

Ephesians 1:1-5
God's Sovereignty, Predestination and Man's Freedom
Making Grace Amazing Again

God's eternal purpose is to reveal His glorious grace to His adopted sons and daughters that results in them valuing Christ above everything and becoming the means of unity and love within His Body, the church.

Isaiah 55:8-9 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

*“God, from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass:
yet so,
as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the **will of the creatures**; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.” WCF Chapter 3*

Ephesians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus **by the will of God**, To the **saints (holy)** who are in Ephesus, and are **faithful (believers) in Christ Jesus**:

Ephesians 1:2 **Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed (*worthy of praise*) be the **God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**, who has blessed (*object of favor*) **us** in Christ with **every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places**,

Ephesians 1:4-5 even as he (*Father*) **chose** (*to pick out as the recipients of special favor and privilege*) **us** in him (Christ) **before** the foundation of the world, that we should be **holy (saints)** and **blameless (unstained)** before him. In **love he predestined** (*decreed; to ordain beforehand*) **us** for **adoption to himself** as sons **through Jesus Christ**, according to the purpose of his (*Father*) will...

The Bible teaches that **God is Sovereign** and that **mankind/world is fallen**. The issue is the how does a Sovereign God relate to a fallen creation.

Isaiah 46:9-10 remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, **declaring the end from the beginning** and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, **‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,’**

Colossians 1:17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Psalms 135:6 Whatever the LORD pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps.

Romans 3:23 for **all have sinned** and **fall short** of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 For the **wages of sin is death**, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1. **Being sovereign**, God could decide to provide **no** opportunity to be saved.

Q: Is God under an obligation to save any? Would he be just if he saved none? Would saving no one be an injustice?

2. **Being sovereign**, God could decide to provide an opportunity or a chance to be saved. Creating the possibility that some may but also creating the possibility that none will.

3. **Being sovereign**, God could decide to insure that **some will be saved by** intervening and rescuing **some**.

4. **Being sovereign**, God could decide to insure that **all will be saved by** intervening and rescuing **all**.

Grace/Mercy vs. Justice - Justice is required, grace/mercy is voluntary.

Romans 9:14 What shall we say then? Is there **injustice on God's part**? By no means!

Revelation 16:7 And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, Lord God the Almighty, **true and just are your judgments!**"

Zephaniah 3:5 The **LORD** within her **is righteous; he does no injustice;** every morning he shows forth his **justice**; each dawn he does not fail; but the unjust knows no shame.

Romans 9:15 For he says to Moses, "**I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.**"

Romans 9:16 So then **it depends** not on human will or exertion, but **on God, who has mercy.**

There are saved and unsaved.

Both categories are comprised exclusively with
fallen and rebellious people.

Some get mercy, the others get justice. No one gets injustice.

Grace - Amazed - Expect - Assume - Demand - Angry if we do not get it.

What about **freedom to choose the opportunity?**

Freewill: Freedom to choose what you want.

Genesis 6:5 The LORD saw that the **wickedness** of man was great in the earth, and that **every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**

Romans 3:9 What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both **Jews and Greeks, are under sin,**

Romans 3:10 as it is written: "**None is righteous,** no, not one;

Romans 3:11 no one understands; **no one seeks for God.**

Romans 3:12 **All have turned aside**; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”

John 3:19 And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people **loved the darkness rather than the light** because their works were evil.

John 3:20 For **everyone** who does wicked things **hates the light and does not come to the light**, lest his works should be exposed.

Romans 8:5 For those who live according to the flesh **set their minds on the things of the flesh**, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

Romans 8:6 For to **set the mind on the flesh is death**, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

Romans 8:7 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**.

Romans 8:8 Those who are in the flesh **cannot please God**.

Romans 8:9 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**.

Ephesians 2:1 And **you were dead** in the trespasses and sins

Ephesians 2:2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the **sons of disobedience—**

Ephesians 2:3 **among whom we all once lived** in the **passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind**, and were by nature **children of wrath, like the rest of mankind**.

Ephesians 2:4 **But God**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,

Ephesians 2:5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, **made us alive** together with Christ—**by grace you have been saved**—

1Corinthians 2:12 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**.

1Corinthians 2:13 And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but **taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual**.

1Corinthians 2:14 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.

2Corinthians 4:4 In their case the **god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers**, to **keep them from seeing the light** of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Romans 6:17 But thanks be to God, that you who were once **slaves** of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,

Romans 6:18 and, having been set free from sin, have become **slaves** of righteousness.

John 6:63 It is the **Spirit who gives life**; the **flesh is no help at all**. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

John 6:64 But there are some of you who **do not believe**.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who **did not believe**, and who it was who would betray him.)

John 6:65 And he said, “This is why I told you that **no one can** (ability) come to me **unless** it is **granted him by the Father.**”

John 6:37 **All** that the Father gives me **will come to me**, and whoever comes to me **I will never 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.

James 2:6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who **drag** you into court?

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

John 13:18 **I am not speaking of all of you;** I know whom I have **chosen**. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, ‘He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.’

John 15:16 You did not **choose** me, but I **chose** you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

All have sinned. The wages of sin is death. None are righteous, none seek God, not even one, therefore God chooses to have mercy on some by applying the work of Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit to dead people (from their sins and trespasses and who hate the light), in order to insure the work of Christ was not in vain, to the praise of His glorious grace.

“Amazing Grace, How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now am found
T'was blind but now I see”