

Belgic Confession 16–You weren’t chosen for your beauty

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: When you chose your wife you probably you had reasons. Maybe you were looking for beauty. Maybe you were looking for a good cook. Maybe you were looking for someone to take care of you. Maybe you were looking for someone with money. There usually is something in it for us when we choose.

Was that the way God chose you for salvation and to be a part of his bride? Did God look ahead and see how wonderful you were? Did he look ahead and say there was potential in you? These are some of the questions for which we will get answers today.

Our headings are:

God’s Electing Love

God’s Reprobating Judgment

Our goals are: That you **learn to love and embrace the doctrine of election**, and that you **praise God all the more for your election in Jesus Christ**.

We believe that, all the posterity of Adam being thus fallen into perdition and ruin by the sin of our first parents, God then did manifest Himself such as He is; that is to say, **merciful and just**: merciful, since He delivers and preserves from this perdition all whom He in His eternal and unchangeable counsel of mere goodness has elected in Christ Jesus our Lord, without any respect to their works; just, in leaving others in the fall and perdition wherein they have involved themselves.

God’s Electing Love

1. Election is God’s sovereign choosing of those he wished to save through the death of his Son.

2. Election was necessary because man could not choose to be saved.

Adam was perfect and fully morally capable of obeying God’s laws and was in no way deficient, but he sinned grievously. His sin caused him to lose the ability to reach out to God for help. **This plight came on all of Adam’s natural children because he was the natural and federal head of all mankind.** Sin separated man from God. This separation is called spiritual death. Because of man’s death, God had to choose man, make him alive (regenerate him) and help man to return to him.

Acts 13:48b - And as **many as had been appointed** to eternal life believed.

3. Election to salvation is therefore evidence of God’s mercy (God did for Adam what he could not do for himself).

Election begins the unalterable process of salvation; once begun, it cannot stop. The Golden Chain cannot be broken!

Ephesians 1:4 just as He chose us in Him (Jesus Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, **according to the good pleasure of His will,**

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

4. While Adam's act of apostasy had grave consequences for all men, his rebellion did not surprise God, nor did it ruin God's plan for human history.

As soon as Adam broke God's law, God came to him with the Gospel. God had already decided to present this plan of salvation for the elect long before Adam sinned!

God works out election by the preaching of the gospel, but this was God's plan was from eternity. The elect weren't therefore zapped with salvation.

So don't make the excuse against evangelizing: If they are elected they will be saved. Rather, preach the Gospel! Preach it to all.

5. God did not elect you because you were good or because he liked the color of their skin.

At times in history Christians were people of color and were mostly in North Africa and the Middle East. Whites were quite wicked. Now many whites are Christians. God shows no preference to skin color.

6. If God does not elect you based on your good works or your beauty, why then did God choose to show you mercy and elect you?

a. God chose you for his glory and honor.

1Samuel 12:22 "For the LORD will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake, because **it has pleased the LORD to make you His people.**

You bring glory and honor to God when you worship him and when you work for him.

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 remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

b. God chose you because he is good and loving. God had no need for you.

Romans 8:28 And we know that **all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called (his children) according to His purpose.** ²⁹ For **whom He foreknew,** He also predestined to be

conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

The word “foreknew” is a word that means “fore-loved.” This was a common way of speaking: “Adam knew his wife and she conceived.” **Some try to argue that this word means “to know beforehand.”** They believe that God knew who would believe and then elected them. But **no one could believe unless God helps him.** So God **knew whom he would help to believe.** That is **election!**

Deuteronomy 7: 6 "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; **the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples** on the face of the earth. **7 "The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people,** for you were the least of all peoples; **8 "but because the LORD loves you...**

This knowledge of God’s election must make you realize how precious you and your children are.

This knowledge must humble you as God did not choose you because of **your goodness or beauty!**

This knowledge must remove fear from your hearts... for your future is secure. **This process is unalterable!** The links of the Golden Chain cannot be broken.

7. God’s election of his people is from his eternal and unchangeable counsel.

God knows who will believe, not because he looked forward to see who would believe, but because he has already chosen those who will believe!

8. Because God loves you his elect people, he preserves you and does not destroy you!

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

John 6:37 - "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me **I will by no means cast out.**

Deuteronomy 7:9 "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; **10 "and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them.** He will not be slack with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face.

God's Reprobating Judgment

1. Reprobation is God passing-by some people who are on the Devil's side.

God simple refuses to draw them to himself through his Son. This is a passive act of God.

John 6: 65 And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me **unless it has been granted to him by My Father.**"

Romans 9:11 (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, **not of works but of Him who calls**), 12 it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger." 13 As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, **but Esau I have hated.**"

But these are condemned, not because they were reprobated by God, but because of the **sins they inherited** and the **sins they committed** daily. They **plunged themselves into sin and perdition**. They **continue in their sins, they love their sins, and they do not have the slightest desire to leave their sins behind**.

2. Reprobation is a matter of divine justice so you must love it.

1 Peter 2:8 - and "A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, **to which they also were appointed**.

Remember, the wicked are condemned, not for their reprobation, but because of their sins – sins they inherited from their parents and their actual sins.

You must not therefore accuse God of sin. God is always fair.

You must not excuse other people's sin by saying: "They are sinning because they are not elected." The truth is, the **wicked are sinning because they are sinners**, and as such, will be justly condemned.

3. Reprobation, like election, is for God's glory.

You must always praise God for his justice.

Romans 9:22-24 What if God, **wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known**, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

So if you don't sing the imprecatory Psalms, you are robbing God of praise for his justice.

4. What about phrases like "God hardened Pharaoh's heart?"

Sometimes God uses the phrase “hardens,” but that simply means that **God left some to their own devices**. Man, left to his own devices, becomes hardened against God. God did not go into their hearts and harden them. In fact, the Bible said on multiple occasions that **Pharaoh hardened his heart**. (Exodus 8:15, 8:32, 9:34; 1 Samuel 6:6) Look at a warning!

Romans 9:19-22 - 19 You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" 20 But indeed, **O man, who are you to reply against God?** Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?" 21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

While this may offend some, the truth is, all are sinners in Adam (guilty for Adam's sins as well as your own). **You should be thankful to God for his grace**. This doctrine of reprobation **should also humble you** because you are no better than the reprobate. **The only difference is that you are loved and elected**.

Conclusion:

God chose some to eternal life out of the grace that flowed from his heart. God judged some for their wickedness.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. You are regenerated and have the hope for heaven because God chose you in Jesus Christ, from love, before the world began. He **presented the Gospel** to you that you might believe, and **he worked in you by his Holy Spirit** so that you might believe. Love him back!

2. There was nothing good in you – your name or your nature...there was nothing good in your future which caused God to elect you. How humbling! Knowing this completely eliminates “foreknowledge” as the basis for election but rather confirms that **“foreloving” was the basis of your election**. If God had not chosen you, you would never have chosen him.

Spurgeon: **“I am sure God chose me before I was born, or else he never would have chosen me afterward!”** So worship him!

3. If someone asks you: How do you know if you are one of the elect? Say: I am one of the elect because I trust in Jesus Christ. Yes, tell others of him.

4. If you don't accept election, you won't work for and worship your heavenly Father like you should. Your salvation would seem less valuable.

Finally, if you are moved to trust in Christ today, you are the elect, the chosen of God. Do not fight against it. Ask God to accept Christ's suffering as yours. Enjoy God's love...his electing love.