

Election and Reprobation

Chapter 32

August 21, 2010

Introduction

1. Redemption Accomplished and Applied
 - 1.1. Title of book of by John Murray
 - 1.2. Often how systematic theologians - especially Reformed ones - order the presentation of doctrines of salvation
 - 1.3. Redemption accomplished - Christ's coming and work - we have already studied these
 - 1.4. Redemption applied - how Christ's work become effective in those who are saved
 - 1.5. The events of the application of Christ's redemptive work are often given in a particular order.
 - 1.5.1. The theological term for this is the ordo salutis (Latin for order of salvation)
 - 1.5.2. Grudem lists ten elements of the ordo salutis on page 670.
 - 1.5.3. These will be the topics covered in the coming months
 - 1.5.4. The Scriptural basis for this is usually given from Romans 8:29-30 - For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.
2. The first step in the application of redemption - election
 - 2.1. A little unusual since it happened before Christ's redemptive work
 - 2.2. Also unusual because it happens outside of us - it is something God does, rather than something we do
 - 2.3. Sometimes referred to as predestination

The Doctrine of Election

1. Definition - Election is an act of God before creation in which He chooses some people to be saved, not on account of any foreseen merit in them, but only because of His Sovereign good pleasure.
 - 1.1. It is an act of God - not of man
 - 1.2. It is eternal - it happens before we even exist
 - 1.3. It is selective - it applies to some people and not to others
 - 1.4. It is unconditional - it is based on God's free choice, not something in us
 - 1.5. It is sovereign - it is based on God's Sovereignty as creator alone and for His glory and pleasure
2. Some New Testament Scriptures on generally dealing with election and predestination

- 2.1. Romans 8:29-30 **For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.**
- 2.2. Acts 13:48 When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and **all who were appointed for eternal life believed.**
- 2.3. Romans 11:5-8 So too, at the present time there is **a remnant chosen by grace.** 6 And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace. 7 What then? **What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened,** 8 as it is written: "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day."
- 2.4. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because **from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.** 14 He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2.5. Romans 9:15-18 For he says to Moses, "**I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.**" 16 **It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.** 17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: "I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." 18 **Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.**
- 2.6. Ephesians 1:4-6 **For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- 6 to the praise of his glorious grace,** which he has freely given us in the One he loves.
- 2.7. Ephesians 1:11-12 **In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,** 12 in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.
- 2.8. John 6:37 **All that the Father gives me will come to me,** and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.
- 2.9. John 6:44-45 "**No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.** 45 It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' **Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.**
- 2.10. John 6:60-65 On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "**This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?**" 61 Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "**Does this offend you? 62 What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! 63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.** 64 Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. 65 He went on to say, "**This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him.**"

- 2.11. John 10:26-27 **but you do not believe because you are not my sheep.** 27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.
- 2.12. 1 Peter 1:1-2 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, **To God's elect**, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, 2 **who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit**, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.
3. It is an act of God - not of man
 - 3.1. Romans 8:29-30 **For those God foreknew he also predestined** to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 **And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.**
 - 3.2. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because **from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.** 14 **He called you** to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
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 - 3.5. Ephesians 1:4-6 **For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he predestined us** to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, **in accordance with his pleasure and will-- 6 to the praise of his glorious grace**, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.
 - 3.6. John 6:37 **All that the Father gives me will come to me**, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.
 - 3.7. John 6:44-45 "**No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.** 45 It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' **Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.**
 - 3.8. John 15:16 **You did not choose me, but I chose you** and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.
 - 3.9. All of the Scriptures show that election is an act of God - we do not 'elect ourselves.'

4. It is eternal - it happens before we even exist
 - 4.1. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because **from the beginning God chose you to be saved** through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. 14 He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 4.2. Ephesians 1:4-6 **For he chose us in him before the creation of the world** to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.
 - 4.3. Matthew 25:34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take **your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.**
 - 4.4. Revelation 13:8 All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast--**all whose names have not been written in the book of life** belonging to the Lamb that was slain **from the creation of the world.**
 - 4.5. Revelation 17:8 The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction. **The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world will be astonished** when they see the beast, because he once was, now is not, and yet will come.
 - 4.6. 2 Timothy 1:9 who has saved us and called us to a holy life--not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. **This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,**
 - 4.7. All of the Scriptures show that election did not occur in time. On the contrary, it was an act of God that occurred before the creation of anything - in eternity.
 - 4.8. The fact that election is eternal further underscores that it is an act of God - and one with which we have nothing to contribute.
5. It is selective - it applies to some people and not to others
 - 5.1. Romans 8:29-30 **For those God foreknew he also predestined** to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 **And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.**
 - 5.2. Acts 13:48 When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and **all who were appointed for eternal life believed.**
 - 5.3. Romans 11:5-8 So too, at the present time there is **a remnant chosen by grace.** 6 And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace. 7 What then? **What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened,** 8 as it is written: "**God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear,** to this very day."
 - 5.4. Romans 9:15-18 For he says to Moses, "**I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.**" 16 It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy. 17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: "I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you

- and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." 18 **Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.**
- 5.5. John 6:37 **All that the Father gives me will come to me**, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.
 - 5.6. John 6:44-45 **"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.** 45 It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' **Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.**
 - 5.7. John 10:26-27 **but you do not believe because you are not my sheep.** 27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.
 - 5.8. These Scriptures show that some people are God's elect and others are not. Election does not apply to all human beings, but only to those whom God in His grace has chosen to be His people.
 - 5.9. This means that any teaching which says God has chosen everyone so that everyone can now believe and those who turn to Christ are God's elect is wrong. Election is not given to everyone. Those who are elect will come to Christ, and whoever does not is not the elect of God.
 - 5.10. This further underscores that election is an act of God, not man.
 6. It is unconditional - it is based on God's free choice, not something in us
 - 6.1. Romans 11:5-8 So too, at the present time there is **a remnant chosen by grace.** 6 **And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.** 7 What then? **What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did.** The others were hardened, 8 as it is written: "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day."
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 - 6.3. Ephesians 1:4-6 **For he chose us in him before the creation of the world** to be holy and blameless in his sight. **In love** 5 **he predestined us** to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, **in accordance with his pleasure and will--** 6 **to the praise of his glorious grace**, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.
 - 6.4. Ephesians 1:11-12 **In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,** 12 in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.
 - 6.5. Deuteronomy 7:7-8 **The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples.** 8 **But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.**

7. It is sovereign - it is based on God's Sovereignty as creator alone and for His glory and pleasure
 - 7.1. Romans 9:10-13 Not only that, but Rebekah's children had one and the same father, our father Isaac. ¹¹ Yet, **before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad--in order that God's purpose in election might stand: ¹² not by works but by him who calls--she was told, "The older will serve the younger."** ¹³ Just as it is written: **"Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."**
 - 7.2. Romans 9:15-18 For he says to Moses, **"I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."** ¹⁶ It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy. ¹⁷ For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: **"I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth."** ¹⁸ **Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.**
 - 7.3. Romans 9:20-24 But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? **"Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'"** ²¹ **Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?** ²² What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath--prepared for destruction? ²³ **What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory--** ²⁴ **even us, whom he also called,** not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?
 - 7.4. 2 Timothy 1:8-9 So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, ⁹ **who has saved us and called us to a holy life--not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,**
 - 7.5. Titus 3:4-6 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ **he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,** ⁶ **whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior,**
 - 7.6. Luke 10:21 At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because **you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.**
8. Election and a human response
 - 8.1. None of this can be taken to indicate that a human response to the Gospel is not being called for and commanded by God. Election will usher in a genuine human response - ALWAYS.
 - 8.2. This point will be covered in depth in future sessions, but notice the combination of election and human response in these few verses:
 - 8.2.1. Acts 13:48 When the Gentiles heard this, **they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.**

- 8.2.2. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. ¹⁴ He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 8.2.3. John 6:37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.
 - 8.2.4. John 6:44-45 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.
9. The purpose of the doctrine of election
- 9.1. It provides comfort to believers and assures them of their salvation
 - 9.1.1. Romans 8:28-30 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.
 - 9.1.2. John 10:28-29 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.
 - 9.1.3. John 6:37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.
 - 9.1.4. John 6:39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.
 - 9.1.5. Romans 8:33-34 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.
 - 9.1.6. Jude 1:1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, To those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ:
 - 9.2. It causes us to worship God, praising Him for saving us
 - 9.2.1. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. ¹⁴ He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 9.2.2. Ephesians 1:4-6 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

- 9.2.3. Ephesians 1:11-12 **In him we were also chosen, having been predestined** according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, ¹² **in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.**
- 9.2.4. 1 Thessalonians 1:2-4 **We always thank God for all of you,** mentioning you in our prayers. ³ We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ **For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you,**
- 9.3. It precludes any boasting on our part - we have NOTHING to do with our salvation
- 9.3.1. Ephesians 2:5-9 **made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved.** ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ **For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.**
- 9.3.2. Romans 9:11-12 Yet, **before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad--in order that God's purpose in election might stand: ¹² not by works but by him who calls--**she was told, "The older will serve the younger."
- 9.3.3. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 Brothers, think of what you were when you were **called.** Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But **God chose** the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; **God chose** the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸ **He chose** the lowly things of this world and the despised things--and the things that are not--to nullify the things that are, ²⁹ **so that no one may boast before him.** ³⁰ **It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus,** who has become for us wisdom from God--that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. ³¹ **Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."**
- 9.4. It gives confidence for evangelism because we can KNOW that some people around us will respond to the Gospel - and there is no other way for dead men and women to live!
- 9.4.1. Acts 13:48 When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and **all who were appointed for eternal life believed.**
- 9.4.2. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because **from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.** ¹⁴ **He called you to this through our gospel,** that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 9.4.3. John 6:37 **All that the Father gives me will come to me,** and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

- 9.4.4. 2 Timothy 1:8-10 So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. **But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God,⁹ who has saved us and called us to a holy life--not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,¹⁰** but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.
- 9.4.5. 2 Timothy 2:10 Therefore **I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.**
- 9.4.6. 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5 For **we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you,⁵ because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction.**
- 9.4.7. Acts 18:9-11 One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: **"Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent.¹⁰** For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, **because I have many people in this city."¹¹** So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.
- 9.4.8. Some people misunderstand election and think it will undercut evangelism, but this is not the case. A proper understanding of election should spur evangelism because we can KNOW that God has people who He is going to save. We do not have to worry that "no one will ever listen" because we know God is at work all around us and those appointed to eternal life WILL believe.
- 9.4.9. Actually this is the only way people can be saved. If we properly understand our plight we know that those dead in trespasses and sins can not respond apart from God's electing grace and the regenerating work of the Spirit, and that those who God calls and regenerates WILL respond to the Gospel call.
- 9.4.10. This understanding is seen through history where many of the people most used by God to preach the Gospel and see multitudes converted had the strongest understandings of election. This would include not only biblical characters like Paul, but men like Luther, Calvin, Whitefield, and Edwards.
10. What election does NOT do according to Scripture
- 10.1. Election is never given to allow me to guess who has been chosen and who has not been. I have NO biblical warrant for trying to guess if my neighbor is chosen or not. I am NEVER told to even consider this. I am called to love and serve them and reach out to them with the Gospel, knowing that God will work in some of these hearts and that they will respond to the Gospel.
- 10.2. Election is not given to allow me to get out of the responsibility to preach the Gospel. This is a gross misunderstanding of election. God has called - that is His work. I am to go and preach - that is the task He has given me. I can not elect, and He does not preach - or save apart from preaching the Gospel. To use election as a reason to not reach out to the lost is simply a smokescreen for willing disobedience.

- 10.3. Election is not given to “get behind or around” Jesus. We do not preach to be elect - we preach Christ. Our question is not “Are you elect?” but “Do you believe in Christ?”

11. Misunderstandings of the doctrine of election

11.1. Election is fatalistic

- 11.1.1. Election does NOT remove human will or freedom. It does not remove the reality of a real human response to the Gospel.
- 11.1.2. Sovereign election by God and our response to the promises of the Gospel are flip sides of the same coin. Election does not mean that we do not decide - it simply says that when we decide it is because of something God had already done, unknown to us.
- 11.1.3. See the Scriptures in section 8 above - “Election and a human response”
- 11.1.4. Also see chapter 17 on “Providence” where the question of God’s Sovereignty and Human Freedom and responsibility was handled in depth.

11.2. Election is simply based on foreknowledge of our response of faith

- 11.2.1. For a general refutation of this idea see section 6 “It is unconditional - it is based on God’s free choice, not something in us” above.
- 11.2.2. It should also be noted that election and foreknowledge are always spoken of in terms of people - not their faith. The idea of foreknowledge of faith is nowhere taught in the Scripture, but rather is simply assumed - in contradiction to the Scriptures listed in section 6 above.
- 11.2.3. It should also be noted that if election is based on something in us - even faith - then we are on the road to meriting salvation. The reason some are saved and not others is because of something they did - not something God did.

12. Objections to the doctrine of election

12.1. Election removes human free will

- 12.1.1. See section 11.1 above, and chapter 17 on “Providence”
- 12.1.2. This really arises from a false view of free will, which upon further reflection is impossible to maintain. If by free will we mean that nothing outside of our will can influence our decisions, this is simply a false idea. Every decision is influenced by many things outside of our wills - including our own nature, our circumstances, our environment, our past history, etc. To deny that God may use these things to accomplish His Sovereign will in our life is to deny the reality of how choices are actually made.

12.2. Election means unbelievers never really had a chance to believe

- 12.2.1. The Scripture always places the responsibility for rejecting the Gospel on the unbeliever - not God.
- 12.2.1.1. John 8:43-44 Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. ⁴⁴ You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire.

- 12.2.1.2. Matthew 23:37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, **but you were not willing.**
- 12.2.1.3. John 5:39-40 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. **These are the Scriptures that testify about me,⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me to have life.**
- 12.2.1.4. Luke 7:29-30 ²⁹ (All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus' words, acknowledged that God's way was right, because they had been baptized by John. ³⁰ **But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves,** because they had not been baptized by John.)
- 12.2.2. This means that the reason unbelievers do not believe is because they choose not to believe. The responsibility for this choice lies entirely with them.
- 12.3. Election is not fair
 - 12.3.1. This objection can resonate with all of us. In fact, it seems inbred into every human being - including me!
 - 12.3.2. But several points militate against this:
 - 12.3.2.1. As our Creator, it is 'fair' for God to do whatever he wants with any of us. Since we exist because of Him, He has an absolute right to do whatever He wants, and no one can claim this is not fair. To do so is make ourselves out to be God's equal. We simply have no right to question God's ways.
 - 12.3.2.1.1. Romans 9:19-21 One of you will say to me: "Then why does God still blame us? For who resists his will?" ²⁰ **But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?' " ²¹ Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?**
 - 12.3.2.1.2. Isaiah 29:16 **You turn things upside down, as if the potter were thought to be like the clay! Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, "He did not make me"? Can the pot say of the potter, "He knows nothing"?**
 - 12.3.2.1.3. Isaiah 45:9 **"Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker, to him who is but a potsherd among the potsherds on the ground. Does the clay say to the potter, 'What are you making?'" Does your work say, 'He has no hands'?**

12.3.2.2. As the One who has been offended, God has the right to forgive and save whomever He decides. True justice demands that no one be saved. Mercy does not require that everyone be saved - but God in His mercy may forgive and save those He desires to save. And as guilty offenders, we have no right to demand that God show mercy to everyone or no one.

12.4. God desires to save everyone

12.4.1. A couple of Scriptures seem to indicate that God desires to save everyone:

12.4.1.1. 1 Timothy 2:3-4 This is good, and pleases God our Savior,⁴ **who wants all men to be saved** and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

12.4.1.2. 2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, **not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.**

12.4.2. In reality these verses do not teach this. Notice each of them in context:

12.4.2.1. 1 Timothy 2:1-8 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made **for everyone--² for kings and all those in authority**, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.³ This is good, and pleases God our Savior,⁴ who wants **all men** to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.⁵ For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all men--the testimony given in its proper time.⁷ And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle--I am telling the truth, I am not lying--and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles.⁸ I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing.

12.4.2.1.1. Notice that in the context, “all men” or “everyone” really refers to different classes of men, and especially those in authority.

12.4.2.1.2. The point of v4 is actually that a peaceful, quiet society lends itself to more people hearing and responding to the Gospel - which is pleasing to God because He wants people to be saved.

12.4.2.2. 2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. **He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.**

12.4.2.2.1. Note that the people God is being patient with is not unbelievers - but the church members reading Peter’s letter. Thus, strictly speaking, the verse is not directly talking about

unbelievers at all, but rather God's patience with believers to come to repentance.

12.4.2.2.2. Second, even when we consider unbelievers, the context is about Noah and the flood, which is certainly a picture of God's patience. However, only Noah and His family - who found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Genesis 6:9) - were saved. Not one single person outside of them heard or responded.

12.4.3. It should also be noted that we may speak of "two wills" of God - His revealed will and His secret will. God's revealed will is given in His commands in Scripture, but His secret will is unknown to us but guides all of life.

12.4.3.1. Deuteronomy 29:29 The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.

12.4.3.2. God's revealed will is that the Gospel be preached to everyone, and that the free offer of salvation be made to everyone.

12.4.3.3. God's secret will - which can never be known by us - has determined whose heart will be set free from their sin so that they can freely respond and believe the Gospel.

12.4.3.4. Thus, these verses can be seen as speaking of God's revealed will, but not His secret will.

12.4.3.5. Arminians sometimes react against this concept, but as Grudem points out on page 684, every system must have some form of two wills in these passages since even though they say God wills everyone to be saved, He knows not everyone will be, and therefore He wills something else more than He wills their salvation.

12.4.3.6. Thus, the difference in the Reformed and Arminian conception of the two wills is what is willed more than everyone being saved. In the Arminian view it is the free will of man, while in the Reformed conception it is the glory of God. I think the Scripture is pretty clear what God values the most - His own glory. See section 7 above.

The Doctrine of Reprobation

1. Definition - Reprobation is the Sovereign decision of God before creation to pass over some persons, in sorrow deciding not to save them, and to punish them for their sins, and thereby to manifest His justice.
2. This is a very difficult and indeed dreadful doctrine. In fact, Calvin called it the 'horrible doctrine' - but he still believed and taught it because it is the teaching of Scripture.
3. Scriptures regarding reprobation:
 - 3.1. Romans 11:5-8 So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. ⁶ And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace. ⁷ What then? **What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened,** ⁸ as it is written: "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day."
 - 3.2. Isaiah 6:9-10 He said, "Go and tell this people: " 'Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.' ¹⁰ Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."
 - 3.3. John 12:37-40 Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, **they still would not believe in him.** ³⁸ This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet: "Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" ³⁹ For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere: ⁴⁰ "He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn--and I would heal them."
 - 3.4. 1 Peter 2:8 and, "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." **They stumble because they disobey the message--which is also what they were destined for.**
 - 3.5. Romans 9:17-20 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: "I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." ¹⁸ Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden. ¹⁹ One of you will say to me: "Then why does God still blame us? For who resists his will?" ²⁰ But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?' "
 - 3.6. Matthew 11:25-26 At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because **you have hidden these things from the wise and learned,** and revealed them to little children. ²⁶ **Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.**
 - 3.7. Romans 11:7 What then? **What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened,**
4. Important differences between election and reprobation
 - 4.1. Election is always spoken of in terms of bring God pleasure and joy, but reprobation is often spoken of in sorrowful terms by both God and His people. Therefore election

should produce joy in us, but the prospect of reprobation should produce mercy and cries to God to save those who are lost.

- 4.1.1. Ezekiel 33:11 Say to them, 'As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, **I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways!** Why will you die, O house of Israel?'
- 4.1.2. Ezekiel 18:23 Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign LORD. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?
- 4.1.3. Romans 9:1-4 I speak the truth in Christ--I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit--² **I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.** ³ **For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race,** ⁴ **the people of Israel.** Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises.
- 4.1.4. Luke 19:41 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it
- 4.1.5. Philippians 3:18 For, as I have often told you before and **now say again even with tears**, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.
- 4.2. Election is grounded in God's grace, but reprobation is grounded in God's justice
- 4.3. Consequently, the term 'double predestination' is not really helpful and should be avoided.