

God’s Amazing Grace – Part 4

For many are called, but few are chosen."

Matthew 22:14

Election – Part 1

One of the biggest hindrances to a right understanding of God’s Amazing Grace bringing salvation through the life-giving, transforming, saving power of God granted to many (“the elect” – some individuals, but not all) because of Christ, through the working of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, is the expectation or assumption that “God would never choose only some to salvation when he really what to save every person”. This statement about God’s will, through it seems to satisfy man’s sense of value and importance and presents God as having “good intentions” (but apparently not able or willing to actually carry them out and save everyone) does not fit will ALL the Bible says on the issue. Instead of starting with assumptions and answers, let’s start with questions and genuine searching of God’s Word for truth.

If God’s “intention” is to save as many as he possibly can – how many would be saved?

Remember men (fallen in sin through Adam) will not and even cannot do right or even believe until God makes a change within them.

Deuteronomy 29:4 But to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear. (Even after all the revelation of God in Egypt, the wilderness, etc...)

Romans 8:7-9 ⁷ For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. ⁸ Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

Restricted Revelation, Selective Disclosure

One of the most common modern misconceptions of God and his plan for salvation is the notion that "God loves everybody and wants to save everyone", and "God is doing his best to reveal himself to everyone, but many just don't believe."

I must admit, these are the very things that I used to believe until I learned that this is what men teach, not the Scriptures. Please take note of the fact that God does not love everybody in the same way.

Psalm 5:5 ⁵ *The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers.*

Psalm 11:5 ⁵ *The LORD tests the righteous, but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence.*

Proverbs 6:16 ¹⁶ *There are six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to him:... ¹⁹ a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.*

Romans 9:13 ¹³ *As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."*

Now, though God does not love them (as objects of His love in the same way that He loves the elect), nonetheless because God is love, he is loves (as an action) or better, is still loving (good and kind) towards those who are the objects of his holy and righteous hatred.

Psalm 145:8-20 ⁸ *The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.* ⁹ ***The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.*** ¹⁰ *All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD, and all your saints shall bless you!* ¹¹ *They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power,* ¹² *to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.* ¹³ *Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. The LORD is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.* ¹⁴ *The LORD upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down.* ¹⁵ ***The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season.*** ¹⁶ ***You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing.*** ¹⁷ ***The LORD is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works.*** ¹⁸ *The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.* ¹⁹ *He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them.* ²⁰ *The LORD preserves all who love him, **but all the wicked he will destroy.***

(See also Mat. 5:43-45; Rom. 12:17-21;)

God is love and this manifests itself in a general loving kindness even to unbelievers (all creation). But they are not the express *objects* of His love. They benefit from the love of God by having different opportunities and experiences of the pleasures of this world, and even those who have not benefited in this way are still experiencing the love of God because their judgment, misery and suffering is, at present, less than they ultimately deserve and will eventually receive.

But, we who are the objects of God's love are so, not because of ourselves -- anything in us, about us or, what we will do, or have done. God's Sovereign Selection is illustrated in his choice of Israel.

Deuteronomy 7:7-8 ⁷ ***It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples,*** ⁸ ***but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.***

Deuteronomy 9:5-6 ⁵ ***Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.*** ⁶ ***"Know, therefore, that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stubborn people.***

Deuteronomy 10:14-17 ¹⁴ ***Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it.*** ¹⁵ ***Yet the LORD set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day.*** ¹⁶ ***Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.*** ¹⁷ ***For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is **not partial** and takes no bribe.***

It is the same with us who are chosen by God:

Titus 3:5-7 ⁵ ***he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,*** ⁶ ***whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,*** ⁷ ***so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.***

1 John 4:10 ¹⁰ *In this is love, **not that we have loved God but that he loved us** and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

God chose to set his love upon only one nation even though every thing belongs to him. Some would say that this is not fair and is showing partiality, but this cannot be. His choice was based on his purpose and not on anything desirable or more lovable in Israel. Also, just as he set his love on them in a conditional covenant, he can take it away and set it on others.

Hosea 9:15 ¹⁵ *Every evil of theirs is in Gilgal; there **I began to hate them**. Because of the wickedness of their deeds I will drive them out of my house. **I will love them no more**; all their princes are rebels.*

Romans 9:25 ²⁵ *As indeed he says in Hosea, "Those who were not my people I will call 'my people,' and her who was **not beloved I will call 'beloved.'**"*

We know who are the special objects of God's love today by what he does for them.

1 John 3:1 *See **what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are**. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.*

1 John 4:19 ¹⁹ *We love because he first loved us.*

Ephesians 1:5 ⁵ ***he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,***

1 John 5:19-20 ¹⁹ *We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. ²⁰ And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.*

John 8:47 *Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God."*

Has the Son given this understanding to all? Does he try to or even want to?

Luke 10:21-22 ²¹ *In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that **you have hidden** these things from the wise and understanding **and revealed** them to little children; yes, Father, for **such was your gracious will.** ²² *All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and **anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.**"**

But isn't Jesus trying to reveal the father to everyone, but they just won't believe? No.

Matthew 13:10 ¹⁰ *Then the disciples came and said to him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" (Mark 4:10)*

Matthew 13:11-13 ¹¹ *And he answered them, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. ¹² *For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. ¹³ This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.**

Mark 4:11-12 ¹¹ And he said to them, "**To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables,** ¹² **so that "they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven."**

Jesus spoke in parables to prove that he does not owe anyone anything. God has no duty or obligation to give everyone a chance. To prove this Jesus spoke in parables, because the message was intended to be hidden from some and revealed to others.

What if Jesus would have not used cryptic language (parables) but said it plainly like we are supposed to today.

John 10:24-27 ²⁴ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." ²⁵ Jesus answered them, "**I told you, and you do not believe.** The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, ²⁶ but **you do not believe because you are not part of my flock.** ²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

Even though Jesus did not and does not owe everyone a chance, because it is given only to some, he made it clear that even if he speaks clearly to those not chosen to be sheep, they will not believe.

Are you trying to say that God himself is not trying to save everyone?

John 12:37-40 ³⁷ Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him, ³⁸ so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and **to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"** ³⁹ Therefore **they could not believe.** For again Isaiah said, ⁴⁰ "**He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest [ὅνα μὴ-in order that they would not] they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.**"

God has not revealed his arm to everyone, some can not believe because He has blinded their eyes (2 Cor. 4:4 he is not the agent of blinding, but the designer)

2 Thessalonians 2:10-13 ¹⁰ and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ Therefore **God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false,** ¹² **in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.** ¹³ But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because **God chose you as the first fruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.**

Why would God send a powerful delusion leading people to believe what is false if so many say "he wants everyone to come to him and is doing his best to get them to believe."?

We have seen:

He taught in Parables so that many might not understand "the knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom."

He performed miracles but many could not believe because "He had blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts."

He spoke the truth plainly and they would not believe because they were not his sheep.

Others He leads into believing lies "so that those who took pleasure in unrighteousness will be condemned."

But to those the Father has selected and given to him as his sheep...

John 17:2-24 ² since you have given him authority over all flesh, **to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.** ³ And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent... ⁶ **"I have manifested** [Εφάνέρωσά from φανερώω - to make manifest or visible or known what has been hidden or unknown] **your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world.** Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word... ⁹ I am praying for them. **I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me,** for they are yours... ¹⁴ I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world... ²⁰ **"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,...** ²⁴ Father, **I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.**

Colossians 1:25-27 ²⁵ of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, ²⁶ the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now **revealed to his saints.** ²⁷ **To them God chose to make known** how great among the Gentiles [ἔθνεσιν from ἔθνος here plural, literally nations or peoples] **are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

1 Corinthians 2:12-14 ¹² Now **we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.** ¹³ And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. ¹⁴ The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

John 14:17 ¹⁷ even **the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive,** because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Galatians 1:15-16 ¹⁵ But **when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace,** ¹⁶ **was pleased to reveal his Son to me,** in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone;

Titus 3:5-6 ⁵ **he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,** ⁶ **whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,**

We did not save ourselves. He saved us. If God had not moved upon us in rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, we would have never responded in faith and repentance. If God had not made us alive (Eph. 2:5) we would have remained dead in our sins and incapable of seeing, hearing, understanding, comprehending and apprehending the glorious truth of the Gospel of grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:1-3 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, **To those who are elect** exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ² according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you. ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! **According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again** to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (See John 3)

1 Corinthians 6:11 ¹¹ And such were some of you. **But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**

Romans 11:5-8 ⁵ So too at the present time there is a **remnant, chosen by grace.** ⁶ But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. ⁷ What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. **The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened,** ⁸ as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day."

Romans 5:5 ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because **God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.**

This love is not poured out on all, but to those he has chosen to set his love upon and give to the Son. The Son has chosen to reveal the Father and himself to those chosen and the Spirit actively carries out these things in the life of the elect.

After seeing these things people again raise their voices and say this is not fair. The only reason that they think and say this is because they do not have an adequate understanding of the Creator / Creature distinction and relationship as well as the impact of sin.

Just to remind us again : God is just and fair not because it seems fair to us, but because He is. The Bible teaches that: (The following references through page 31 are out of the NIV whereas we've been using ESV up to this point. These things are clear in any translation so YOU can and should look them up in your favorite. A working knowledge of the Greek text even adds more clarity and precision)

Deuteronomy 32:4 He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.

Job 34:12 It is unthinkable that God would do wrong, that the Almighty would pervert justice.

Isaiah 5:16 But the LORD Almighty will be exalted by his justice, and the holy God will show himself holy by his righteousness.

Matthew 7:14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

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