

Ephesians 1:3-6: ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ ⁴just as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵**He predestined us** to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, **according to the kind intention of His will,** ⁶**to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us** in the Beloved.

Romans 8:29-35: ²⁹For **whom He foreknew, He also predestined** to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren ³⁰and **whom He predestined**, these **He** also called; and whom **He** called, these **He** also justified; and whom **He** justified, these **He** also glorified. ³¹What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who is against us?** ³²**He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?** ³³**Who will bring a charge against God's elect?** God is the one who justifies; ³⁴who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

When we consider that our salvation is rooted in the free and sovereign purpose of God, we naturally rejoice with thanksgiving. How amazing that God would stoop to save such unworthy sinners caught up in sin and rebellion and deserving of hell! We exult in His amazing grace, which frees us from the eternal death we have merited. With grateful hearts, may we glorify God for our salvation by freely proclaiming His goodness to us.

2 Thessalonians 2:13: But **we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation** through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

Psalms 65:4: **How blessed is the one whom Thou dost choose, and bring near to Thee,** To dwell in Thy courts. We will be satisfied with the goodness of Thy house, Thy holy temple.

Psalms 106:4-5: ⁴Remember me, O LORD, in Thy favor toward Thy people; Visit me with Thy salvation, ⁵**That I may see the prosperity of Thy chosen ones, That I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nation, That I may glory with Thine inheritance.**

Question #166: Carefully read 2 Timothy 1:8-10, Ephesians 1:3-6, and Romans 8:29-35. According to these passages, how secure is your salvation? _____

If God is for you (and He is if you are saved), who can be against you? _____

Who can successfully bring a damning accusation against you? _____

Who has the power to condemn a person God has justified? _____

Who is able to separate you from the love of God? _____

What else in all of creation can separate you from the love of God? _____

What makes your salvation so secure? _____

Question #167: Do 2 Thessalonians 2:13, Psalm 65:4, and Psalm 106:4-5, accurately describe your attitude toward your salvation? _____ If not, it would be wise for you to spend more time studying and meditation on what Scripture teaches about the security of your salvation.

Election should encourage evangelism

We should zealously preach the gospel and evangelize people because *God has promised* to save people from every tribe and nation, indeed from every language and ethnic group in the world.

Matthew 28:19-20: ¹⁹Go therefore and **make disciples of all the nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Luke 24:45-47: ⁴⁵Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶and He said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; ⁴⁷and that **repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.**”

Revelation 5:9-10: And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; **for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.** ¹⁰And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.

We see Paul, in his missionary journeys in the book of Acts, being encouraged by God to evangelize in certain areas because God’s elect people were there.

Acts 16:6-10: ⁶And they passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, **having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia;** ⁷and when they had come to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and **the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them;** ⁸and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. ⁹**And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a certain man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him, and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”** ¹⁰And when he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, **concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.**

Acts 18:8-11: ⁸And Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized. ⁹And **the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, “Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent;** ¹⁰**for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city”** ¹¹And he settled there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

2 Corinthians 2:14-16: ¹⁴But thanks be to God, **who always leads us in His triumph in Christ,** and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. ¹⁵For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among **those who are being saved and among those who are perishing;** ¹⁶**to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma of life to life.** And who is adequate for these things?

Paul affirmed that he did all for sake of God’s elect, the church he zealously sought to reach with his relentless preaching of the Gospel.

2 Timothy 2:10-11: For this reason I **endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they also may obtain the salvation** which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.

Paul affirms in Romans 9 that God elects according to His own free and sovereign purpose. Then in Romans 10, he explains that people are saved when they call upon the name of the Lord. God saves those He has elected through the means of Gospel preaching! **“How shall they hear without a preacher?”**

Romans 10:12-15: ¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him; ¹³for “Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.” ¹⁴How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And **how shall they hear without a preacher?** ¹⁵**And how shall they preach unless they are sent?** Just as it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!”

Question 168: From the above Scripture passages, describe at least four specific ways in which the doctrine of election *encourages* evangelism:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Consider a few statements from the **Canons of the Synod of Dort**:

ARTICLE 7. Election is the unchangeable purpose of God, whereby, before the foundation of the world, He has out of mere grace, according to the sovereign good pleasure of His own will, chosen from the whole human race, which had fallen through their own fault from the primitive state of rectitude into sin and destruction, a certain number of persons to redemption in Christ, whom He from eternity appointed the Mediator and Head of the elect and the foundation of salvation. This elect number, though by nature neither better nor more deserving than others, but with them involved in one common misery, God has decreed to give to Christ to be saved by Him, and effectually to call and draw them to His communion by His Word and Spirit; to bestow upon them true faith, justification, and sanctification; and having powerfully preserved them in the fellowship of His son, finally to glorify them for the demonstration of His mercy, and for the praise of the riches of His glorious grace; as it is written “For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will — to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves” (Ephesians 1:4-6). And elsewhere: “And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified” (Romans 8:30).

ARTICLE 8. There are not various decrees of election, but one and the same decree respecting all those who shall be saved, both under the Old and New Testament; since the Scripture declares the good pleasure, purpose, and counsel of the divine will to be one, according to which He has chosen us from eternity, both to grace and to glory, to salvation and to the way of salvation, which He has ordained that we should walk therein (Ephesians 1:4,5; 2:10).

ARTICLE 9. This election was not founded upon foreseen faith and the obedience of faith, holiness, or any other good quality or disposition in man, as the prerequisite, cause, or condition of which it depended; but men are chosen to faith and to the obedience of faith, holiness, etc. Therefore election is the fountain of every saving good, from which proceed faith, holiness, and the other gifts of salvation, and finally eternal life itself, as its fruits and effects, according to the testimony of the apostle: “For He chose us (not because we were, but) in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight” (Ephesians 1:4).

ARTICLE 10. The good pleasure of God is the sole cause of this gracious election; which does not consist herein that out of all possible qualities and actions of men God has chosen some as a condition of salvation, but that He was pleased out of the common mass of sinners to adopt some certain persons as a peculiar people to Himself, as it is written: “Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad — in order that God’s purpose in election might stand: not by works but by Him who calls — she (Rebekah) was told, ‘The older will serve the younger.’ Just as it is written: ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated’” (Romans 9:11-13). “When the Gentiles heard

this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed” (Acts 13:48).

ARTICLE 11. And as God Himself is most wise, unchangeable, omniscient, and omnipotent, so the election made by Him can neither be interrupted nor changed, recalled, or annulled; neither can the elect be cast away, nor their number diminished.

The Sovereignty of God

Part 4: In Salvation

Effectual Calling

What Does the Bible Say?

We have seen that salvation is a supernatural work of God accomplished by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. This is the only way salvation can occur because mankind is naturally unable to see, hear, and understand the Gospel. Salvation rests upon the free electing grace of God. He chooses (elects) those who will be saved from before the beginning of time. Election is unconditional; that is, it is not **conditioned** (determined or based) upon any response in man. People are saved in time and space because God has chosen them in eternity past and regenerates them (causes them to be born again) at a specific point in the course of their lives.

John 3:3: Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**”

1 Peter 1:1-3 - ¹Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, **who are chosen ²according to the foreknowledge of God the Father**, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure. ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again** to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Salvation is a supernatural work of God, initiated by election and accomplished by the new birth. Although predestined to occur in eternity past, it actually happens when the chosen sinner’s heart is regenerated by God’s Holy Spirit. He does this through a process of **drawing** or **calling**. The Bible plainly declares that those whom God has elected and predestined are **drawn** to salvation by God Himself.

John 6:37: All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

John 6:44: No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.

John 6:65: And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that **no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father.**”

Jeremiah 31:2-3: ²Thus says the LORD, “The people who survived the sword Found grace in the wilderness—Israel, when it went to find its rest.” ³The LORD appeared to him from afar, saying, “I have loved you with an everlasting love; **Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.**”

Exodus 19:4: You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and **how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself.**

Question 169: From the passages listed above, describe in your own words the supernatural work of God that saves sinners. _____

The **Bible plainly declares** that the Church, i.e., those who are the elected recipients of salvation, have been **called** by God at a particular point in their lives. This clearly affirms that **God is the initiator** of their salvation.

Romans 8:28: And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, **to those who are called according to His purpose.**

Romans 1:1-7: ¹Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, **called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,** ²**which He promised before-hand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,** ³concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, ⁴who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, for His name's sake, ⁶among whom **you also are the called of Jesus Christ;** ⁷to all who are beloved of God in Rome, **called as saints:** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 9:23-24: ²³And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, **which He prepared beforehand for glory,** ²⁴**even us, whom He also called,** not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.

1 Corinthians 1:9: God is faithful, through whom **you were called into fellowship with His Son,** Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:22-24: ²²For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; ²³but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, ²⁴**but to those who are the called,** both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

2 Thessalonians 2:14: And it was for this **He called you through our gospel,** that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 6:12: Fight the good fight of faith; **take hold of the eternal life to which you were called,** and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

2 Timothy 1:8-11: ⁸Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of me His prisoner; but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, ⁹who **has saved us, and called us with a holy calling,** not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, ¹⁰but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, ¹¹for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher.

Hebrews 9:15: And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, **those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.**

1 Peter 5:10: And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, **who called you to His eternal glory in Christ,** will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.

Scripture also speaks of our salvation as a **calling** by God, i.e., a divine favor or privilege which has been given to all the saints.

Romans 11:28-29: ²⁸From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; ²⁹**for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.**

1 Corinthians 1:1-3: ¹Paul, called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Sosthenes, our brother, ²to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, **saints by calling,** with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours: ³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:26-29: ²⁶For **consider your calling , brethren**, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; ²⁷but **God has chosen** the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and **God has chosen** the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, ²⁸and the base things of the world and the despised, **God has chosen**, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, ²⁹that no man should boast before God.

Ephesians 1:18-19a: ¹⁸I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the **hope of His calling**, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.

Hebrews 3:1: Therefore, **holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling**, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.

Question #170: According to the above passages, who is the initiator of our salvation? _____
Is this clear teaching of Scripture difficult for you to accept? _____ If so, read these passages again, prayerfully asking God to open your heart to receive this truth with joy and contentment.

All the Elect will be Saved

The **Bible plainly declares** that everyone God the Father chooses for salvation will be saved and glorified. God is sovereign, and His purpose to save His people (those He elects, predestines and calls) cannot be frustrated. God works everything after the counsel of His will (Ephesians 1:11), including His plan of redemption. Consider the words of our Lord Jesus Christ:

John 6:37-39: ³⁷**All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me**, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. ³⁸For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹And this is the will of Him who sent Me, **that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing**, but raise it up on the last day.

Notice how Jesus affirms the *certainty* of salvation of *all* whom the Father has given Him. Oh, what comfort for the saints! The very purpose of almighty God, which cannot be thwarted, upholds their final salvation. This great truth will be examined further under the doctrine of Eternal Security. For now, consider the following verses:

Acts 13:48: And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and **as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed**.

How many believed? **As many as had been appointed to eternal life**, as a consequence of the divine appointment (predestination). God acted upon them in a calling of regeneration to grant them the gift of faith so they could believe, and “as many” did.

Romans 8:29-30: ²⁹For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren; ³⁰and **whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified**.

How many of those whom God foreknew and predestined to salvation were also called, justified, and glorified? **All!**

Question 171: Describe your initial reaction to this scriptural truth. _____

The Golden Chain

Romans 8:28-30 has been rightly described as *the golden chain of salvation* because of its profound assurance that God's purpose in salvation cannot be thwarted by anyone or anything. It describes the effectual calling of salvation on Christian believers.

Romans 8:28-30: ²⁸And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, **to those who are called according to His purpose.** ²⁹**For whom He foreknew, He also predestined** to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; ³⁰**and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.**

Notice first that, in the *effectual calling* of His saints, God is the divine initiator of salvation and strong protector of those whom He has chosen to save.

Romans 8:28: And we know that **God causes all things to work together for good** to those who love God, **to those who are called according to His purpose.**

Surely the highest good of those God has "called according to His purpose" is their salvation. He *causes* all things to work together to accomplish this specific purpose as well as all His other purposes for them. He will draw them, regenerate them, gift them with repentance and saving faith in Christ, and bring them to conversion. Then He will continue working in them through the indwelling power of His Holy Spirit to conform them to the image of Jesus Christ before finally glorifying them in Heaven.

1 Peter 1:3-5: ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has **caused us to be born again** to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴**to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away**, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵**who are protected by the power of God through faith** for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Philippians 2:12-13: ¹²So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³**for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.**

Second, we see that God predestined those He *foreknew* (fore-loved) to "be conformed to the image of" Christ. Being conformed to the image of Christ is a process that begins, *by God's work in us*, at salvation and is completed, *by His work in us*, at glorification. The "predestination" has a final destination of the completed work of sanctification (which we call Glorification when the saints are finally changed by God with glorified bodies).

Romans 8:29: **For whom He foreknew, He also predestined** to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren;

Thus, the *destiny* of those God foreknew has been *pre-destined* (pre-determined) by God.

Ephesians 1:5-6: ⁵**He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself**, according to the kind intention of His will, ⁶to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

Ephesians 1:11-12: In Him ¹¹also we have obtained an inheritance, **having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will**, ¹²to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

Third, consider this concise summary of the salvation process.

Romans 8:30: **and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.**

Clearly, those who have been predestined are called; and those who are called are regenerated by the Spirit and saved through faith in the justifying work of the Son. The calling of God is thus *effectual* because His Holy Spirit *effects* salvation in those who are called by moving them to be willing accept the Gospel.

John 6:65: And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that **no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father.**”

We have already seen this *effectual calling* at work in many who were saved in the narrative passages of Acts. Paul, Lydia and Cornelius are a few examples.

Question 172: According to the passages quoted above, what prevents the links in “the golden chain” from being broken? _____

What does this tell you about the security of your salvation? _____

Is saving Grace Irresistible?

Yes, it cannot be resisted because salvation is a supernatural work of God in regeneration. Could Lazarus have resisted his resurrection from the dead? God has, in eternity past, elected and predestined *all* who will come to saving faith through the irresistible or effectual calling (working) of His Holy Spirit. **The calling effects salvation in the elect.**

Deuteronomy 30:6: Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live.

John 6:37: All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

John 6:44: No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.

John 6:65: And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that **no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father.**”

Regeneration, which precedes and enables believing faith, is an irresistible working of God’s Holy Spirit that changes sinners’ hearts and minds, raises them from spiritual death to spiritual life, and implants within them the nature of God. This work of the Spirit is accomplished according to the Father’s good will and cannot be thwarted by the creature.

Titus 3:4-7: ⁴But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, ⁵**He saved us**, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, **by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit**, ⁶whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷**that being justified by His grace** we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Ezekiel 36:26-27: ²⁶Moreover, **I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you**; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

²⁷**And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.**

Romans 8:9: However, **you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.** But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

1 John 4:13: By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because **He has given us of His Spirit.**

Romans 8:16-17: ¹⁶**The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God**, and if children, heirs also, **heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ**, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.

Question 173: According to the verses above, what is Holy Spirit's role in regeneration? _____

Question 174: Write a brief prayer of thanksgiving for the Holy Spirit's work in your life. _____

David N. Steele comments:

"The gospel invitation extends a call to salvation to everyone who hears its message. It invites all men without distinction to drink freely of the water of life and live. It promises salvation to all who repent and believe. But this outward general call, extended to the elect and non-elect alike, will not bring sinners to Christ. Why? Because men are by nature dead in sin and are under its power. They are of themselves unable and unwilling to forsake their evil ways and to turn to Christ for mercy. Consequently, the unregenerate will not respond to the gospel call to repentance and faith. No amount of external threatenings or promises will cause blind, deaf, dead, rebellious sinners to bow before Christ as Lord and to look to Him alone for salvation. Such an act of faith and submission is contrary to the lost man's nature.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit, in order to bring God's elect to salvation, extends to them a special inward call in addition to the outward call contained in the gospel message. Through this special call the Holy Spirit performs a work of grace within the sinner which inevitably brings him to faith in Christ . . .

Although the general outward call of the gospel can be, and often is, rejected, the special inward call of the Spirit never fails to result in the conversion of those to whom it is made. This special call is not made to all sinners but is issued to the elect only! The Spirit is in no way dependent upon their help or cooperation for success in His work of bringing them to Christ. It is for this reason that Calvinists speak of the Spirit's call and of God's grace in saving sinners as being 'efficacious,' 'invincible,' or 'irresistible.' For the grace which the Holy Spirit extends to the elect cannot be thwarted or refused, it never fails to bring them to true faith in Christ!"³⁷

Let's review: How are people saved? By exercising their human wisdom and choosing to follow Christ? Or by **God choosing** to save them before they were born, before they had done anything good or bad, and then powerfully calling them in regeneration at some point in their life?

Romans 9:10-12: ¹⁰And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; ¹¹for though the twins **were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand**, not because of works, but because of Him who calls, ¹²it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger."

³⁷ David N. Steele *The Five Points of Calvinism: Defined, Defended, Documented* P&R Publishing 1963 page 48

Romans 9:15-16,18: ¹⁵For He says to Moses, **“I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.”** ¹⁶So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. . .
.¹⁸So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.

Question 175: What does this say about people’s ability to resist the Spirit’s work in salvation?

Could Paul have chosen *not* to be God’s appointed instrument to take the Gospel to the Gentiles?

_____ Could Jeremiah have decided not to be God’s prophet to the nations? _____

Could you have refused the Holy Spirit’s call to repent and believe the Gospel? _____

Daniel 4:35: And all the inhabitants of the earth are counted as nothing, **But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitatns of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, “What hast Thou done?”**

Acts 9:13-16: ¹³But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, **how much harm he did to Thy saints at Jerusalem;** ¹⁴and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call upon Thy name.” ¹⁵But the Lord said to him, **“Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel;** ¹⁶for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name’s sake.”

Galatians 1:15-17: ¹⁵But **when He who had set me apart, even from my mother’s womb, and called me through His grace,** was pleased ¹⁶to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, ¹⁷nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.

Jeremiah 1:4-5: ⁴Now the word of the LORD came to me saying, ⁵**“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.”**

With this in mind, let us consider again whether or not we would take a Semi-Pelagian or an Augustinian view of this doctrine.

Man’s will is free and he can successfully resist the Spirit’s call.	Human Resistance	Effectual Calling	The calling of God to the elect does effect salvation infallibly.
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We have seen that the Bible clearly teaches that God’s call to the elect actually effects their salvation infallibly (without fail).

Question #176: How will you respond to God’s word on this subject? _____

Notes: