect will be restored to everlasting fellowship with the Lord. Those who are loved by the Father, redeemed by Christ, and drawn by the Holy Spirit will persevere in good works as they are kept by the power of God unto salvation. In the act of man's salvation or ultimate condemnation, God will be glorified through the expression of mercy or the extraction of justice. "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off" (Rom. 11:22).

Any person can know if he or she is among the elect of God. Any person can know if he or she is among those for whom Christ died by embracing in faith this gospel promise: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

A brief summary of the doctrines of sovereign grace is here set forth.

Total Depravity is the teaching that establishes the complete inability of man to save himself or have any part in saving himself because of the effect of sin in the soul. The sin of man is extensive as well as intensive. While individuals may not be as bad as they can be at any given moment, they are as bad off as they can be. The effect of the fall upon man is that sin has corrupted every part of his personality, intelligence, emotions, and will. The unregenerate (unsaved) person is declared to be "dead" in sin (Romans 5:12). Apart from the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, the natural man is "blind" and "deaf" to the message of the gospel (Mark 4:11f). There is a natural but total inability to come to faith in Christ apart from a divine work of grace in the heart (Ephesians 2:1-5, 2:8,9).

Unconditional Election states that God has chosen, apart from human merit, those whom He is pleased to bring to knowledge of Himself. This divine selection was not based upon God's looking forward to see who would receive the offer of the gospel. The elect are chosen solely on the counsel of God's own will (James 1:18). Some individuals have been chosen for glory while the rest have been passed over (Romans 9:15,21; Jude 4). The act of election took place before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4-8). The doctrine of unconditional election does not diminish man's responsibility to believe in the redeeming work of God the Son (John 3:16-18). Scripture presents a tension between God's sovereignty in salvation and man's responsibility to believe, which tension it does not try to resolve. Divine sovereignty and human responsibility are both true. With respect to good works, the elect are saved in order to perform them (Ephesians 2:10). While good works will never unite a soul to God and become the basis of salvation, good works are a result of God's saving grace. Peter exhorts believers to make their "calling and election sure" (2 Peter 1:10). The root of righteousness bears the fruit of good works and indicates that God has sown the seed of gospel grace in the fertile soil of a regenerated heart.

Limited Atonement is the answer to the question, "For whose sins did Christ atone?" The Bible teaches that Christ died for those whom the Father gave Him to save (Matt. 26:28; John 17:9). Specifically, Christ died for the elect, which refers to all who will be born again (John 3:3; Ephesians 5:25). Belief in the doctrine of a definite redemption provides an incentive for evangelistic zeal and undergirds the presentation of the gospel. With confidence the soulwinner can share the Scripture, which promises that Christ will not lose any that the Father has given to Him. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

The death of Christ was not one of potential atonement for all people though it is ample to save all. Rather, Christ died to accomplish a real redemption for His people. On the night of the Lord's birth, the angels declared that Jesus had come to "save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). The atoning work of Christ was not designed to make men savable but to actually purchase their salvation by His own precious blood (1 Pet. 1:19). While the work of the Cross is sufficient for all, it is effectual for the elect. At Calvary Christ accomplished that which was real and lasting. The gospel message goes forth that Christ died for sinners and none will perish for whom He died. Therefore, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Irresistible Grace is the inevitable and positive response produced by the power of God in the elect to the inward call of the Holy Spirit when the outward call is given by the proclamation of the gospel. Christ Himself teaches that all whom God has elected will come to a sure knowledge of the truth (John 6:37). Individuals always come to Christ for salvation when the Father effectually calls them (John 6:44). The eternal and omnipotent Holy Spirit of Almighty God causes the elect to manifest genuine evangelical repentance (Romans 8:14). It is a source of great comfort and joy to know that the gospel of redeeming grace will wondrously save as it subdues the most hardened, sinful heart (I Peter 5:10).

Perseverance of the Saints is the Biblical doctrine which teaches that the elect whom God has chosen for salvation will eternally reside in His sovereign care. There is a divine certainty the elect will be brought to dwell with the Lord in heaven (John 14:1-4; Rom 8:28-39, Phil. 1:6). Christ assures His own they will not be lost but will be glorified at the last day (John 6:39). What Christ has promised He will perform.

The Gospel Invitation

*“Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, joined with power:
He is able, He is able,
He is willing: doubt no more.*

*Come, ye weary, heavy-laden,
Bruised and mangled by the Fall;
If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all;
Not the righteous, not the righteous-
Sinners Jesus came to call.*

*Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him:
This He gives you, this He gives you;
Tis the Spirit's rising beam.”*

Joseph Hart
1712-1768

Calling upon Christ

Romans 10:13 promises, *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”* If it is the desire of your heart to call upon the name of Christ for salvation then pray in this manner: *“Lord Jesus, I am coming to You by faith, admitting that I am a lost sinner, and in need of mercy and the forgiveness of sin. I am asking you to forgive me for all that I have done wrong, to come into my life, to save me, and to change me. Please make me the kind of person you would have me to be. Please give me the grace to trust You and You alone, Lord Jesus, for this so great salvation. In your name I pray, Lord Jesus. Amen.”*

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW
Written c. AD 58-68 presenting Christ as King

MATTHEW 1

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his Name Jesus [Heb. Joshua, lit. Jehovah-saved]: for he shall save his people from their sins.

L ♦ Matt 20:28 The design and extent of the atonement is set forth in limited terms. On the night of the birth of Christ the angels declared that He had come to save "His people from their sins".

MATTHEW 7

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

T ♦ Matt 7:17 The first point to understand in the doctrine of total depravity is that the nature of a person determines what fruit shall be manifested.

17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

T ♦ Matt 7:18 The "corrupt tree" refers to the nature of man as he is prior to conversion. David confessed that he was born in sin as is all humanity (Psa. 51:5 with 58:3).

18 A good tree cannot bring forth-evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

T ♦ Matt 7:23 Because individuals are born into sin and are by nature spiritually dead they need to be born "from above" if they are to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity!

T ♦ Matt 12:33 Apart from regeneration, men face a certain judgment for whatever "goodness" they offer to God in place of gospel repentance. Their "goodness" will be unacceptable. The key concept to comprehend is that man, according to nature, is totally without merit in every facet of his soul and therefore is not known by the Lord.

MATTHEW 11

25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

S ♦ Matt 11:26 "The sovereignty of God may be defined as the exercise of His supremacy. Being infinitely elevated above the highest creature is the Most High, Lord of heaven and earth. Subject to none, influenced by none, absolutely independent; God does as He pleases, only as He pleases, always as He pleases. None can thwart Him, none can hinder" (A.W.Pink). To His chosen ones the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are revealed.

26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.

S ♦ Matt 11:27

27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save [except] the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

U ♦ Matt 19:26 The doctrine of election teaches God decreed to show mercy and grace to some but not all members of the human race. Sin was no surprise to God. He knew that men would fall and that souls would need redeeming. In justice God could have left all men to themselves but He chose to save some and manifest His mercy. The doctrine of election must not be separated from the doctrine of man's total ruin and the grace of redemption for some. Many passages set forth the concept that God has an elect people whom He has predestinated to salvation and eternal life.

S ♦ Matt 15:13

MATTHEW 12

33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.

T ♦ Mark 7:21 The gospel calls upon men to recognize the true status of their hearts. An unclear understanding of the fallen nature will lead the unregenerate to minimize sin and the atoning work of the Savior.

An unclear understanding of the new nature will lead the regenerate to despair, or worse, to the acceptance of carnality as part of the normal Christian experience.

MATTHEW 15

13 But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

S ♦ Matt 16:17 The sovereignty of God is manifested in the salvation of souls. Only what God "plants" is pleasing in His sight and will be preserved.

MATTHEW 16

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

S ♦ Matt 19:25 The sovereignty of God is manifested through divine illumination. It is the Lord who illuminates the hearts and minds of men or leaves them in spiritual darkness, facing a certain and fearful damnation. Understanding this, the unconverted should call today upon the name of the Lord and plead for divine mercy and grace.

MATTHEW 18

12 How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

P ♦ Matt 18:13 Those whom the Father has given to the Son will be kept by omnipotent power and brought to glorification. The security of the believer is a divine undertaking so that it might be said from beginning to end, "Salvation is of the Lord."

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

P ♦ Matt 18:14 "Those whom God hath accepted in the beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, and given the precious faith of His elect unto, can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the

end, and be eternally saved" (The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689).

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

P ♦ Matt 24:24 "He that did so well for us in that helpless, useless state, will not leave us when He has reared us and nursed us up into some capacity of serving Him" (Matthew Henry).

MATTHEW 19

25 When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

S ♦ Matt 19:26 The sovereignty of God is manifested in the high and holy standards He sets for those who will be saved. The Lord places men under such responsibilities as He sees fit. In this particular instance the rich young ruler was invited to become a disciple of Christ and to recognize the Lord's authority by selling all that he had and redistributing his wealth to the poor.

26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

U ♦ Matt 20:15 Because all men are like the young ruler who was wedded to his sin of covetousness and would not divorce it, the only hope for salvation is in a divine initiative. God must do something for those who will be saved, and He does. God gives to men a new heart and a new life principle so that at the point of gospel hearing there is a willing compliance with the gospel terms. Of course not all men are given the gift of saving grace. Even though Jesus loved the young man He let him walk away. Why? Because the Lord chooses whom He will save (John 15:16) which leads to another truth concerning love. Two distinct sentiments of love must be recognized. There is a love of complacency (self-satisfaction) and a love of benevolence. In the love of benevolence the worthiness of the person is not a consideration. In this manner God can make the rain to fall on the just and unjust alike and have a love for His creation. In His unchanging love of complacency (self-satisfaction) God extends grace to the elect of His own choosing.

S ♦ Matt 20:23 While it is impossible for any person to keep the law of God and merit the righteousness of Christ in salvation, it is possible for God to have mercy and to save the unsaveable by grace alone.

MATTHEW 20

15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

U ♦ Matt 22:14 While individuals might question the concept of the sovereignty of God to select one soul for salvation while passing over another, God does nothing wrong. In all matters He remains holy, just, and good.

23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

S ♦ Matt 20:26 The sovereignty of God is manifested in assigning positions of honor to individuals.

26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

S ♦ Matt 20:27 The sovereignty of God is manifested in directing the behavior and attitude of His own. Now "consider how safe, and quiet, and easy, those are that are of a humble spirit, what communion they have with God and comfort in themselves, we will say, 'With the lowly is wisdom'" (Matthew Henry).

27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

S ♦ Mark 10:26

28 Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

L ♦ Luke 19:10 Christ states plainly that His intent was not to die for all without exception but for the elect.

W ♦ Matt 26:28 These words express the great blessing of redemption and the Author of it, the Son of Man. The particular persons ransomed are identified and described as “the many”.

MATTHEW 22

14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

U ♦ Matt 24:22 While many receive the external call to salvation, those who are chosen for salvation are elected according to the principle of grace by the Sovereign's selection. It must not be thought that election is arbitrary. Rather, election is grounded in the wisdom of God.

MATTHEW 24

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

U ♦ Matt 24:24 In order to preserve the elect in temporal and eternal matters, God will do whatever is necessary. The key concept is that there is an elect of God who will be preserved.

24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

U ♦ Matt 24:31 One of the clearest teachings in the Bible is that there is an election of souls to salvation. The elect are chosen by Christ, regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and kept by the power of God in time and for eternity (cf. Acts 13:48).

P ♦ John 3:15 While Satan unites with the evil of others to seek the destruction and damnation of the souls of the elect, it is not possible for those chosen by God to be lost.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

U ♦ Mark 13:20

MATTHEW 26

28 For this is my blood of the new testament [Ex. 24:8 with Jer. 31:31; Zech. 9:11], which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

W ♦ John 1:9 Christ did not intend to take away all sins of all men, for then the basis of judgment would have been removed from those who ultimately perish. In addition, the doctrine of universalism would be vindicated. Christ shed His precious blood to atone for those who will be saved.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

Written prior to AD 65 presenting Christ as the Servant

MARK 1

5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

It is instructive to note that the word “all” does not mean “all men without exception” when used in Scripture. Not every single individual of the land of Judea and Jerusalem went out to hear John preach and were baptized of him for many of the Scribes and Pharisees rejected the gospel. Other examples of “all” not meaning everyone without exception may be noted: Matthew 10:22; John 3:26; John 8:2; Acts 22:15.

MARK 7

21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

T ♦ Mark 7:22 From the natural heart proceeds the vilest thoughts leading to the most despicable deeds.

22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

T ♦ Mark 7:23 While it is not flattering to men to conceive of themselves as evil by nature, the reality remains. From within the soul and apart from external compulsions comes all manner of wickedness.

23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

T ♦ John 3:5 The state of the natural soul is desperate because of inward defilement. "As a corrupt fountain sends forth corrupt streams, so doth a corrupt heart send forth corrupt reasonings, corrupt appetites and passions, and all those wicked words and actions which are produced by them" (Matthew Henry).

MARK 10

26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

S ♦ Mark 10:27

27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

S ♦ Luke 1:19 The reason why all things are possible with God is because He is absolutely sovereign. "What His soul desires or designs even that He does, and nothing can stand in His way or put Him upon new counsels. Men desire many things which they may not do, or cannot do, or dare not do. But God has an incontestable sovereignty: His will is so perfectly pure and right that it is highly fit He should pursue all its determinations. And He has an uncontrollable power. None can stay His hand. Whatever the Lord pleased that did He (Psa. 135:6), and always will, for it is always best" (Matthew Henry).

45 For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

The extent of the atonement is limited to the "many" or to the elect for whom Christ died for the death of Christ had a particular design and purpose. It was not a general design and purpose towards all men.

MARK 13

20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

U ♦ Luke 18:7 The grace of God provides assurance that there will be an elect to be saved in time and eternity.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

Written c. AD 60 to present Christ as perfect man

LUKE 1

19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

S ♦ Luke 4:25 The sovereignty of God is manifested by the command He exercises over the angels.

LUKE 4

25 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias [Elijah], when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land.

S ♦ Luke 4:26 The sovereignty of God is manifested by providential circumstances.

26 But unto none of them was Elias [Elijah] sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

S ♦ Luke 4:27 "God governs the world in infinite wisdom and the creatures and all their actions are continually under His eye" (Matthew Henry).

27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

S ♦ John 3:3

LUKE 18

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

U ♦ John 3:8

LUKE 19

10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

L ♦ John 6:35 Christ did not come to make men savable but to actually secure the lost whom the Father had given to Him.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

Written: early date: prior to AD 70

Later date: c. AD 90 presenting Christ as God

JOHN 1

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

W ♦ John 1:29 The reference is to every person without distinction, not every person without exception, for it is obvious that babies die, that not all have intellectual comprehension, and that many reject the gospel after living every day of life hostile to the Lord of Glory.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

There are a number of places in Scripture where the word world means less than all men without exception (cf. Luke 2:1; John 8:26; John 12:19; 1 John 5:19).

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:

I ♦ John 1:13 The doctrine of irresistible or efficacious grace teaches that God will bring to faith those individuals He has selected to salvation.

The Holy Spirit will never fail to bring the elect whom He calls to Christ. As one person knows how to woo and win influence over the will of another, to a much higher degree does the Spirit.

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

I ♦ John 3:5 The good news of the gospel is that men will be born of God. Now, "if we find fault with God's government, we virtually suppose ourselves fit to be God's counselors; whereas it becomes us rather, with great humility and adoration, to cry out with the apostle, (Rom. 9:33, etc.), 'O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!'" (Jonathan Edwards).

B ♦ John 3:3 The enslaved will of man must first be freed by sovereign grace and power so that at the point of gospel hearing there is a new capacity to believe the gospel. The natural will of man renders him helpless and hopeless before the Divine mandate to embrace Christ.

29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

W ♦ John 3:16 The world whose sin is taken away is the world of the elect. While the Pharisees looked for a prophet and desired a king, Jesus came as the Lamb to remove the guilt and condemnation. It is only those who believe in Christ for whom there is no condemnation (Rom. 8:1; 2 Pet. 2:5).

JOHN 3

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

S ♦ John 3:7 The sovereignty of God is manifested in the conversion of precious souls.

B ♦ John 3:7 Because the will of a person is enslaved to sin, no one will act contrary to his or her nature. Because the nature of a person is enslaved to sin, the one who is still in the flesh will do nothing but sin. Such a soul will never choose God as Father nor Christ as Saviour.

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water [i.e., in the natural birth process] and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

T ♦ John 3:6 The innate defilement of the soul leaves it helpless to effect any part of personal redemption. Individuals can be born again or regenerated only by the sovereign power of the Holy Spirit.

I ♦ John 3:8 Because individuals are totally helpless to effect a change in their own hearts that would be acceptable to God, the Holy Spirit must and will regenerate the elect according to an effectual working of sovereign grace.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

T ♦ John 3:7 By a natural birth individuals are corrupt and sinful and stand in need of regeneration in order to enter into the kingdom of God. Individuals can do nothing but what is carnal and sinful. They are totally incapable of doing that which is spiritual and good until born of the Spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

T ♦ John 3:19 Because individuals are born into sin and are by nature spiritually dead, having broken the laws of God, Jesus taught that all must be born "from above" (Gk. anothen) if they are to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

S ♦ John 3:8 The sovereignty of God is manifested in the way souls are converted. They are "born again." They are born of God. In the matter of salvation, "All human power must sink and die, as a dim candle shines at noon; and the great and almighty power of Jehovah, the Creator of heaven and earth, be exalted; for He is King of kings, and Lord of lords" (John Kershaw).

B ♦ John 3:8 There is much made about man's free will in the matter of salvation. "But of what is that will free to do while in a state of unregeneracy? The will is one of the faculties of the mind, a depraved faculty; so that men willingly drink in sin, like thirsty oxen drinking in water; they lie down, as thousands do, as some of us did, in the sink of sin, and wallow in it and delight in it like a sow wallowing in the mire.

Man's free will in a depraved sinner leads him from God in the broad and downward road; it leads him to eternal destruction, if not prevented by the free and sovereign grace of God" (John Kershaw). The only hope of the soul is from a heavenly source. Man must be born "from above".

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth [Gr. thelo, determines, is inclined], and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

U ♦ John 3:27 In trying to determine the root or ground of election, the Biblical answer is the grace of God. Election is not based upon any condition within man but upon the free grace of God's benevolent goodness, so that we read, "He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy" (Rom. 9:18).

I ♦ John 3:27 Those who are the objects of divine favor will certainly come to faith, for the Spirit that moves where He wants moves past any resistance to effect His will.

S ♦ John 9:39 The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit unite in the saving of the soul to resolve the sin question and secure the objects of divine affection. In the day of redemption the heart will confess that it is not of man's willing or running but of God, who shows mercy after the counsel of His will (Eph. 1:11; Rom. 9:16).

B ♦ John 5:21 The image of the new birth by means of the Spirit teaches monergism, or a salvation that is singular in essence. As infants do not induce, contribute to, or co-operate in their own procreation and birth, neither do those who are born of God. The spiritual birth is a free and mysterious exercise of divine power. In the end, salvation is of the Lord apart from human merit.

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

P ♦ John 3:16 The concept of eternal life would only be a myth if the soul can lose salvation. "Eternal" would not mean "without end" and "life" would be "death" if the soul could be lost after conversion.

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.

P ♦ John 3:36 "Christ died to bring us to God in order to know Him as our Creator, and to love Him, obey Him, submit to Him, and trust in Him, as our Owner, Ruler, and Benefactor to devote ourselves to Him as our sovereign Lord, depend upon Him as our Chief Good, and direct all to His praise as our highest end-this is life eternal" (Matthew Henry).

W ♦ John 3:17 The term world refers to the "world of believers" or the elect of God, in contrast to the "world of the ungodly" spoken of elsewhere (2 Pet. 2:5). Confirmation of this truth may be found by a comparison of the other passages that speak of God's love (Rom 5:8; Heb 12:6; 1 John 4:19). In the final analysis, God had such a special and supreme love that He willed within the nations of earth that His people should be saved. This salvation was to be accomplished by appointing His Son to be a sufficient Savior, making it certain that every believer should have all the spiritual riches He intended for them.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

W ♦ John 4:42 In the act of salvation the benevolent nature of God and the purpose of His love is manifested. There was every reason why God should condemn every person in the world without exception. However, He has chosen to save some and thus be glorified in the expression of grace to the world of the elect. That the world of the elect is in view and not the world of mankind without exception is confirmed in the fact that not all men are saved. In fact, those outside of Christ are already condemned (v. 18). The very coming of Christ was appointed for the fall or destruction of some (cf. Luke 2:34).

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

T ♦ John 6:44 If individuals are not born again, they will be left in their natural state, which is under a just judgment. Such a state is acceptable to the natural man for he loves the very sin that hardens the heart.

27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

U ♦ John 6:35 Because of the total inability of man to help himself in salvation, God must give heaven's highest gift. The gift of grace is given only to the elect.

I ♦ John 5:21 While no one is ever saved against his or her will, the will of God is what is irresistible. The gospel truth is simply that the Creator knows how to change His creation so that in the day of salvation the will that formerly resisted God's mercy is replaced with a new will that wants salvation, longs for it, and even pleads for the gift of grace.

36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

P ♦ John 5:24 God's wrath is upon all who do not believe and obey the gospel. A wrathful God is not a propitiated or satisfied God (1 John 2:2). In contrast, no wrath will ever be poured out on the soul who is safe and secure forever in the Saviour (Rom. 8:1).

JOHN 4

42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

W ♦ John 10:11 Considered as outcasts from Israel and separated from the way of salvation by the Jews, the Samaritans rejoiced as they understood they were part of the world of the elect for whom Christ came as the Savior. Truly God shows favor to men without distinction as regards to race, color, gender, social status or education.

JOHN 5

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

I ♦ John 6:27 The omnipotent power of God and divine certainty in the salvation of the soul is set forth. All through Scripture the will of God is declared to be irresistible. "My counsel shall stand, I will do all my pleasure" (cf. Isa. 46:10).

B ♦ John 8:36 The will of man is free in respect to performing sinful acts, but it is bound in its natural ability to perform good works acceptable to God until it is freed by Christ. The image of the natural man being "dead" to God and "dead" to righteousness is appropriate.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

P ♦ John 6:35 Realizing that the legal threat of divine condemnation has been forever removed enhances the confidence of the believer in Christ.

JOHN 6

27 Labour not for the meat [food], which perisheth, but for that meat [food] which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

I ♦ John 6:44 Spiritual life shall be given to the elect. Undergirding the work of salvation is the sovereignty of God. He who has decreed all that shall come to pass has the power to effect what He has ordained by establishing the means of His will. God will give the believer everything that is necessary to nourish the soul unto everlasting life.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

U ♦ John 6:37 The glorious gospel is graciously offered to all men without distinction as this verse reflects. Jesus speaks of spiritual hunger and spiritual thirst and defines believing as coming to Him. That means coming to Him as one who has nothing but sin and needs salvation. Coming to Christ means turning to Him as a plant will turn towards the sun. The problem is that the Jews to whom Christ is speaking will not come (v. 36). And the reason they will not come is because they have not been given by the Father (v. 37).

L ♦ John 6:37 The Lord has promised that every soul that comes to Him shall neither hunger nor thirst. "But who shall come?" The answer is this: "All that the Father has given to the Son shall come to Him." Those who come to Christ are the same as those for whom He died. Spiritual life shall be given to the elect.

P ♦ John 6:40 The strong words of Christ stated in an intense negative emphasizes the integrity of the promises. The Christian shall never hunger nor thirst after salvation, which means that the soul will never be what it once was.

37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

U ♦ John 6:44 God has made a covenant with Christ to be the Shepherd of the elect according to the principle of grace (cf. Isa. 53:12). The Father has promised to give a chosen people to the Son as His seed, His bride, His sheep, and His inheritance so that the elect will be saved. The Son has promised to obey His Father's will even to the point of suffering without being rebellious (Luke 2:49; Isa. 50:5). This covenant of redemption and grace was formed before time began although the actual giving of the elect to Christ is in the present.

L ♦ John 6:39 The Spirit of God brings the elect to the Son. It is inconceivable that God would love the whole world indiscriminately enough to give to Christ but not enough to apply the redemptive work of grace by means of the Holy Spirit (cf. 2 Cor. 5:14, 15; Rom. 6:4-9). It is more conceivable that Christ was given to die for His own.

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.

L ♦ John 6:40 The design of redemption was to secure the salvation of the elect, not merely to make salvation possible.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

L ♦ John 10:11 While there will be a general resurrection of all men to either condemnation or eternal life, the Lord will guard His own.

P ♦ John 6:47 The final security of the believer rests in the will of God. It is part of the divine decree that all who believe in Christ will receive eternal life and a resurrected body. The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is taught here in unmistakable terms.

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.

T ♦ John 6:65 Because of the just judgment of God, because of a natural love for darkness, fallen individuals cannot come to Christ. By nature, souls do not have the power or ability to prepare themselves for conversion. The only spiritual fruit of the natural person is unbelief and corruption.

U ♦ John 10:16 While human responsibility is certainly emphasized in this section, so is divine predestination as Christ refers to the divine drawing of the elect.

I ♦ John 6:45 It is a glorious truth that the Father shall draw in an irresistible manner the elect unto Himself as a net of big fishes was dragged ashore (John 21:6,11), as Paul and Silas were dragged into the forum (Acts 16:19), as Paul was dragged out of the temple (Acts 21:30) and as the rich drag the poor before the judgment seats (James 2:6).

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.

I ♦ John 6:64 The words of certainty in Scripture are designed to encourage faith as the believer, realizing the effective power of God in the saving of his soul, rests in the finished work of redemption. "Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it, Seal it to Thy courts above!"

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

P ♦ John 10:27 Words become a mockery if the believer is not secure for time and eternity. "Life" would not mean "life" and "everlasting" would not mean "without end." But these words do have meaning, for they were promised by the One who cannot lie and who remains the same yesterday, today, and forever, even Jesus Christ, the Truthful One.

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

I ♦ John 6:65 Those who are allowed by the Father to "resist" the Son through unbelief to their own destruction are contrasted with those who do not, will not, cannot resist the power of divine persuasion.

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

T ♦ John 8:34 The only way for the natural man to be saved is for the Father to give him a new heart, a new will, and a new mind with a renewed capacity to believe in Christ.

I ♦ John 15:5 The reason why men do not come to Christ is because they have not been given by the Father, redeemed by the Son, nor drawn by the Spirit. The non-elect remain in a natural state of helplessness and hopelessness while the elect enjoy the power of the Saviour, who will save His people from their sins.

JOHN 8

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

T ♦ John 8:44 To be the servant of sin is to be dominated by the same. Sin is the master of the soul of the unconverted. The terrible plight of man is that he has no power to please the Lord while in the flesh and so he has no power to be saved.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

B ♦ John 15:5 Rather than speak of the "free" will of man it would be more appropriate to speak of the "freed" will of man, for that is what must happen before a soul can be saved.

44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

T ♦ Rom 3:9 Not only is man by nature outside the sphere of saving grace, under condemnation, and in love with sin, but also is his desperate condition made worse in that he is a child of Satan.

JOHN 9

39 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

S ♦ John 12:39 The sovereignty of God is manifested by the rendering of a judicial judgment.

JOHN 10

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

L ♦ John 10:14 As Jesus is the Bread of Life, so He is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep. The Father has given the sheep to Christ.

W ♦ John 11:50 Christ contrasts His sheep with those who are not His sheep. Both are before His mind when He says that He died for His sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

L ♦ John 10:15 In distinction from the Pharisees, whom He views as "strangers" (John 10:5) and "hierlings" (John 8:12) as well as "thieves and robbers" (John 10:1,8,10), the Lord knows His sheep. He knows them by name and by their nature (John 10:3), and He loves them to the point of death.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

L ♦ John 10:24 It is not for all without exception that Christ says He lays down His life, but for those He owns (cf. John 6:37, 39; 17:6,24).

16 And other sheep [Gentiles] I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

U ♦ John 10:26 The elect of God are to be found in every tribe and nation. Jew and Gentile, rich and poor, male and female, young and old, educated and less educated alike shall be numbered among the elect.

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

L ♦ John 10:25 Christ reveals to the non-elect and non-redeemed that He is indeed the Messiah that should come and why they will not come to Him in faith but will remain wedded to their unbelief because they are not His sheep.

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

L ♦ John 10:26 Despite information from the lips of the Lord Himself, the heart of the non-elect is so hardened that it will not believe (cf. 5:17-47; 6:29,35, 51-65; 7:37-39, etc.). The problem with the Jews was not lack of information, but not being of the Lord's sheep.

26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

U ♦ John 11:52 For their unbelief the Jews were fully responsible. Jesus had not only told them the truth about Himself but He had proved it by the miracles He performed. Nevertheless, because they were not among those who had been given to the Good Shepherd by the Father, they were not of His fold (10:29 cf. 6:39,44).

L ♦ John 10:27 It is a simple truth that God is under no obligation to save those who have brought destruction upon themselves, nor is Christ obligated to die for those who shall certainly perish. However, for those who will be saved, Christ must die. This He did.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

L ♦ John 10:28 There is a definite certainty of the believer's security when the Lord is followed as the Good Shepherd. Those who have been given to the Son shall never perish.

P ♦ John 10:28 While it is not possible to reconcile the two great thoughts which run parallel in Scripture, human responsibility and divine predestination, neither one can be denied. What is certain is that those who follow Christ by trusting and obeying Him will follow the Lord to the end because they have been given and drawn. And those who are not able to listen and to follow Christ shall remain in a state of inability and will perish because it has not pleased the Father to redeem them.

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

L ♦ John 10:29 It is clear that people cannot make themselves sheep (cf. John 6:39,44; 10:29). It is also clear that unless Christ dies and takes away every sin of a particular person, that soul is left without a Redeemer, a Saviour, a Shepherd, or a basis of acceptance in the sight of God. It is to the elect alone that the results of the atonement are given, even "eternal life," so that "they" shall never perish.

P ♦ John 10:29 These simple words of Jesus promise that the sheep shall never enter the state of wrath or be banished forever from the presence of God or diminish His love. The hand of Christ is the hand of power out of which no one shall snatch them.

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand.

L ♦ John 15:13 Having given the elect to the Son and the Son having died for them, God makes certain that they and they alone shall know salvation full and free and shall enjoy fellowship forever with God in Christ (John 17:3) by partaking of His peace (John 16:33) and His joy (John 17:13).

P ♦ John 13:1 In the gospel of John the doctrines of predestination and the perseverance of the saints, who are kept by the power of God, are constantly emphasized (cf. John 2:4; 4:34; 5:30; 6:37,39,44,64; 7:6,30; 8:20; 13:1; 18:37; 19:28).

JOHN 11

50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

W ♦ John 17:9 The term "whole" reflects a large portion of the population, not every single person without exception. The significance of this observation is to stress caution when dealing with comprehensive terms in Scripture such as "world," "whole," and "all."

52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

U ♦ John 13:18 From the nation of Israel and from the nations of the earth, God has ordained that souls shall be saved and given to His Son (cf. John 10:16). While not all men shall be converted there is a great multitude called "the children of God." Though the elect are "scattered abroad," Christ shall redeem them, gather them, and form them into one Church, which is His body.

JOHN 12

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias [Isaiah] said again.

S ♦ John 12:40 The sovereignty of God is manifested actively by hardening hearts so that individuals are confirmed in sin.

40 HE HATH BLINDED THEIR EYES, AND HARDENED THEIR HEART; THAT THEY SHOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES, NOR UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED, AND I SHOULD HEAL THEM [Isa. 6:9,10].

S ♦ Rom 9:13 The spiritual blinding of the eyes of the people by God was so that individuals would not be able to see the mighty deeds of Christ as signs pointing to Him as the Son of God and as the Messiah. The meaning of this passage is plain even if it appears harsh. Placing individuals under a judicial judgment God does blind eyes and He does harden hearts in order that souls might not turn to Christ and as a result be healed. Such is the absolute sovereignty of God. He heals and He hardens and He is to be feared.

JOHN 13

1 Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

P ♦ John 14:16 The love of Christ for His people reassures the believer of an ultimate and final security in the presence of the Saviour.

18 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

U ♦ John 15:16 The Lord knows personally and intimately those whom He has chosen.

JOHN 14

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another [Gr. allon, like Jesus] Comforter [Gr. Paraclete, one called alongside to help, a Comforter], that he may abide with you forever.

P ♦ John 17:11 Because of the permanent indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit the believer may rest assured that salvation from the penalty, pain, and pollution of sin is a divine certainty.

JOHN 15

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

The pruning process enhances the bearing of fruit (cf. Gal. 5:22-26).

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

I ♦ John 17:2 Apart from Christ no person can believe on Him, abide in His presence, or enjoy spiritual life. Every facet of salvation is of the Lord. The Spirit who effectively calls the elect intimately unites them to Christ.

B ♦ Rom 9:16 Those who are outside of Christ can do nothing whatsoever to merit divine favor. That is true not only for the drunkard, the thief, the murderer, and those who engage in immoral behavior but also includes the poet, the scientist, the philosopher, the professor, the doctor, the lawyer, and even the minister who has not embraced Christ.

There is no work that is acceptable to God. Only those in Christ can bring forth spiritual fruit. This verse condemns Pelagianism and semi-Pelagianism of every form.

Note. Pelagianism is the belief that original sin does not enter into human nature because every soul is created from God pure and holy. This means that the mortal will is from birth capable of choosing good or evil without God's enablement. Therefore, the sin of Adam was "to set a bad example" for his progeny [descendants], but his actions did not have the other consequences imputed [placed on them] due to original sin. Original sin refers to the sin nature of Adam being passed on to others. Pelagianism views the role of Jesus also as "setting a good example" for the rest of humanity thereby counteracting Adam's bad example. In short, every person has full control of his life and full responsibility for his own salvation in addition to full responsibility for every sin in the soul. Pelagianism was opposed by Augustine of Hippo, who taught that a person's salvation comes solely through the grace of God, and only by God's pleasure to whomever he chooses to bestow it, with no need of participation on the person's part. As a system of official teaching in the church, Pelagianism was condemned as a heresy [extreme error] at several local synods [church gatherings]. It was officially condemned in 416 and 418 at the Councils of Carthage. These condemnations were summarily [in total] ratified at the Church Council of Ephesus in 431. Pelagianism as a structured heretical movement ceased to exist after the 6th century but its essential ideas continued to cause dispute due to the revitalization of his thinking in the person of Jacobus Arminus whom John Calvin, in the spirit and courage of Augustine of old, refuted in order to preserve the historic biblical faith.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

L ♦ John 17:1 As the Bread of Life Jesus feeds His sheep; as a Good Shepherd He gives His life for them; as a Friend of Sinners Christ died to manifest His great love for His own.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

U ♦ John 17:2 Individuals do not choose to be saved or serve the Lord until they are divinely chosen. The natural person does not love the Lord nor long to close with Christ apart from the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, for every person acts consistently with his or her nature. The nature of the unconverted is to be enslaved to sin and hostile to the Lordship of Christ until the soul is set free from its former master.

JOHN 17

1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

L ♦ John 17:2 In His role as the great High Priest, Jesus prayed for all of His own but not for the world in general. In obedience to the will of the Father, Christ accomplished the specific work of redemption He was sent to undertake to make the Father known to His people and to impart eternal life to the same.

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

U ♦ John 17:6 In the process of the selection of some to salvation, God exercises His divine sovereignty and prerogative to be either gracious or just.

L ♦ John 17:9 God has the divine right to give salvation to as many as are ordained to eternal life. That the scope and design of the atonement is limited is clear. Eternal life is not given to all but to those whom the Father has given to the Son.

I ♦ Acts 5:31 That those whom the Father has given to the Son shall be saved is certain, for the gift that God gives in sovereign grace will be received in the day of divine visitation from on high. The Son shall give eternal life.

6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

U ♦ Acts 2:39 Not to everyone was the name of the Father manifested but only to those who in the eternal decree of salvation, had been given to the Son in order to restate the doctrine of election, the following definition may be studied.

"Election [or choosing] is God's unchangeable purpose by which He did the following: Before the foundation of the world, by sheer grace, according to the free good pleasure of His will, He chose in Christ to salvation a definite number of particular people out of the entire human race, which had fallen by its own fault from its original innocence into sin and ruin. Those chosen were neither better nor more deserving than the others, but lay with them in the common misery. He did this in Christ, whom He also appointed from eternity to be the mediator, the head of all those chosen, and the foundation of their salvation" (The Canons of Dort, First Head, Article 7).

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

L ♦ John 17:20 The death of Christ and His intercession for His own are the two main divisions of this priestly prayer. For those whom He is the Propitiation, Sanctifier, and Sacrifice, Jesus prays because they are not in the world. Had Christ intended to save every person or to make atonement for the same, He would have prayed for the world without exception.

W ♦ Acts 20:28 While the prayer of Christ is for His own particular people, His prayer is universal in scope insofar as it includes all those who shall yet come to faith (v. 20,21). The concept of Christ's praying for those in unbelief is a comforting thought. It is consistent with the greatness of His love towards sinners (Rom. 5:8).

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

P ♦ John 17:12 Jesus has prayed for the eternal security of the believer. Because all the prayers of Christ are honored, the believer is assured of salvation.

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 [Judas]; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

P ♦ John 17:15 In order to honor the name of the Father and safeguard the integrity of the Scriptures, Jesus keeps a constant spiritual guard upon His own. He will protect them against apostasy.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

P ♦ Rom 5:8 One reason why it is certain that Christians shall not escape tribulation is that the Lord has prayed that His people not be taken out of the world. It is through the believer's victories over trials and temptations that the Lord is gloried and the lessons of spiritual life are learned. In the midst of the conflict against the world, the flesh, and the devil, Christ will continue to pray for and preserve His own.

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.

L ♦ John 17:24 As Christ had prayed for the eleven disciples, so He prays for all who shall become His disciples. "The mind of Christ scans the centuries and presses to His loving heart all His true followers as if they had all been saved even at this very moment" (William Hendriksen).

24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

L ♦ John 17:25 The tender desire of Christ is expressed that "the given ones" should be with Him in the glories of eternity. From eternity past they have been given to Him in order that in time they should be His reward for the sufferings of His soul on their behalf.

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

L ♦ John 17:26 Because the Father is righteous, because the Son has requested it, and because divine integrity demands it, the full merits of the redemptive work of Christ shall be applied to the "the given ones."

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

L ♦ Acts 5:31 Secure in the prayer of the Savior, the Christian goes on to enjoy all of the spiritual blessings of salvation, including redemption and the forgiveness of sins. The fountain from which these blessings flow is the eternal counsel of God determined before the foundation of the world.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Written AD 63

ACTS 2

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

U ♦ Acts 9:15 The gospel promises and the effectual call to salvation are for the elect.

ACTS 5

31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

L ♦ Acts 20:28 The purpose for the coming of Christ and His subsequent exaltation to heaven is noted. The Lord will give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sin. The gift of divine grace was not to be given to all in Israel without exception (for then men like Judas Iscariot would have been saved) but to those whom God had chosen for salvation.

I ♦ Acts 11:18 Not only will the Lord give repentance to His people but He will give this divine gift of grace according to the eternal purpose of God's plan. Christ was raised from the dead and glorified in order to make salvation effective to the elect.

ACTS 9

15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

U ♦ Acts 10:41 The only reason Saul of Tarsus came to faith in the sovereign Saviour was because he was the object of electing love.

*“Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.”*

John Newton

ACTS 10

41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

U ♦ Acts 13:48 The doctrine of election is clearly set forth. God has not chosen all to bear witness to Christ.

ACTS 11

18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

I ♦ Acts 13:48 If God does not effectively grant repentance unto life, then none shall be saved. Souls are saved when and where God grants repentance unto life. “It is one thing to mourn for sin because it exposes us to hell, and another to mourn for it because it is an infinite evil; one thing to mourn for it because it is injurious to ourselves, and another thing to mourn for it because it is wrong and offensive to God. It is one thing to be terrified; another, to be humble.” (Gardiner Spring)

ACTS 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.

U ♦ Acts 17:26 Plainly and simply does the Scripture reveal it is God who ordains individuals to eternal life.

I ♦ Acts 14:27 While not all people are ordained to eternal life, those who are will come to faith in Christ. They can do no less under divine compulsion. They want to do no less because of the imparting of the new nature with the capacity to believe.

ACTS 14

22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

The Bible does not teach that God's people will be spared the purifying effects of tribulation in time. Just the opposite is stated and demonstrated time and again. The stories in the Old Testament, the writings of the New Testament, and the documentation of 2,000 years of Church history testify to the blood of the saints in the Church.

27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

I ♦ Acts 16:14 It is the Lord who opens the door of faith in order for souls to be saved. What God opens no man can shut.

ACTS 16

14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

I ♦ Acts 18:27 Because the Lord opened the heart's door of salvation for Lydia, she came to faith. From a divine perspective her conversion was inevitable, for the will of the sovereign God cannot be overthrown or set aside.

ACTS 17

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.

U ♦ Acts 18:10 There are many personal matters that are determined by God, such as the day of one's birth and the day of death. On a practical level in order to insure the preservation of religion, God appoints the boundaries of nations. Within those boundaries the elect shall seek the Lord and come to faith.

ACTS 18

10 For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.

U ♦ Acts 18:27 Evangelism is encouraged by the doctrine of election. The winner of souls presents the gospel with absolute confidence that God will bring individuals to faith.

27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace.

U ♦ Acts 22:14

I ♦ Rom 1:6 The grace that comes to men is free but not cheap or ineffectual. Individuals cannot and will not believe the gospel apart from a redeeming grace that produces evangelical faith and genuine repentance.

ACTS 20

28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers [Gr. episkopous, bishops], to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

L ♦ Rom 3:24 Using precise words, the Scriptures reveal that the object of particular redemption was the Church of God and not the people of the world indiscriminately.

W ♦ Rom 5:18

ACTS 22

14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth.

U ♦ Rom 1:6 Those who are chosen of God will certainly come to know His will, which is to see Christ with spiritual eyes of understanding and to obey His voice. “Conversion is a deep work—a heart-work. It goes throughout the man, throughout the mind, throughout the members, throughout the entire life.” (Joseph Alleine)

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE ROMANS

Written AD 58

ROMANS 1

6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ.

U ♦ Rom 4:16 The elect are the called of God. Not all men are called, elected, predestined, or chosen for salvation; otherwise all men would certainly be saved, for the decreetive will of God cannot be resisted.

I ♦ Rom 1:7 Those who are called by the Spirit to salvation are invited in such a way that they are inevitably and willingly brought to faith in Christ.

7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I ♦ Rom 8:14 Paul is teaching that the believers he is addressing are saints by virtue of having been called. Something has happened to them. They have been effectively called. "By this inner or effective call is meant that operation of the Holy Spirit whereby he so applies the gospel to the minds and hearts of sinners that they become aware of their guilt, begin to understand their need of Jesus Christ, and embrace him as their Lord and Saviour" (William Hendriksen).

ROMANS 3

9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

T ♦ Rom 3:10 It is not just some men who are the servants of Satan but all. The reign of sin is extensive in that it is universal. All people are under the dominion of sin so that none is righteous.

10 As it is written, THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NO, NOT ONE [Psa. 14:1-3; 53:1-3]:

T ♦ Rom 3:11 There is none righteous, none that has an honest good principle of virtue or is governed by such a principle, none that retains anything of that image of God, consisting in righteousness wherein man was created; no, not one. This implies that, if there had been but one, God would have found him out. (Matthew Henry)

RR ♦ Rom 3:23

11 THERE IS NONE THAT UNDERSTANDETH, THERE IS NONE THAT SEEKETH AFTER GOD.

T ♦ Rom 3:12 Unless God in sovereign grace had chosen certain ones to salvation, none would have been saved; for no one seeks after God. The natural depravity of the heart leads to a natural turning away from the Lord.

12 THEY ARE ALL GONE OUT OF THE WAY, THEY ARE TOGETHER BECOME UNPROFITABLE; THERE IS NONE THAT DOETH GOOD, NO, NOT ONE.

T ♦ Rom 5:12 Despite the clear teaching on the desperate plight of man, there is a prevailing belief that man in his natural state is not totally depraved and so has the disposition or ability which enables him to repent, believe, and be saved if he so chooses. Nevertheless, the Word of God remains, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one."

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

RR ♦ Rom 6:23

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

L ♦ Rom 3:25 The elect and only the elect are justified freely by grace, for the blood of Christ covers their sin.

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [satisfaction] through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.

L ♦ Rom 5:8 When Christ died at Calvary, He did so to atone for all the sins of all those who had accepted Him under the Old Testament dispensation as well as those who will accept Him under the New Testament era. The merits and extent of the

atonement reaches backwards as well as forward. Because God placed the sins of the past upon Christ, God demonstrates that He is just and so has a right to be the Justifier of all who believe in Christ.

ROMANS 4

16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.

U ♦ Rom 5:19 No person is chosen because of good works or law keeping. Salvation is rooted in sovereign grace freely bestowed upon all who have the faith of Abraham, "who is the father of us all."

ROMANS 5

8 But God commendeth [extended] his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

L ♦ Rom 5:9 There are many passages in Scripture that characterize the saving work of redemption in definite terms. It was the intent of Christ infallibly to secure and save a particular people.

P ♦ Rom 5:9 If Christ did the most for the elect by dying for them while they were still in a state of sin, certainly He will secure their eternal salvation.

RR ♦ Rom 10:9

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

L ♦ Rom 5:10 "Justification and reconciliation are the first and primary fruit of the death of Christ: We are justified by his blood (v. 9), reconciled by his death (v. 10), sin is pardoned, the sinner accepted as righteous, the quarrel taken up, the enmity slain, an end made of iniquity, and an everlasting righteousness brought in." (Matthew Henry)

P ♦ Rom 5:10 Arguing from the greater to the lesser, Paul sets forth the glorious truth that justification brings a certainty of deliverance from the wrath to come.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

L ♦ Rom 8:1 The limited language that Paul uses in his arguments becomes significant. The "we" reference has in mind that limited number of souls who will come to faith in Christ. "We" who were enemies of God, "we" have been reconciled to Him by the death of Christ so that "we" shall be saved.

P ♦ Rom 8:1 If God justifies and reconciles to Himself those who were His enemies, He will certainly save those who are now His friends.

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

T ♦ Rom 5:19 As Levi was in the body of Abraham when he met Melchizedek (Heb. 7:10), so every member of the human race was in the seminal head of Adam and sinned with him. Because of the transgression of Adam, who acted as the federal head of the human race, all are born in sin and by nature are without spiritual life in the sight of God. If a person is to become a child of God and an heir of the kingdom of heaven, the Holy Spirit must regenerate the soul.

18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

W ♦ 2 Cor 5:14 The apostle has mentioned three times the death of Christ for His people (v. 6, 9, 10). A major doctrine is established. The one trespass of Adam (disobedience) resulted in condemnation for all that are in him. In like manner and by way of contrast the one act of righteous obedience in the redemptive work at Calvary by Christ resulted in imputing justification for all that are in Him. The world for whom Christ died is the world of the elect.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

T ♦ Rom 6:20 The sin of Adam has been imputed to his offspring, who have been made sinners by birth but continue to be sinners by choice. The natural man is an enemy of God with relish. There is an inbred distaste and disrespect for the perfections of God. Moreover, the will of the natural man is contrary to God's will (cf. Rom. 8:7). The natural man is hostile to God's government of his life.

U ♦ Rom 8:28 By the obedience of Christ to the will of the Father in going to Calvary to secure the salvation of sinners, the many, the elect, shall be made righteous.

ROMANS 6

15 What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

In context Paul is teaching that the law is the power that exposes sin. Sin is evil, and the power that exposes it to be such is altogether good. The Christian is delivered from the sin that destroyed him but not from the law that revealed and reveals what is needed to be delivered. The Christian is not under law as the way of damnation but is under Christ as the way of salvation.

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

T ♦ Rom 7:18 As an offspring of Adam, as a child of the devil, as the servant of sin, the natural man is without any positive righteousness. He is free to act according to his nature, which is enslaved to evil. The natural man is not free to act righteously.

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

RR ♦ Rom 5:8

ROMANS 7

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

T ♦ Rom 7:19 The honest heart will confess that in the sphere of the flesh there is nothing of merit that pleases God. There is nothing that can become a basis for receiving spiritual honor.

19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

T ♦ Rom 8:7 "The honest heart will confess to a total lack of ability to do good in the flesh. And even after conversion there is still a struggle in the sanctified soul between grace and corruption. That there are remainders of indwelling corruption, even where there is a living principle of grace, is past dispute; that this corruption is daily breaking forth in sins of infirmity (such as are consistent with a state of grace) is no less certain. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, 1 John 1:8,10. That true grace strives against these sins and corruptions, does not allow of them, hates them, mourns over them, groans under them as a burden, is likewise certain (Gal 5:17)." (Matthew Henry)

ROMANS 8

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them, which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

L ♦ Rom. 8:32 For the apostle "no condemnation" means freedom, not only from the penalty of sin's guilt but also from sin's enslaving power. Every believer can rejoice at the efficacy of the atoning work of Christ at the Cross for them.

P ♦ Rom 8:29 Since there is no basis for eternal judgment for those who are in Christ, there can be no final falling away. The believer is secure in the finished work of redemption.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

T ♦ Rom 8:8 In order to press the point of the depravity of the natural man, the Scriptures declare that his very mind, the essence of his being, is hostile to God and refuses to be subject to the Sovereign.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

T ♦ Rom 11:35 The natural man has absolutely nothing to offer God that is acceptable in His sight, for the corruption of the flesh is extensive and intensive.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

I ♦ Rom 8:30 Those who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God, not potentially but actually. It is the Spirit, who, in an effectual way, creates within the soul a new heart and a new nature that wills to be obedient to the will of the Father.

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.

U ♦ Rom 8:29 There is a golden chain of grace that reaches from heaven to earth to bind those who love God to Him. The links of this golden chain include foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification.

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.

U ♦ Rom 8:30 The elect are foreknown by God. The term foreknowledge directs attention to the persons whom God elects. Another term, foreordination, fixes attention on the purpose for which souls are elected, and that is to be conformed to the image of Christ.

P ♦ Rom 8:30 The knowledge that God has is a knowledge of intimacy and determination to bring certain ones into a unique relationship to Himself (John 10:14).

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.

U ♦ Rom 8:33 Since not all have been predestined, attention is focused upon the elect.

I ♦ Rom 9:15 Six times in this one verse it is said what God has done or will do.

P ♦ Rom 8:35 The grand goal of being conformed into the image of Christ through the process of sanctification is a persevering work of divine grace. That it will happen is a gospel certainty, for the One who calls is the One who justifies and the One who justifies is the Same who sanctifies.

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

L ♦ Rom 8:34 Christ died for all men without distinction in that He died for Jew and Gentile alike. This was a radical concept for orthodox Jews. Christ did not die for all men without exception, or every single person would come to faith. That does not happen. Multitudes die apart from Christ. The language of redemption is that Christ was delivered up for us who are the children of God.

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

U ♦ Rom 9:11 The rhetorical question demands a negative answer. The elect of God, and there is an elect people, are declared righteous by the Lord so that there is no valid charge or condemnation that can be leveled against them.

34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

L ♦ 1 Cor 1:30 By means of His death, the sins of Christ's people have been blotted out. By means of His resurrection and exaltation as the Great High Priest, those for whom Christ died enjoy His special intercessory ministry today.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

P ♦ Rom 8:37 By another rhetorical question the truth is declared that no one and nothing shall be able to separate the believer from the Savior and His special love.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

P ♦ Rom 8:38 Despite the sufferings and hardships set forth in verse 35 and those items that shall be added in verses 38 and 39, Paul stresses that believers are more than conquerors through Christ. The personalities and forces designed to hurt the Christian actually help him become a super-conqueror as victory after victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil is won.

38 For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come.

P ♦ Rom 8:39 It is not wrong to enter into apostolic certainty that the believer's eternal destiny is secure.

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

P ♦ Rom 11:2 "Thy love to me, O Christ, Thy love to me, Not mine to thee, I plead, Not mine to thee. This is my comfort strong, This is my joyful song, Thy love to me, Thy love to me." (Mrs. Merrill E. Gates, 1886).

ROMANS 9

11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth).

U ♦ Rom 9:15 The basis of election is not rooted in any intrinsic goodness of an individual, for no such goodness exists. Election's purpose is grounded in the Sovereign's will to do with His own as He deems proper.

13 As it is written, JACOB HAVE I LOVED, BUT ESAU HAVE I HATED [Mal. 1:2 3].

S ♦ Rom 9:16 The sovereignty of God is manifested by loving whom He will.

15 For he saith to Moses, I WILL HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I WILL HAVE COMPASSION [Ex. 33:19].

U ♦ Rom 9:16 God does not hesitate to take absolute responsibility for the salvation of souls. Indeed, God insists upon being recognized as the supreme Ruler of the universe.

I ♦ Rom 9:16 Neither the will of man nor his exertion in good works secures his salvation; God does. Election, and therefore salvation, is a matter of God's sovereign will.

16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

U ♦ Rom 10:20 If God does not ordain a person to be saved, then divine mercy and ability to believe will not be given no matter how zealous a person may be religiously.

I ♦ Rom 9:23 The sovereignty of God is manifested by showing mercy to whom He wills.

S ♦ Rom 9:17 "Ere into being I was brought, Thine eye did see, and in Thy thought, My life in all its perfect plan, Was ordered ere my days began." (Author Unknown)

B ♦ Rom 9:17 Great sinners, such as John Newton confessed to being, know how helpless the will is. Following his conversion to Christ, Newton wanted to sing about God's great mercy, and so he wrote,

*"Amazing grace!
How sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."*

17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, EVEN FOR THIS SAME PURPOSE HAVE I RAISED THEE UP, THAT I MIGHT SHEW MY POWER IN THEE, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE DECLARED THROUGHOUT ALL THE EARTH [Ex. 9:16].

S ♦ Rom 9:18 The sovereignty of God is manifested by raising up individuals for a specific purpose.

B ♦ Rom 11:25 Beyond the judicial hardening of Pharaoh's heart, as the Scriptural narrative is read, it is easy to see the natural bondage of Pharaoh's heart to sin

18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth [Ex. 4:21; Deut. 2:20; Josh. 11:20].

S ♦ Rom 9:20 As God is sovereign in His mercy, so is He sovereign in the administration of divine justice. The natural heart is bound tightly to sin with link after link: reprobation, a wicked willful life hardening of the heart, confirmation in evil, eternal punishment.

20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?

S ♦ Rom 9:21 The sovereignty of God is manifested by the silencing of His subjects.

21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?

S ♦ Rom 9:22 The sovereignty of God is manifested by making vessels for a predetermined purpose unto honor or dishonor.

22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

S ♦ Rom 9:23 The sovereignty of God is manifested in His holy wrath.

23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.

I ♦ Rom 9:24 Having determined to save souls, having provided the Savior's accomplished work of redemption, God will apply, He will make known "the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy."

S ♦ Rom 9:24 The sovereignty of God is manifested by the greatness of His mercy.

24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles [Isa. 42:6,7; 49:6]?

I ♦ Rom 11:4 God the Holy Spirit effectively and irresistibly applies the gospel to the minds and hearts of sinners so that they become aware of their guilt, begin to see their need of Christ, and call upon Him.

S ♦ Rom 11:8 The sovereignty of God is manifested by uniting in one body Jews and Gentiles.

ROMANS 10

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Christ achieves the goal of the law, which is absolute righteousness. The law could never effect righteousness in individuals but only reveal unrighteousness.

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

➤ RR ♦ Rom 10:10

20 But Esaias [Isaiah] is very bold, and saith, I WAS FOUND OF THEM THAT SOUGHT ME NOT; I WAS MADE MANIFEST UNTO THEM THAT ASKED NOT AFTER ME [Isa. 65:1].

U ♦ Rom 11:4 The innate corruption of the human heart is no barrier to the sovereign grace of God when He is determined to show mercy.

ROMANS 11

2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot [know] ye not what the scripture saith of Elias [Elijah]? How he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying.

P ♦ Rom 11:29 God has never cast the elect away in the past. He does not cast the elect away in the present. In the future the Lord will never abandon those who have put their trust in Him.

4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I HAVE RESERVED TO MYSELF SEVEN THOUSAND MEN, WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO THE IMAGE OF BAAL [1 Kings 19:18].

U ♦ Rom 11:5 The elect of God will be saved and then preserved for sanctification and service by the sovereign God who can and will certainly keep His own.

I ♦ Rom 11:5 The fact that there were seven thousand individuals during the days of Elijah who had remained loyal to God is a testimony to the effectual working of grace upon the hearts of the elect.

5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

U ♦ Rom 11:6 The concept of the salvation of a remnant is taught from Genesis to Revelation. There was a remnant during the time of Noah (Gen. 6:1-8 cf. Luke 17:26,27), during the days of Lot (Gen. 19:29 cf. Luke 17:28,29), in the period of Elijah, in Paul's generation, and during the fall of Jerusalem (Matt. 24:24,31; Rev. 1-22).

I ♦ 1 Cor 1:1 The presence of an elect remnant indicates again the effectual, irresistible working of the Holy Spirit in every generation applying grace to hearts.

6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

U ♦ Rom 11:7 The concept of salvation by works was foundational to Jewish thought as it is central to modern theology. Nevertheless, the unconditional selection of souls for salvation gives greater glory to God, for only then can it be said, "Salvation is of the Lord."

7 Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

U ♦ Rom 11:28 Israel, as a nation, did not find the righteousness which was sought according to keeping the Law. However, the elect of Israel did find righteousness through grace, and the rest were judicially blinded.

8 (According as it is written, GOD HATH GIVEN THEM THE SPIRIT OF SLUMBER, EYES THAT THEY SHOULD NOT SEE, AND EARS THAT THEY SHOULD NOT HEAR;) UNTO THIS DAY [Isa. 29:10,13; Deut. 29:3,4].

S ♦ Rom 11:22 The sovereignty of God is manifested by the present judgment He renders.

22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

S ♦ Rom 11:33 The sovereignty of God is manifested in His awesome grace and unspeakable severity.

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.

B ♦ Rom 16:18 The bondage of the will is manifested and illustrated in Israel's inability to understand spiritual truths.

28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes.

U ♦ Rom 11:33 Three great truths are swiftly set forth: there is an elect people, the elect are beloved, and the elect are loved because of the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

P ♦ 1 Cor 1:7 "Strangely, my soul, art thou arrayed, By the great sacred Three; In sweetest harmony of praise. Let all thy powers agree."(Author Unknown)

33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

U ♦ Rom 11:34 The doctrine of election is designed to elicit admiration, adoration, and awe.

S ♦ Rom 11:36 The sovereignty of God is manifested in the depths of His wisdom to save souls.

34 FOR WHO HATH KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD?
OR WHO HATH BEEN HIS COUNSELLOR [Isa. 40:13; Jer. 23:18; Job 36:22]?

U ♦ Rom 11:35 The doctrine of election is grounded in the mind of the Lord, which is marvelous and incomprehensible. His wisdom and knowledge need no correction nor does the Lord need a counsellor. If there is concern with the doctrine of election, the wisdom of God must be rested upon with a fundamental trust in His character. The God of the universe will always do right.

35 OR WHO HATH FIRST GIVEN TO HIM, AND IT SHALL BE RECOMPENSED UNTO HIM AGAIN [Job 41:11]?

T ♦ Rom 11:36. If a soul is ever to be saved, every facet of the salvation process must be according to sovereign grace so that in the end it can be said that salvation is the gift of God apart from human merit.

U ♦ Rom 11:36 The doctrine of election is unconditional, as this verse teaches, for no one has ever put God in a position of debt that God should repay Him.

36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

T ♦ 1 Cor 2:14a Because of the natural corruption of the heart, salvation is a gift that must be given. It is God and not man who is the epicenter around which salvation revolves.

U ♦ 1 Cor 1:24b In a final outburst of praise, Paul ascribes all the glory due to the Lord. He is the origin, accomplisher, and end of our salvation.

S ♦ Eph 1:5 God foreordains everything that comes to pass. His sovereign rule extends throughout the entire universe and is over every creature.

ROMANS 16

18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

B ♦ Eph 2:1 Those who are enslaved to sin are separated in Paul's mind from those who have been freed from sin's bondage and seek to serve in humility other believers and Christ. "They that are such" indicates that Paul believes "this sort of individuals" to be imposters full of self interests.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

Written AD 57

1 CORINTHIANS 1

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother.

I ♦ 1 Cor 1:2 Paul understood the doctrine of efficacious grace, for he was a recipient of God's mercy apart from religious works.

2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.

I ♦ 1 Cor 1:9 The power of God to save souls in the city of Corinth is a testimony to the irresistible force of the gospel for Corinth was a byword for vice and immorality in the ancient world.

7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

P ♦ 1 Cor 1:8 The believer has been provided with all that is necessary to assure salvation while he waits for the coming of the Lord, who will perfect the soul in righteousness.

8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

P ♦ 1 Cor 1:9

*"Bold shall I stand in that great day!
For who aught to my charge shall lay?
While through Thy blood absolved I am,
From sin's tremendous curse and shame."*

Author Unknown

9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

I ♦ 1 Cor 1:24 Because God has called individuals in Corinth to salvation through Christ, it is His faithfulness which the apostle appeals to as the guarantee that He has not called them in vain. The call that came to the Corinthians was an effectual call.

P ♦ 1 Cor 10:13 God does not call souls into the "fellowship of His Son" only to allow them to be ultimately lost. Because God is faithful, believers will know a final glorification.

24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

U ♦ 1 Cor. 1:27 The called of God, united in Christ, are not always the best and brightest of this world but certainly the most needy.

I ♦ 1 Cor 1:26 In this passage Paul stresses the contrast between those who receive the gospel and those Jews and Greeks who rejected it. The difference is the effectual calling of God. And for those who come to faith it is the power of God, not the free will of man, that is exalted.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.

I ♦ 1 Cor 1:28 "The things which elevate man in the world, knowledge, influence, rank, are not the things which lead to God and salvation" (Charles Hodge). The thing which allows men to come to Christ is the effectual calling of God.

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.

U ♦ 1 Cor 1:28 In this passage Paul sets forth the creative character of God's electing grace as He takes the weak and foolish of this world in order to make them wise with His wisdom and strong in His strength.

28 And base (lit. without kin [i.e; of unknown descent], ignoble) things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.

U ♦ Gal 1:15 The church at Corinth was proof that the selection of souls to salvation is rooted in unmerited favor for grace is extended to those whom the world considers to be base, whether by birth or by behavior.

I ♦ 1 Cor 2:10 The church at Corinth is a testimony to the fact that the strength of sin and a hostile mind in man cannot resist the Sovereign's grace when God is pleased to apply His saving power. When the gospel was first preached, there was no church in Corinth except in God's divine intention. Despite initial opposition and the weakness of individuals, a church came into existence through the effectual work of the Holy Spirit.

30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

L ♦ 2 Cor 5:18 That the death of Christ was designed to secure the redemption of the elect is reflected here in the restricted language, "But of Him are ye in Christ." Not all men are in Christ. Not all men are covered by the blood of the Lamb. Not all men have been redeemed. Paul says, "But ye [believers in Corinth] are righteous in Christ for He is your righteousness"(1 Cor. 1:30).

1 CORINTHIANS 2

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

I ♦ 1 Cor 2:14 The Holy Spirit works in an invincible manner to search the souls in order to illuminate the hearts of those who shall be the heirs of salvation. Since the Spirit's knowledge of God is infinite, intimate, and exhaustive, the fathomless depths of God hold no mysteries for Him. Therefore, the Spirit can effectively apply the knowledge of salvation to the soul that shall be saved.

14 But the natural [lit. unspiritual] man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

T ♦ 1 Cor 4:7 The natural man does not generally consent to the concept that he is as bad as the Scriptures state or that he is the enemy of God. One reason for this lack of perception is an unwillingness to reflect upon spiritual matters, which appear foolish and not worthy of careful consideration.

I ♦ 1 Cor 2:16 If the natural man is to be saved, then the Holy Spirit must remove all natural barriers of resistance to the gospel. That the Spirit does effectually remove all barriers to save souls is a testimony to sovereign grace.

16 FOR WHO HATH KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD THAT HE MAY INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ [Job 15:8; Isa. 40:13].

I ♦ 1 Cor 3:6 Paul makes the question of Isaiah the prophet his own in order to say, "I am in full possession of my Master's mind. Indeed we are in full possession of our Master's mind." Only by an effectual movement of God upon the soul could such a statement be made.

1 CORINTHIANS 3

1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

The carnal Christian is one who is born again but is immature in the Christian life. The carnal Christian is not one who persists in known sin after reproof and instruction in righteousness, for carnality has no place as a normal part of the Christian's life (cf. John 15:5,6).

3 For ye are yet carnal [Gr. sarkikos (sar-kee-kos'); pertaining to flesh]: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

Paul is not seeking to establish a class of Christians that normally and consistently names the name of Christ while living in known sin. Just the opposite is true. A carnal Christian is one who is acting contrary to his real nature, which is to love the brethren while promoting holiness of life.

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

I ♦ 1 Cor 3:7 While individuals labor for the Lord, God must give the increase. The one efficient cause of individuals coming to Christ is the Spirit's special call issued to the elect resulting in spiritual fruit.

7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

I ♦ 1 Cor 4:7 In the salvation of the soul, one always finds a Scriptural emphasis upon God's effectual work of grace. It is true that God uses agents in our natural generation, "(for none of us are born without parents) - so He may use instruments in the other, our spiritual regeneration (for none of us are born Christians where there is no Word). But in both cases, it is God and God alone who gives the increase" (B.B. Warfield).

17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

Because the body of the believer is a sacred temple in which the Holy Spirit dwells, God will not allow its desecration without ultimate discipline (1 Cor. 5:5; 11:30-31; 1 John 5:16).

1 CORINTHIANS 4

7 For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

T ♦ 2 Cor 3:5 The soul that is truly saved will never take one iota of credit for its conversion. The sufficiency of saving grace is in the sovereign Saviour.

I ♦ 1 Cor 4:8 Only God can make an effective difference in a person's life. The inability of people to have any part in salvation is constantly set forth in Scripture in order to humble the heart and remind souls that salvation is of the Lord.

8 Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

I ♦ 1 Cor 6:11 Unfortunately, the believers at Corinth had become unduly proud of their spiritual gifts they consciously possessed. Using sanctified sarcasm, the apostle mocks their pride but then suddenly returns to reality to utter his desire to enter into their reign. In all of this, it is significant to remember that the believers could boast of their spiritual gifts because they did have many spiritual gifts. And the source of their gifts? The effectual working of God's sovereign grace.

1 CORINTHIANS 5

7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

Leaven is sometimes used in Scripture as a type of sin which spreads through the whole batch of dough. When sin is allowed to be unchecked it spreads and so must be purged. Christ the Passover Lamb takes away the sin of the world (Ex. 12:1-13; John 1:29).

1 CORINTHIANS 6

11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

I ♦ 1 Cor 12:3 There is no sin too great for the cleansing blood of Christ. Souls that are effectually drawn to the Lord and justified with a view towards sanctification freely come, being made willing by sovereign grace.

1 CORINTHIANS 10

13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

P ♦ 2 Cor 4:14 Prior to salvation the soul can do nothing but sin. After salvation the soul continues to act according to its nature, which is a new nature. It is the Holy Spirit who renews the will, sanctifies the heart, and preserves the believer in righteousness.

1 CORINTHIANS 12

3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

I ♦ 2 Cor 3:6 Only by the omnipotent power of God the Holy Spirit can any heart confess Jesus is Lord.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

Written AD 58

2 CORINTHIANS 3

5 Not that we are sufficient [able, powerful enough] of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.

T ♦ Eph 2:1 The soul that is truly saved will never take one iota of credit for its conversion. The sufficiency of saving grace is in the sovereign Saviour.

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

I ♦ 2 Cor 3:17 The total dependency upon the Lord for salvation is a difficult gospel truth for many to accept. Nevertheless, the Lord reminds the church that only by the working of the Spirit are souls regenerated. The efficacious grace of God reveals that God gives faith, grants repentance, and creates a new heart within the soul of the lost.

17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

I ♦ 2 Cor 3:18 Appealing to a historical event in the life of Moses (Ex. 34:33), the apostle illustrates how minds are blinded to gospel truths until there is an effectual work of grace that takes away any veil of darkness. In context Christ is that Spirit who effectually works upon the heart to give life in contrast to the letter of the law, which brings death.

18 But we all, with open face beholding [reflecting] as in a glass [mirror] the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

I ♦ 2 Cor 5:17 Having established the fact that salvation is the sovereign work of the triune God, Paul states that an inward change is effectually made in the heart apart from human merit or work.

2 CORINTHIANS 4

14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

P ♦ 2 Cor 4:17 God has promised to glorify the elect. The will of God is always accomplished. "Was ever a bargain so wondrous as this? O, matchless His love and His grace! My guilt for His glory, my pain for His peace, My night for the light of His face!" (Author Unknown)

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

P ♦ 2 Cor 5:17 Whatever trials and tribulations the believer might endure in time can be viewed as insignificant compared to the glory that will come.

2 CORINTHIANS 5

14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

W ♦ 2 Cor 5:15 Paul is not teaching that Christ died for all men without exception and is now reconciling the whole world to Himself without qualification, for that would be universalism. Rather, Christ died for all who shall be saved in order that they should receive forgiveness of sin, eternal life, and a glorified body.

15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

W ♦ 2 Cor 5:19 Those who become alive in Christ are the elect of God. Therefore, Christ died for the elect and only the elect [the alive] and not for the non-elect (those who do not come alive).

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

I ♦ 2 Cor 5:18 The work of making man a new creation begins with the act of regeneration whereby the Holy Spirit actually raises the soul from spiritual death and imparts life.

P ♦ Eph 1:5 Because a person is a new creation in Christ there will be a difference in life until the end of time. It is important to maintain that while a distinction must be made between justification and sanctification, there must never be a separation of the two. Said Calvin, "As Christ cannot be divided, so also these two blessings which we receive together in Him are also inseparable" (Calvin, Institutes, III, XI. 6).

18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

L ♦ 2 Cor 5:19 The elect are reconciled to God by the blood of Christ, which was shed for them and is applied directly to them.

I ♦ Gal 1:15 The ministry of the gospel is to bring souls to the Saviour so that they may find in Him new life. Since God has effectually reconciled "us" to Himself by His Son, it is with confidence that the rest of the elect shall also come to faith as believers go forth to witness.

19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

L ♦ 2 Cor 5:21 Those to whom sins are not imputed are the justified elect (Rom. 8:33,34). God is in Christ, reconciling the elect in the world. The certainty of this position is reflected in the fact that not all are in Christ, nor are all reconciled to God. Multitudes are dying hostile to God. Not all people are interested in the blessing of a non-imputation of sin. But the elect of God who are chosen in Christ, whose peace Christ is, whose sins are not imputed to them, and against whom no charge of any can avail, they are the world to whom God is reconciled.

W ♦ 1 Tim 2:4 As elsewhere in Scripture, the term "world" cannot be taken to mean all men without exception, for there are souls that perish. There would be no basis for ultimate condemnation upon the ungodly if all men have been reconciled as part of the "world" for whom Christ died. Therefore, it is the world of the elect, consisting of Jew and Gentile, that God in Christ has reconciled or brought back into a right relationship with Himself. For an orthodox Jew the concept of Gentiles being included as those for whom Christ died would have been astonishing.

21 For he [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

L ♦ Gal 1:3 At Calvary, Christ did not become sinful Himself for His impeccability was kept. "He knew no sin." However, Christ did take the place of and bore the sins for His own. Every elect child of God can say, "All that is His is imputed to me. O, lovely and fair is my Lord, And He gives me the robe of His own righteousness, To cover my sins, says His Word."(Author Unknown)

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE GALATIANS
Written AD 54

GALATIANS 1

3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

L ♦ Gal 1:4 The apostle begins this letter without flattery or artificial expressions of love. Paul loves the brethren, but the situation in Galatia is tense. Something difficult must be said, not only by Paul but by the brethren who are with him. Nevertheless, the matter to be discussed in this epistle regarding a departure from pure gospel principles and practices will be discussed among those for whom Christ died, as verse 4 indicates.

4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.

L ♦ Gal 3:13 In very specific and limited language, those for whom Christ died are identified.

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace.

U ♦ Gal 1:16 Those who are the heirs of God's special electing love receive divine grace apart from human merit. Here, Paul refers to his own conversion to Christ as a crystal-clear illustration of unconditional electing love.

It is God who separated Paul from other men. It is God who called Paul. It is God who showed His grace.

I ♦ Gal 1:16 God does not separate souls unto salvation because they believe. Rather, individuals believe because they have been separated unto salvation, sanctification, and service. Despite initial resistance and hostility to the gospel, the Holy Spirit effectually called Paul to Christ.

16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.

U ♦ Gal 4:28 Although Paul was with a number of other people in the hour of his conversion, it was he alone who was converted, thereby becoming a demonstration of Love's election (cf. Acts 9:1-9; Acts 26:8-14).

I ♦ Gal 6:15 The effectual salvation of Paul was immediately manifested in his public confession of Christ and proclamation of the gospel which he once opposed.

GALATIANS 3

13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

L ♦ Eph 1:3 Christ has imputed His righteousness and provided a pardon for the elect.

GALATIANS 4

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

U ♦ Eph 1:3 Isaac was chosen by God over Ishmael in order to establish the Sovereign's right to choose whom He wills. God establishes His promises and purpose in the affairs of men.

31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

The true Church of the New Testament is born of the same free woman (Sarah) as Isaac was born in the Old Testament. Israel and the Church are of one family, the family of God. If Israel of old is not of the same mother as the Church, then she was never in Christ and never saved.

GALATIANS 6

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth [profits] any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

I ♦ Eph 1:17 This was not the first time God made a new creature, for He called the Gentile, Abraham, to be a Jew. Any Gentile at any time in history who received Christ was given the right to be called the child of God as per John 1:12.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

Written AD 61

EPHESIANS 1

3 Blessed [worthy of praise] be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

U ♦ Eph 1:4 Every spiritual blessing, including regeneration and sanctification, has been provided for the elect by the gracious work of Christ's redemption.

L ♦ Eph 1:4 Paul invites the saints, who know the application to their hearts of a definite redemption, to join him in ascribing to God the praise He is worthy of for the spiritual blessings He has bestowed (election), presently bestows (redemption), and will bestow (glorification).

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.

U ♦ Eph 1:5 These words offer strong proof of the doctrine of an eternal, personal, and unconditional election of men to grace and glory. The timing of this election is also established as "before the foundation of the world."

L ♦ Eph 1:7 The use of the limited personal pronouns in Scripture must be carefully considered, for they help to indicate the extent and intent of the atonement. Christ intended to save His people from their sin. The extent of the atonement is limited to those for whom Christ gave His life.

5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

U ♦ Eph 1:11 The doctrines of election and predestination are clearly set forth in this passage as an unfolding of rational thought. If man is dead in sin, and has no inclination or ability to help himself, and if he comes alive because God has sovereignly planted a new life in him, then God must have previously decided to do so. This is only logical. God is rational, and so Paul teaches. God consciously and deliberately acts, and He acts with forethought and purpose. He predestinates.

P ♦ Eph 1:13 There is a divine certainty that accompanies all of God's decisions and practices.

S ♦ Eph 1:10 In all matters, including that of salvation, God is the Author. This truth does not negate the extra-trinitarian relationships ascribed to the Son and Holy Spirit, but it is the Father who takes the divine initiative as He works according to the good pleasure of His will.

7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness [lit. to send off; to send away] of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

L ♦ Eph 2:14 Christ has died for those whom God has predestinated for adoption.

10 That in the dispensation of the fullness 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:

S ♦ Eph 1:11

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.

U ♦ Eph 2:10 "Predestination is the decree of God, by which (according to the counsel of His own will) He fore-ordained some of mankind to eternal life, and refused or passed by others; for the praise of His glorious mercy and justice. Some are vessels of mercy, while others are vessels of wrath" (Christopher Ness).

S ♦ Eph 2:8 The sovereignty of God is manifested in the decree that ordains all that shall come to pass.

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 [confirmed] with that Holy Spirit of promise.

P ♦ Eph 1:14 God is not capricious so that His heart is never really known. He is faithful. Those whom He saves will be preserved because they are sealed. The fact they are authentically saved is evidenced by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

14 Which is the earnest [down-payment] of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

P ♦ Eph 4:30 The first installment of the believer's inheritance becomes his security and assurance of final perseverance. Let every child of God say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able, To keep that which I've committed unto Him against that day." (2 Tim. 1:12)

17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit [disposition] of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

I ♦ Eph 1:18 There is a wonderful mystery or secret of the kingdom of God made known to the elect: faith and repentance are gifts of divine grace effectually wrought in the soul through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.

18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened [illuminated]; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

I ♦ Eph 1:19 Apart from the work of the Holy Spirit, the heart of man is blind (John 9:39-41; 1 Cor. 2:14-16) so that he needs two things: the message of the gospel and spiritual perception.

In matchless grace, the Holy Spirit sovereignly applies the gospel to the heart by way of the new birth so that when the gospel is "heard," it is understood.

19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power [Gr. dunamas, dynamite] to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.

I ♦ Eph 1:20 The words "to us-ward who believe" reveal that this effectual, mighty power of God is exerted on behalf of believers and on no one else.

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.

I ♦ Eph 2:1 In order to enable the elect to have their eyes opened and their understanding illuminated concerning the gospel, God has at His disposal the same effectual power that raised Jesus from the dead.

EPHESIANS 2

1 And you hath he quickened [made alive], who were dead in trespasses and sins.

T ♦ Eph 2:2 The origin of true saving grace is rooted in the gracious heart of God. Adam disobeyed the known will of the Lord and deliberately ate of the forbidden fruit. As a result he brought spiritual death upon himself and all of his posterity, rendering them totally helpless to do anything except to act according to their fallen nature.

I ♦ Eph 2:5 The omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit to bring to life those who are spiritually dead is one of the great doctrines of sovereign grace. Such a doctrine leaves no room for human assistance or boasting.

B ♦ James 1:18 "When God converts a sinner and translates him into the state of grace, he frees him from his natural bondage under sin, and by his grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good" (The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689).

2 Wherein in times past ye walked [lived] according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

T ♦ Eph 2:3 The complete domination of the world, the flesh, and the devil upon the natural man may not be considered or comprehended, but it is a reality. The natural man is God's enemy. This enmity appears in every decision contrary to God's law and in every expression of unbridled lust fulfilled.

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation [manner of life] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

T ♦ Eph 4:17 By nature souls are objects of divine wrath, for the holiness of God is violated by willful acts of disobedience. The heart of the natural man is focused, in doing evil. The heart is bent in only one direction, and that direction is towards self and away from the Sovereign.

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

I ♦ Eph 2:8 No one has ever made himself come alive physically or spiritually. No one has ever created physical or spiritual life in someone else. Only God can take those dead and give them new life, and He does. The Lord spoke to dead Lazarus and Lazarus immediately came back from the grave (John 11:43). Christ speaks to dead souls in an irresistible manner and they live (John 5:25).

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.

I ♦ Eph 2:9 Because the faith that saves is a gift of God, because the grace that is extended is not of the the sinner's self, the conclusion must be drawn that salvation is an effectual working of the sovereign Saviour.

S ♦ Eph 3:11 The sovereignty of God is manifested in the gifts of grace He bestows.

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

I ♦ Eph 2:10 Effectual grace is the basis for salvation and the only ground upon which the soul can rest.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

U ♦ Eph 4:4 As Ruler of heaven and earth, God has ordained that some souls be saved and sanctified in order to persevere in good works and glorify Him.

I ♦ Eph 2:11 What God ordains will always come to pass, for the creature is subject to the will of the Sovereign.

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.

I ♦ Eph 4:4 The Christian must never forget by what power he has been brought into the family of God. The Christian is to remember how hopeless and helpless he was in the flesh and by what divine strength the stubborn will was subdued. "Thy precious will, O conquering Savior, Doth now embrace and compass me; All discords hushed, my peace a river, My soul a prisoned bird set free." (Author Unknown)

14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

L ♦ Eph 2:15 The work of redemption accomplished by Christ is applied to His people so that they are reconciled to God, justified, and given the gift of the Holy Spirit, who convicts of sin, regenerates the soul, and sanctifies the life.

15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity [hostility], even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.

L ♦ Eph 2:16 Christ did not abolish the law as a moral principle instilled in the conscience of man (Rom. 1:21; 2:14,15), nor did He abolish the law as it was formalized in the decalogue (Ex. 20:1-17) and restated in the new commandment of John 13:34, 35.

But Christ did abolish the law by satisfying its demands and bearing its curse, thereby ending the ceremonial part to which the Jews had turned their attention having made void the law of God by their traditions. The death of Christ brought a definitive end to this facet of the law so that the redemption He accomplished might be applied to those Jews and Gentiles who are to be saved.

16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain [put to death] the enmity [hostility] thereby:

L ♦ Eph 4:4 Although there might be a human longing to see the whole world converted, that is not part of the divine decree. At Calvary Christ reconciled many a Jew and Gentile to God, but not all. Nevertheless, the miracle of Calvary is not to be minimized. It is a great work of redemption Jesus accomplished.

EPHESIANS 3

“The Church is never a place, but always a people; never a fold but always a flock, never a sacred building but always a believing assembly. The church is you who pray, not where you pray. A structure of brick or marble can no more be a church than your clothes of serge or satin can be you. There is in this world nothing sacred but man, no sanctuary of God but the soul” (Anonymous).

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,

The Church has a glorious future which includes a high state of exaltation and perfection.

11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

S ♦ Phil 1:29 The sovereignty of God is manifested in the outworking of His eternal decree.

EPHESIANS 4

4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.

U ♦ Phil 1:29 The one body is the Church, consisting of elect Jews and Gentiles (cf. 2:14-22). Time and again the Scriptures reveal an elect body of believers, distinct from all others, which has been effectually called by God to salvation, sanctification, and service. This internal gospel call to which some responded, came by means of the Holy Spirit who, in the process of imparting the gift of saving grace, also unites believers into one spiritual organism (1 Cor. 12:13; cf. 3:16; 6:19; Rom. 8:9,11).

L ♦ Eph 5:25 Because not all are called unto hope, the extent of the atonement is deemed to be limited in intent.

I ♦ Phil 1:29 The hope of the believer will always rest in the divine summons to salvation by the secret calling of the sweet Holy Spirit. When He calls, the heart is made willing and comes.

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.

T ♦ Eph 4:18 If sovereign grace does not redeem the soul it shall be left to walk in wickedness and spiritual blindness all the while being without spiritual life. The Biblical revelation of the condition of the natural man is designed to humble him by showing his desperate state of abject despair.

18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.

T ♦ Eph 4:19 As a result of the fall from grace in the Garden of Eden, individuals are born spiritually blind and deaf. Their minds are darkened by sin, and their hearts are corrupt and evil.

19 Who being past feeling [having grown insensitive to that which is morally right and wrong] have given themselves over unto lasciviousness [excessive wickedness], to work all uncleanness with greediness.

T ♦ Eph 5:8 The natural state of the unconverted is wretched as they eagerly give themselves over to every form of personal pleasure no matter how sensual and perverted. The only feelings the natural man will suppress are those connected with the goodness of God that would bring them closer to His will.

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

P ♦ Col 3:3 In this passage personal responsibility for spiritual sensitivity to the Spirit and divine faithfulness are united. Although the believer is sealed until the day of redemption, he must be careful not to grieve the Spirit by persisting in sin, making provisions for the flesh or remaining with evil unconfessed (1 John 1:9).

EPHESIANS 5

8 For ye were sometimes darkness [spiritually unenlightened], but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.

T ♦ Col 2:13 Christians must never forget they were once in utter spiritual darkness. It is sovereign grace that makes the difference between the day of delight in being with the Lord in heaven or being eternally banished from the presence of love.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it.

L ♦ Eph 5:26 The Scriptures plainly teach that Christ loves the Church and gave Himself for the people who comprise the Church in an act of definite redemption in order to sanctify His own.

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.

L ♦ Phil 1:29 While it is the Church alone which Christ sanctifies and makes clean, it is the Christian who prays, "Search me, O God, and know my heart today; Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray: See if there be some wicked way in me: Cleanse me from every sin, and set me free" (Author Unknown). And He does.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS **Written AD 62**

PHILIPPIANS 1

29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.

U ♦ Phil 2:12 Faith is the result and the evidence of divine election, not the cause or ground of God's sovereign choice. Faith is a gift of divine grace freely given.

L ♦ Col 1:13 While not all people are given grace to believe, many do become the objects of mercy and are born again by the Holy Spirit.

I ♦ Phil 2:12 It is a humbling truth to realize that there is no strength in self to come to faith in Christ. It is a grand truth to discover that God knows how to save His own. Let the gospel trumpet sound, let the Holy Spirit say, "Come," and the soil of the soul will shake as up from spiritual death a new life arises.

S ♦ Col 1:12 The sovereignty of God is manifested by the ability He bestows upon the elect to believe in Christ for salvation.

PHILIPPIANS 2

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

U ♦ Phil 2:13 Though salvation is by grace through faith alone, the faith that saves is not alone, for good works accompany it.

I ♦ Phil 2:13 While the Holy Spirit calls, regenerates, and sanctifies the soul, the believer has a responsibility to be obedient. While divine sovereignty and human responsibility remain a great mystery, there is no incompatibility between the two. In the end the Christian realizes it is ultimately God at work in his life.

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

U ♦ Col 3:12 In this verse the apostle destroys the pride of man by announcing gloriously that it is God who works in hearts "to will and to do of His own good pleasure." Let the Church unite to sing, "All hail the power of Jesus name! Let angels prostrate fall; Bring forth the royal diadem, And Crown Him Lord of all; Bring forth the royal diadem, And crown Him Lord of all! Ye chosen seed of Israel's race, Ye ransomed from the fall, Hail Him who saves you by His grace, And crown Him Lord of all; Hail Him who saves you by His grace, And crown Him Lord of all!" (E. Perronet).

I ♦ Col 2:13 Since it is God that worketh in the heart, there can be no final resisting of the strength and will of the Sovereign.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Written AD 61

COLOSSIANS 1

12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet [fit] to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

S ♦ 2 Thess 2:11 Realizing the greatness of God's sovereignty elicits praise.

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

L ♦ Col 1:14 Only the elect are delivered from the power of evil and made citizens of the kingdom of God, thereby demonstrating the truth of a definite redemption.

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

L ♦ Col 1:21 The moral content of redemption is emphasized by Paul in this phrase, "even the forgiveness of sin." The price Jesus paid to redeem His people from their sins was His own precious blood. "Jesus paid it all, All to Him I owe; Sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow" (Mrs. H. M. Hall).

21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.

L ♦ Col 1:22 Though the wickedness of all men is total, God graciously saves some who were alienated from Him, enemies in the depths of the heart, and workers of wickedness.

22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight.

L ♦ 1 Tim 1:15 Justification secures for the elect the righteousness of Christ. His righteousness is imputed to the believer and is manifested in progressive sanctification.

COLOSSIANS 2

13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened [made alive] together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.

T ♦ 2 Tim 2:25 The absolute helplessness of the soul prior to salvation to save itself or have any part in its own regeneration is complete, for the heart is dead. There is no life principle.

I ♦ 2 Tim 1:9 Having instilled new life, the Spirit reveals to the elect the mysteries of the kingdom of God.

COLOSSIANS 3

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

P ♦ Col 3:4 The life of the believer is united to the life of Christ in such a way that the two cannot be separated.

4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

P ♦ 1 Thess 5:23 Here is a wonderful promise that the believer shall share the glory of Christ. "Some day the silver cord will break, And I no more as now shall sing; But oh, the joy when I shall wake Within the palace of the King! And I shall see Him face to face, And tell the story-saved by grace; And I shall see Him face to face, And tell the story-saved by grace"(Fanny Crosby).

5 Mortify [put to death] therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication [illicit sexual intercourse], uncleanness [any sexual or bodily perversion], inordinate affection [unnatural cravings], evil concupiscence [desires that cannot be satisfied], and covetousness, which is idolatry [because God is reduced to a secondary place in life].

The believer is exhorted to make the pronouncement of a death sentence upon any organ or part of the body that might have been given over to sin before salvation, for salvation transforms the body into the temple of God (Rom. 8:13; Gal. 5:24; 1 Cor. 3:16).

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.

U ♦ 1 Thess 1:4 The elect of God are called first to salvation and then to holiness of life. Therefore, "Take time to be holy, Speak oft with thy Lord; Abide in Him always, And feed on His Word: Make friends of God's children; Help those who are weak; Forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek" (W. D. Longstaff).

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS

Written AD 51

1 THESSALONIANS 1

4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

U ♦ 1 Thess 1:5 The redeemed can know and should know they are the elect of God. The doctrine of election is designed, in part, to elicit certainty of salvation as it magnifies the power and grace of God.

5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

U ♦ 1 Thess 2:12 Paul does not emphasize himself but the glorious message he was called by God to proclaim. As the gospel was preached, it went forth in effectual power in the strength of the Holy Spirit, and those who had been ordained to eternal life were saved.

1 THESSALONIANS 2

12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

U ♦ 1 Thess 4:5 A holy life speaks of a gracious election.

1 THESSALONIANS 4

5 Not in the lust of concupiscence [forbidden longings], even as the Gentiles which know not God.

U ♦ 1 Thess 5:9 By contrasting the Christians at Thessalonica with the "Gentiles which know not God," the doctrine of election is established, for not all people are effectually called to salvation.

The constant emphasis in Scripture of an elect people is designed to stir individuals up to seek the Lord. Far too many give no thought to the spiritual status of their soul. They are at ease and so work out their own destruction, for they presume upon the grace of God.

1 THESSALONIANS 5

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

U ♦ 2 Thess 1:11 The elect of God will never know the terror of divine wrath.

23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

P ♦ 1 Thess 5:24 Because the believer will be sanctified in every facet of the soul the effective power of sin to destroy the heart is rendered ineffective.

24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

P ♦ 2 Tim 4:18 What will God do? He will preserve and keep those who believe in His Son. There is a firm foundation for the saints of the Lord. "The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose, I will not, I will not desert to its foes; That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I'll never no, never, no never forsake!"(George Keith).

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS

Written in late AD 51 or early AD 52

2 THESSALONIANS 1

11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power.

U ♦ 2 Thess 2:13 Those who have been elected and marked out for salvation, having been called by the Holy Spirit, will know the power of the sanctifying presence of God.

2 THESSALONIANS 2

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.

S ♦ 2 Thess 2:12 It is a fearful thing to have the sovereign God become one's enemy. As the Lord knows how to deliver from evil, He also knows how to confirm in the same. If men will not believe the truth, they will believe a lie as a result of divine discipline.

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

S ♦ Titus 3:5 In a moral universe created and controlled by God, even the Fall and all the results associated with that event are ordained to further the eternal purposes of the Lord. While God is the ultimate cause of whatever comes to pass, He is not the actor of sin because every evil deed is the result of a deliberate choice for which the person is the immediate agent and is therefore responsible. It had been better that Judas had never been born, for his betrayal was foretold. Yet he remains responsible for his treachery. And so it is that all will be condemned who do not believe the truth but love unrighteousness.

13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

U ♦ 2 Thess 2:14 The divine selection of the heirs of salvation was made before the foundation of the world so that salvation would be all of grace.

14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

U ♦ 1 Tim 6:12 There is an elect people whom God has chosen from eternity past and has effectually called to salvation by the power of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of obtaining the glory associated with the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

When God determines the end, He also determines the means by which His will shall be obtained.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO TIMOTHY

Written AD 65 or 66

1 TIMOTHY 1

15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief [the worst].

L ♦ Titus 2:14 Christ did not come to save all people of all sin, or all would be saved. Many people, such as Judas Iscariot, do not go to heaven but to their own place (Acts 1:25). Therefore the scope of the atonement is of necessity restricted to those souls that will ultimately and finally be saved.

1 TIMOTHY 2

4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

W ♦ 1 Tim 2:5 God would have all to be saved whenever He appoints the gospel to be preached and the Holy Spirit to convict and convert. However, God is under no obligation to draw all to Himself (John 6:44 cf. Acts 16:7).

5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

W ♦ 1 Tim 2:6 Christ is a Great High Priest for His people. He mediates on their behalf so that sin is not charged to their account.

6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

W ♦ Heb 2:9 If God truly intended for all men without exception to come to faith, then that would happen.

If anyone could ultimately resist God He would cease to be the Sovereign. In context Paul is speaking of all sorts or classes of men (note v. 1.2), which are identified. God would have all types of individuals come to faith and they do.

1 TIMOTHY 4

10 For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe.

In context Paul argues that God is not merely the Saviour of a few ascetics (note 1 Tim. 4:3,4). God's offer of salvation applies to all men without distinction. To reassure any Christian who was concerned by the exclusive claims of the heretics, Paul declares that God is especially the Saviour of believers. This passage should not be taken out of its context to teach universalism or that Christ died for all sins of all men.

1 TIMOTHY 6

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

U ♦ 2 Tim 1:9 The state of being numbered among the elect necessitates a holy standing in the outworking of personal sanctification.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO TIMOTHY

Written c. AD 67

2 TIMOTHY 1

9 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.

U ♦ 2 Tim 2:10 God has a reason and purpose for His election of some to salvation and His rejection of others.

Part of the divine rationale is to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known (Rom 9:22-23). The good works of individuals are the result of, not the basis for, the act of predestination.

I ♦ 2 Tim 2:25 Our salvation is wholly of God; He effectually accomplishes it without the aid of man or his merits. "Nothing can for sin atone, Nothing but the blood of Jesus; Naught of good that I have done, nothing but the blood of Jesus" (Robert Lowry).

2 TIMOTHY 2

10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

U ♦ Titus 1:1 In all of his epistles, Paul teaches there is an elect people of God. Rather than discourage evangelism, the doctrine of election was a motivation to endure hardships.

25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

T ♦ 2 Tim 2:26 Such is the nature of the natural man that he opposes the message of the gospel and those who present it. Nevertheless, ministers must be patient and gentle, for it is possible that God will give the grace needed for repentance to the lost. Only such divinely given mercy can rescue men from the stupification of their sinful state.

I ♦ 2 Tim 2:26 God must give the gift of repentance and the Holy Spirit if a person is to be saved. Those who are saved must pray for the salvation of others because God has ordained not only those who will come to faith but the means by which individuals come to faith. Prayer is an effective means that God uses to advance the gospel.

26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare [trap] of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

T ♦ Titus 1:15 The desperate plight of the natural man is compounded by the strength of Satan who is able to trap the soul and keep it in spiritual bondage.

I ♦ Titus 3:5 Because sovereign grace regenerates the soul, meekness should characterize the converted. No person has any basis to boast of any personal decision to be saved for it is God who gives the gift of repentance or the ability to repent.

2 TIMOTHY 4

18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

P ♦ Heb 9:12 Not only is salvation of the Lord but so is the sanctification and security of the believer.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO TITUS **Written c. AD 65-67**

TITUS 1

1 Paul, a servant [Gr. doulos, slave] of God, and an apostle [Gr. apostolos, one sent with a commission] of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness.

U ♦ Heb 9:15 The selection of the heirs of salvation in Christ is a matter declared to be God's prerogative. He is the root of all righteousness, grace, and mercy.

15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

T ♦ Titus 3:3 The Scriptures reveal the state of the natural man to be that of total corruption and defilement in every facet of the soul: will, mind, and emotions. The heart is a slave to sin.

TITUS 2

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

L ♦ Titus 3:5 As a gracious and merciful Saviour, Christ gave Himself to those whom He intended to redeem and sanctify. It is an unacceptable concept that Christ would give Himself for and redeem those who will be forever lost.

TITUS 3

3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers [many] lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

T ♦ James 3:2 The Christian remembers that sin reigns universally over all who are kept under its power. As a result, none are righteous in the sight of God prior to salvation.

5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost

L ♦ Titus 3:6 Christ saves the elect apart from works of personal righteousness.

I ♦ Heb 9:15 Good works do not save. Only the mercy of God manifested by the saving ministry of the Spirit gives assurance of salvation. Only the Spirit can definitely bring souls to the Saviour, which He does.

S ♦ Heb 2:10 The fruit of salvation is rooted in the sovereignty of God, not works of self-righteousness.

6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

L ♦ Heb 2:17 When properly understood the doctrine of definite redemption humbles the heart. "I know not why God's wondrous grace To me He hath made known, Nor why, unworthy Christ in love Redeemed me for His own"(El Nathan).

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

Written c. AD 61-68

HEBREWS 2

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

W ♦ Heb 2:17 The word for “man”, "anthropos", is not found in this passage, but "pantos" is, which signifies "everyone." The concept is that every one of the heirs of salvation (1:14), every one of the sons of God (2:10), and every one of the brethren (2:11) can be assured that Christ tasted the awful death of redemption by way of anticipation (Luke 2:49), and then drained the bitter cup.

10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain [author] of their salvation perfect [complete] through sufferings.

S ♦ Heb 2:13 The totality of every facet of life, all that is or shall be, originates in God.

13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

S ♦ Heb 6:17 Knowledge of God's sovereignty produces great confidence in the hearts of the elect.

17 Wherefore in all things it behoved [was right for] him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation [Gr. hilaskomai, to propitiate, to make satisfaction] for the sins of the people.

L ♦ Heb 9:12 The death of Christ was sufficient for all, efficient for some. Salvation is by the grace of God.

W ♦ Heb 3:1 A reference to "the people" indicates that not all the people of the world shall be saved but "the people" for whom Christ died.

HEBREWS 3

1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers [partners] of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession [confession], Christ Jesus.

W ♦ Heb 9:28 It can never be said that Christ is the Apostle or High Priest of the non-elect or of those who will perish. Christ is the Saviour of souls and the protector of our profession, a reference not to the world, but to the redeemed.

HEBREWS 6

6 If they shall fall away, to renew [restore] them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

The loss of salvation is not taught in this section. Rather, a hypothetical illustration is used to teach what would happen to a person who has been converted if that person could fall away. The author believes his readers are saved (v. 9) but warns them of a false profession. The general teaching of Scripture is that the security of the believer is rooted in the promises of God to preserve His own (cf Phil 1:6; 1 John 5:13).

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability [unchangeability] of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath.

S ♦ James 1:17 God is pleased to make His sovereignty known to men.

HEBREWS 9

12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place [Holy of Holies], having obtained eternal redemption for us.

L ♦ Heb 9:14 Christ has not purchased eternal redemption for all men without exception but for “us”, the elect of God.

P ♦ Heb 9:15 The redemptive work of Christ for the elect is not temporal but eternal. Once the blood of Christ is applied to the soul of the believer, there can be no return to a former state of unbelief and condemnation.

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge [cleanse] your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

L ♦ Heb 13:12 There were two aspects of the Old Testament sacrifices: the slaying and shedding of the blood of the animal, and then the actual offering of it upon the altar. Both facets were necessary in order to complete the sacrifice. The killing of the sacrifice was meaningless if the blood was not offered; the shedding of blood was insignificant if the life of the animal was not taken. Christ was a perfect and complete sacrifice for His people, for His blood was shed and His life was given. Now He can keep on cleansing His people from their sins.

15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

U ♦ James 2:5 The called, and only the called of God receive the promises of God, which include the gift of eternal life. In the act of calling, the doctrine of divine election is realized.

I ♦ James 1:18 There is a general and universal call of the gospel extended to every one who hears. In addition, there is a special inward call of the Spirit to salvation that only the elect as the sheep of Christ hear. While the external call to salvation can be rejected, the inward call will not and cannot be resisted.

P ♦ Heb 10:14 Because Christ is Redeemer and Priest, the security of the believer is assured. There is an eternal inheritance to possess.

28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

W ♦ 2 Pet 3:9 A declaration is made that Christ purposely died to bear the sins of many. The wisdom and grace of God provided for the elect's deliverance from the curse. The Anointed One, as the High Priest of His people, presented to God an all-sufficient and final satisfaction for all the sins of all who have been, from eternity, given to Him by the Father. The sins of many Christ bore—had imputed to Him, received the punishment of, and fully expiated—in His own body on the tree (1 Pet. 2:24, A.W. Pink).

HEBREWS 10

14 For by one offering he hath perfected [completed] for ever them that are sanctified [set apart].

P ♦ Heb 12:28 The redemptive work of Christ is perfect. If a person could be lost after salvation, then the Lord's saving accomplishments would be proven ineffectual, the promises of God would be overthrown, and the words of Scripture would be rendered meaningless.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.

This passage does not teach that any of the readers had committed the sin of apostasy. It does warn that those who deny Christ are worthy of a much more severe punishment than was administered under the Old Testament economy.

HEBREWS 12

28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

P ♦ 1 Pet 1:3 A gospel exhortation to evangelical obedience does not negate the fact that the believer is within that kingdom which cannot be moved.

HEBREWS 13

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

L ♦ 1 Pet 1:2 The elect are "the people" for whom Christ suffered "without the gate."

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES

Written: early date: AD 45-49 * Later date: after AD 55

JAMES 1

17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

S ♦ 1 Peter 2:8 The Scriptures are careful to teach that God is the ultimate source of every gift of life. Because He is sovereign; because He is in control over every thought, word, and deed; because He is immutable in His essence; praise and honor and glory can rightfully be rendered to Him.

18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

I ♦ 1 Pet 1:2 There is not only a divine will in salvation but also a divine certainty. God will bring souls to His Son in a sovereign manner according to His will.

B ♦ The salvation of the sinner is not determined by the free will of man, but by the free grace of the sovereign God, who alone imparts life according to His own good pleasure.

JAMES 2

5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

U ♦ 1 Pet 1:2 Those who love God will manifest their love through good works. It is worthy of repeating that while salvation is by grace through faith alone, the salvation that comes to the elect is not alone, for good works accompany it.

JAMES 3

2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect [mature] man, and able also to bridle [control] the whole body.

T ♦ James 3:8 Another manifestation of the natural corruption of the soul is the inability to control the tongue.

8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

T ♦ 1 John 1:8 The inability of man to control his tongue reflects the total depravity of the heart from which comes forth the most vile words expressing the darkest intentions of the heart. Let the honest heart confess, "I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all But Jesus Christ is my All in all" (Unknown).

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

Written c. AD 66

1 PETER 1

2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

U ♦ 1 Pet 2:8 God knew before the foundation of the world was created those whom He had elected for salvation. The nature of this foreknowledge is not rooted in the merits of men but in the mystery of His mercy (Eph. 2:8-9). The effect of election is sanctification.

L ♦ 1 Pet 2:24 According to Scripture, election is either to an office (as Saul was made king over Israel), to a special place of privilege (as national Israel enjoyed), or to salvation. The election in view here has reference to God's gracious decree or resolution to save some and effectively to bring them, through Christ, to eternal life.

I ♦ 1 Pet 1:3

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

I ♦ 1 Pet 1:13 Supernatural life is a gift because we are born by nature the children of wrath. We who are by nature destined to eternal death are restored to life by God's mercy.

P ♦ 1 Pet 1:4 In great mercy God saves a person and then continues to give grace to maintain a lively hope in the heart, leading to sanctification and ultimate glorification of the soul.

4 To an inheritance incorruptible [without decay], and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.

P ♦ 1 Pet 1:5

5 Who are kept [guarded] by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

P ♦ 1 Pet 2:9 Peter does not leave the Christian in suspense. The final perseverance is not in doubt. Believers stand by the power of God. Christians are sustained by a faith that receives its stability from God's power. The security of the believer is not only for the present but also for the future.

13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation [apokalupsis (ap-ok-al'-oop-sis); manifestation] of Jesus Christ.

I ♦ 1 Pet 1:15 Here is a divine grace. Complete saving, sanctifying, sustaining grace shall be brought to the heirs of salvation at the second advent (Heb. 9:28) of Christ.

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [living].

I ♦ 1 Pet 1:23 Whom God calls He calls effectually first to salvation and then to holiness of life. "All true grace in the heart leads to holy practice in life" (Jonathan Edwards).

23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

I ♦ 1 Pet 2:9 Because the flesh is helpless and hopeless, men must be born of God, and they are. "God has an incontestable authority and an irresistible ability to form and fashion individuals as He pleases so as to serve His own purposes" (Matthew Henry).

1 PETER 2

8 AND A STONE OF STUMBLING, AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed [Isa. 8:14].

U ♦ 1 Peter 2:9 According to His sovereign will, God has made all, but all have not been made for the same use and end. There are vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy.

S ♦ 1 Pet 2:12 God does not hesitate to take responsibility for being sovereign over the dark deeds which men do.

9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar [God's own] people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

U ♦ 1 Pet 5:10 Consistent with the teaching of the rest of Scriptures Peter speaks of an elect people of God chosen by sovereign grace to be holy and distinct.

I ♦ 1 Peter 5:10 Those who are chosen will show forth the praises of the One who has called them, for there is an effectual work of God that takes place in the soul.

P ♦ 1 Pet 2:24 All that the Father has chosen, all for whom the Son has died, all whom the Holy Spirit regenerates will walk out of darkness and into the marvelous light of the gospel. They can do no less; they want to do more. "To those who are sincere in their religion God will give grace to persevere in it. Those that follow God faithfully will be divinely strengthened to continue following him" (Matthew Henry).

12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

S ♦ Jude 1:4

24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: BY WHOSE STRIPES YE WERE HEALED [Isa. 53:4,11].

L ♦ 1 Pet 3:18 The death of deaths in the death of Christ secured the gift of the Holy Spirit, who comes to regenerate and sanctify the soul of every believer so that we, whose sins are borne by Christ, might be holy.

P ♦ 1 John 2:19 The redemptive death of Christ guarantees a life of holiness and spiritual health that assures salvation.

1 PETER 3

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.

L ♦ 1 John 1:7 In the act of dying at Calvary, Christ reconciled His own to the Father and justified them in the eyes of the law so that the Holy Spirit can regenerate and sanctify them.

1 PETER 5

10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect [complete], stablish, strengthen, settle you.

U ♦ 2 Pet 1:10 Without exception the elect of God will enter into the sufferings of the Saviour.

I ♦ 2 Pet 1:3 The "effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man, nor from any power or agency in the creature co-working with His special grace, the creature being wholly passive therein, being dead in sins and trespasses, until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit; he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it, and that by no less power than that which raised up Christ from the dead" (The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689).

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER

Written c. AD 66-67

2 PETER 1

3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.

I ♦ 1 John 5:4 It is the glory of God's power to save sinners and so He does. In an effectual, sovereign manner, God calls to life, by His word and Spirit, those who are in a state of sin and death.

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

U ♦ 2 John 1:13 The calling and election of a soul is not salvation but unto salvation. Salvation does not take place until there is regeneration by the Holy Spirit and faith in Christ.

2 PETER 2

1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily [secretely] shall bring in damnable heresies [i.e., heresies of destruction], even denying the Lord [lit. despoteen, God the Father] that bought [lit. agorásanta, owns] them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

The word “Lord” speaks not of Christ but of the sovereign God and His authority over all. The word “bought” speaks of a purchase which establishes ownship and authority. What is taught is that God is sovereign and reigns in authority over all, even over these false teachers who deny His sovereignty and rule. What is not taught in this verse is a universal redemption. The false teachers are not denying the Christ who paid a general redemption price for them. Rather, they are denying the sovereign God who owns them by the right of creation.

2 PETER 3

9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

W ♦ 1 John 2:2 In contrast to universal passages, there are many Scriptures that teach in definite terms that Christ performed a saving work so as to infallibly redeem a particular people, even the elect given to Him by the Father. Peter illustrates this truth by teaching that the Second Coming of Christ will take place according to the will and purpose of God, which includes the calling out of a people prior to that hour. God is not slack regarding the fulfillment of His promise. Rather, there is a group that is the object of God’s forbearance and God is not willing that these certain ones perish. He wants them to come to repentance and they will. Christ will then return when this people is complete. Until then God will work to bring the elect to salvation.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

Written: early date: Prior to AD 70 * Late date: c. AD 80-85

1 JOHN 1

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood [the death] of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

L ♦ Rev 13:8 The children of God are righteous and sanctified because the Father will honor the covenant which He entered into with the Son before the foundation of the world. None of those whom the Father has given to the Son shall be lost.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

T ♦ 1 John 1:10 The doctrine of total depravity teaches man's total inability to come to Christ apart from sovereign grace. Those who are under the universal reign of sin are unable of their own will to repent, to believe the gospel, or to come to Christ. They have no natural spiritual power or innate ability to change their natures or prepare themselves for salvation. To deny a sin nature is to deny the obvious.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

T ♦ 1 John 3:10

1 JOHN 2

2 And he is the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

W ♦ 1 John 4:14 Once again it can be argued that Christ died for all men without distinction in that He died for Jew and Gentile alike. Christ did not die for all men without exception for the purpose of saving each and every lost sinner, for then all would certainly be saved. The motive for this divine act of propitiation was love. "God so loved the world" (John 3:16). To say "God so loved the world" is not to suggest "that the world is so big that it takes a great deal of love to embrace it all, but that the world is so bad, that it takes a great kind of love to love it at all, and much more to love it as God has loved it when He gave His Son for it" (B.B.Warfield).

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest [obvious] that they were not all of us.

P ♦ 1 John 2:25 All who are truly born of God will remain within the sphere of Christian fellowship and service for the Saviour.

25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.

P ♦ 1 John 3:9 Because God cannot lie, the promise of eternal life guarantees the salvation of believers.

1 JOHN 3

9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

P ♦ 1 John 5:1 Those who are born of God cannot and will not continually practice sin as a way of life. The new nature will not allow a sinful way of life.

10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

T ♦ 1 John 5:19 The natural inclination of the unregenerated heart is to love neither God nor man, all the while performing acts of unrighteousness.

1 JOHN 4

14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

W ♦ Rev 5:9 Whenever a soul is saved in the world, it is because the Father has given the Son to be the Saviour.

1 JOHN 5

1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

P ♦ 1 John 5:4 To be born of God is to enjoy a new nature so that it can never be said, "Ye are of your father the devil" (John 8:44).

4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

P ♦ 1 John 5:11 In matchless mercy a new heart is instilled in the soul of the person dead in sin so that the heart walks in the ways of God.

I ♦ 1 John 5:20

10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

A rejection of the biblical record is a rejection of Christ.

11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

P ♦ 1 John 5:12

12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

P ♦ 1 John 5:13

13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

P ♦ 1 John 5:20

18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

The divine provision for the prevention of repetitive sinning is the new birth and a realization of one's new position in Christ. By coming to understand all that a believer is in Christ (a son, an heir, a representative, a priest etc.), there is the opportunity to be transformed in the mind so that sin ceases because Christ is honored in the heart (Rom. 12:1-2). The soul does not want to violate the integrity of its self-image in Christ.

19 And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

T ♦ The honest heart knows two truths: whether or not it is born of God and whether or not it lives in the sphere, strength, and power of the evil one.

20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

I ♦ Jude 1:1 Because God has chosen individuals without condition and with Divine certainty to salvation and eternal life, His Spirit must and will apply the benefits of redemption to those whom the Father has given to the Son.

P ♦ Jude 1:1

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF JOHN

Written c. AD 60-95

2 JOHN 1

13 The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.

U ♦ Rev 7:14 Election is set forth in Scriptures to encourage soul-winning activity and to separate those chosen by God from all others. This precious doctrine is a source of great comfort to those who have been redeemed.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JUDE

Written c. AD 67

JUDE 1

1 Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.

I ♦ Rev 7:14 There are a number of souls whom God has determined to call, sanctify, and preserve. Because salvation is of the Lord, there will be an effectual salvation.

P ♦ Jude 1:24 "Those whom God hath predestinated unto life, he is pleased in his appointed and accepted time, effectual to call, by his Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh: renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace" (The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689).

4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness [evil], and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

S ♦ Jude 1:5 God has raised up certain individuals to be monuments of His power and justice. While men move to protect the goodness and grace of God, the Lord asserts His sovereignty over evil, those who commit evil, the reason why men perform evil, and the final fate of all that oppose Him.

5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling [stumbling], and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

P ♦ Jude 1:25

25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Written: early date: Prior to AD 70 * Late date: c. AD 90-95

REVELATION 5

9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

W ♦ The reference to the redeemed is not universal and indiscriminate but particular and limited, referring to the world of the elect.

REVELATION 7

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

U ♦ Rev 13:8 From Genesis to Revelation the doctrine of election flashes forth from the pages of holy Scripture.

REVELATION 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.

U ♦ Rev 17:8 The election to salvation was not a general, racial, or indiscriminate selection. Rather, God chose particular individuals to be the heirs of salvation and wrote their names in the Book of Life before the foundation of the world

REVELATION 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.

U ♦ Rev 17:14

A Final Note

The greatest issue in life which any person faces is the matter of salvation. The cry of the Philippian jailer is universal: “What must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:30). The divine answer is that a person must be born again. Speaking to Nicodemus, “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). But how is this possible? Can man be born again by performing good works? The answer is no for it is “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost” (Titus 3:5). If man cannot work in order to secure the salvation of his soul then how is the heart converted? Once more the Scriptures reveal the answer. Salvation is the gracious and sovereign work of God. Salvation is completely God’s prerogative and not man’s.

- *Ephesians 1:19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.*
- *John 5:21 ...even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.*
- *John 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*
- *John 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.*
- *John 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.*
- *Acts 16:14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.*
- *Acts 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.*
- *James 1:18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.*

*“Therefore,
come ye sinners, poor and needy
Weak and wounded, sick and sore,
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, and love, and power.*

*Come you weary, heavy laden,
bruised and broken by the Fall,
If you tarry till you're better,
You'll never come at all.*

*Let not conscience make you linger,
or of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness He requireth
is to feel your need of Him.*

*Come ye thirsty, Come and welcome!
God's free bounty glorify.*

*True belief, true repentance,
every grace that brings you nigh,
Without money,
come to Jesus Christ and buy.”*



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