

Soteriowhat?

Taken from Wayne Grudem's Systematic Theology, Chapter 32: Election and Reprobation, and Chapter 33: The Gospel Call & Effective Calling

Introduction

$$\int_a^b f(x) dx = F(b) - F(a)$$

Does anyone know what this is? It's the Fundamental Theorem of Calculus.

Does anyone know who invented this? Sir Isaac Newton

Isaac Newton invented Calculus because he needed to be able to document his discoveries on gravity and motion. He was studying the movements of the planets and he lacked a way to describe their movements—so he did the only logical thing: he created an entire branch of mathematics: Calculus.

Much like Newton, we see movements and influences of different portions of Scripture—and we seek to describe these relationships. So, when we study the Bible, sometimes we create systems in attempts to solve larger problems. This approach isn't necessarily bad, but it can be distracting from the larger goal: to know God.

So, as we go through tonight's topics, let's remember our goal: to know God. And as we strive to know Him, let's remember we cannot fully know Him now. We are not able to comprehend Him fully now. Just like we stare at this equation and scratch our heads, we know that we will ultimately look into the perfect law of liberty and scratch our heads at His beauty and majesty and complexity.

So, let's agree on a few points tonight (especially as we tackle tough topics):

1. All that God does is good (whether we understand or not)
2. All that God does is right (whether we understand or not)
3. All that God does is holy (whether we understand or not)

About Our Series: Soteriowhat?

Note: We are using Wayne Grudem's *Systematic Theology* for the structure of this series, but the Bible for the substance of this series. Aside: Wayne Grudem has Parkinson's, not multiple sclerosis (I miscommunicated to Terry Brown).

Systematic – carefully organized (all relevant passages organized into topics)

Theology – the study of religious truths

Grudem: What is systematic theology? . . . *Systematic theology is any study that answers the question, "What does the whole Bible teach us today?" about any given topic. . . . This definition indicates that systematic theology involves collecting and understanding all the relevant passages in the Bible on various topics and then summarizing their teachings clearly so that we know what to believe about each topic.*

Our series is divided up into three different major divisions:

Before Conversion	During Conversion	After Conversion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common grace • Election and Reprobation • The Gospel Call and Effective Calling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration • Conversion • Justification • Adoption • Baptism in and Filling With the Holy Spirit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanctification • Perseverance of the Saints • Death and the Intermediate State • Glorification • Union with Christ

Not all theological terms show up in the Bible (and that's OK—they just help us think through these massive concepts in an easier way—like 'trinity').

Tonight, we have two topics to look at—and election and reprobation are up first. (Spoiler alert: this is not an exhaustive study—it's an introduction intended to whet your appetites for more.) But first . . . memory verse review.

Luke 6:35–36: But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Election and Reprobation

Why are you saved? Is it something you did? Is it something God did? Is it something you both did? Tonight, we're going to look at who started it.

Common grace (as Terry discussed last week) is God's grace prior to conversion that is extended to all men—and for the believer, it keeps us alive long enough to hear the gospel and respond. (Grudem in his Sunday school class—you can go online and hear him teach through these topics—describes common grace as anything that—as you walk down the street—doesn't look like the burning fires of Hell.) Common grace is for believers and unbelievers.

Something else that happens before conversion is election.

Grudem: 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.

Grudem: It is rightly thought of as the first step in the process of God's bringing salvation to us individually.

A. Does the New Testament Teach Predestination?

Acts 13:48; **Romans 8:28–30**; 9:11–13; 11:7; **Ephesians 1:4–6**, 12; 1 Thessalonians 1:4–5; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 1:9; 1 Peter 1:1; 2:9; Revelation 13:7–8; 17:8

B. How Does the New Testament Present the Teaching of Election?

1. As a Comfort

Grudem: Romans 8:28–30. Paul's point is to say that God has *always* acted for the good of those whom he called to himself. (past, present, and future)

2. As a Reason to Praise God

(in contrast to the idea of praising man for man's salvation)

Ephesians 1:5–6, 12; 1 Thessalonians 1:2–4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13

3. As an Encouragement to Evangelism

2 Timothy 2:10: Grudem: Election is Paul's guarantee that there will be some success for his evangelism, for he knows that some of the people he speaks to will be the elect, and they will believe the gospel and be saved.

E. The Doctrine of Reprobation

Grudem: 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.

Jude 4; Romans 9:17-22; 11:7; 1 Peter 2:8; Revelation 13:7-8

Grudem: The fact of reprobation and the eternal condemnation of some will show God's justice and also result in his glory. **Romans 9:22-23**

Grudem: We must be careful of our attitude toward God and toward these passages of Scripture. We must never begin to wish that the Bible was written in another way, or that it did not contain these verses.

Grudem: We also must remember that *there are important differences between election and reprobation as they are presented in the Bible.* Election . . . God is viewed as actively choosing us for salvation, and doing so in love and with delight. But reprobation is viewed as something that brings God sorrow, not delight (see **Ezekiel 33:11**). . . . Another important difference is that the ground of election is God's grace, whereas the ground of reprobation is God's justice.

F. Practical Application of the Doctrine of Election

Grudem: Our only appropriate response is to give God eternal **praise**.

Scripture Memory Passage

Ephesians 1:3-6: 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even 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 for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

The Gospel Call and Effective Calling

Now we transition into man's involvement in salvation (we were not involved directly with common grace or election or reprobation).

In this part of the lesson, we will move from the general, external, and gospel calling of man that is not 100% fruitful (the gospel call) to the specific, internal, and effective calling of God that draws sinners to faith to the.

B. Grudem: The Elements of the Gospel Call

In other words, **what does our part look like?**

Grudem: In human preaching of the gospel, three important elements must be included.

1. Explanation of the Facts Concerning Salvation
 1. All people have sinned (Romans 3:23).
 2. The penalty for our sin is death (Romans 6:23).
 3. Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty for our sins (Romans 5:8).

However, mental assent is not enough. It is not a head knowledge only.

2. Invitation to Respond to Christ Personally in Repentance and Faith

Matthew 11:28–30. Grudem: This is a genuine *personal* invitation that seeks a personal response from each one who hears it.

John 1:11–12. Grudem: In emphasizing the need to “receive” Christ, John, too, points to the necessity of an individual response.

Revelation 22:17. Grudem: Finally, just five verses from the end of the entire Bible, there is another invitation from the Holy Spirit and the church to come to Christ.

Grudem: But what is involved in coming to Christ? . . . If we come to Christ and trust him to save us from our sin, we cannot any longer cling to sin but must willingly renounce it in genuine repentance. . . . Any genuine gospel proclamation must include an invitation to make a conscious decision to forsake one's sins and come to Christ in faith, asking Christ for forgiveness of sins. If either the need to repent of sins or the need to trust in Christ for forgiveness is neglected, there is not a full and true proclamation of the gospel. **Luke 24:47; Acts 2:37–38; 3:19; 5:31; 17:30; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10**

3. A Promise of Forgiveness and Eternal Life

John 3:16; Acts 3:19; 2:38

This is from Grudem's class to show differences between the two calls:

Gospel Call	Effective Call
Man's action	God's action
Offered to all people	Particular
External	Internal
Often rejected	Always effective
The means for effective calling	

So what do we do with that? Spread the **gospel** (we cannot skip the gospel)

A. Effective Calling

Grudem: Effective calling is an act of God the Father, speaking through the human proclamation of the gospel, in which he summons people to himself in such a way that they respond in saving faith. . . . Although it is true that effective calling awakens and brings forth a response from us, we must always insist that this response still has to be a voluntary, willing response in which the individual person puts his or her trust in Christ.

*Grudem: God's effective calling comes through the human preaching of the gospel. **2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; Romans 10:14**. Grudem: Unless God works in peoples' hearts to make the proclamation of the gospel effective, there will be no genuine saving response. **John 6:44***

Closing

1. All that God does is good (whether we understand or not)
2. All that God does is right (whether we understand or not)
3. All that God does is holy (whether we understand or not)

Next week, Terry B is scheduled to be back with regeneration and conversion.

Scripture Memory Passage

Matthew 11:28-30: 28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.