

What the Bible Teaches about Predestination

~~OPENING PAGE~~

This is a study of one of the most wonderful teachings of Scripture. The doctrine of predestination produces great joy in the heart of the believer. What a wonderful joy it is to know that God "first loved us" by choosing us, individually, to be His children. We hope that realizing this great love of God will give you a greater love for Him which will manifest itself by a greater obedience to His Word.

As you think about this teaching, we ask you to remember that all the words of the Bible are the Words of God. We are presenting this teaching with the premise that God's Word is our standard for all our beliefs about God and His dealings with man. We sincerely hope that you accept this premise too. Because Jesus said: "If anyone is ashamed of Me and My Words, the Son of man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels." (Luke 9:26 NIV).

We sadly admit that there are many Christians who have rejected what we believe to be the truth about predestination. Nevertheless, we stand firmly upon this truth and pray that God would use this study to humble you, teach you, and make you more like our Blessed Saviour - The Lord Jesus Christ.

We suggest that you study this doctrine from a position of submission to the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word. The Psalmist said, "I am Thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know Thy testimonies." (Psalm 119:125). We, like the Psalmist, need to humble ourselves before the Lord as His servants as we study His Holy Word. Ask the Lord to give you wisdom and understanding as you study. And we trust that appreciation for the predestinating love of God will give you great lasting joy.

ONE WAY INN CHRISTIAN COFFEE HOUSE

SUMMER, 1976

A necessary introduction to ~~the~~ a
study of Predestination must be
a ~~look~~ ^{look} at the Bible's view of
man. So we must first
understand —

THE COMPLETE* INABILITY OF MAN TO DESERVE SALVATION

* Man's nature is completely corrupt, perverse, and sinful throughout. The Word "complete" does not mean that each sinner is as totally corrupt as it is possible for him to be. Instead, the word "complete" explains that man's entire being - body and spirit - have been affected by sin.

A. Because of Adam's sin, men are born in sin. Their nature is that they are spiritually dead. If they are to be saved they must be born again of the spirit.

1. In the garden of Eden, God warned Adam that he would die - physically and spiritually - if he ate the forbidden fruit.

"And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, 'You may eat freely of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.'" Genesis 2:16,17

2. Adam's disobedience (Genesis 3:1-7) brought spiritual death upon himself and upon all men.

"Therefore, as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned." Romans 5:12

"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins." Ephesians 2:1

3. The penalty of Adam's sin is applied to all men at birth.

"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Psalm 51:5

"The wicked go astray from the womb, they err from their birth, speaking lies." Psalm 58:3

4. Men must be miraculously changed to enter the kingdom of Heaven.

"Jesus answered him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God'." John 3:3

B. Because of Adam's sin, men are deaf and blind to spiritual truth. Their minds are darkened by sin; their hearts are corrupt and evil.

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it?"

"The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him to His heart." Genesis 6:5,6

1. Intensity - "The wickedness of man was great."

2. Inwardness - "Imagination of the thoughts of his heart."

3. Totality - "Every imagination."

4. Constancy - "Continually."

5. Exclusiveness - "Only evil."

The same verdict of guilty is given by God both before the flood (Genesis 6:5) and after the flood. (Genesis 8:21)

"And when the Lord smelled the pleasing odor, the Lord said in His heart, 'I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done!'"
Genesis 8:21

1. Early manifestation - "From his youth."

C. All who are not Christians are children of the devil and under his control; they are slaves to sin.

"You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him." John 8:44

"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and the ruler of the kingdom of the air. The spirit is now at work in those who are disobedient." Ephesians 2:1,2

"By this it may be seen who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil; whoever does not do right is not of God, nor he who does not love his brother." I John 3:10

D. Every person on the earth is under sin's power.

"Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for no man living is righteous before thee." Psalm 143:2

"Who can say, 'I have made my heart clean; I am pure from my sin'?" Proverbs 20:9

"Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins." Ecclesiastes 7:20

E. Non-Christians can do good. "Yet, all of his common virtues or good works have a fatal defect in that his motives which prompt them are not to glorify God, - a defect so vital that it throws any element of goodness as to man wholly in the shade."

"A high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked is sin." Proverbs 21:4

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

F. Men left in their sin are unable to repent, believe the gospel, or come to Christ. They have no such power within themselves.

"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? There is not one." Job 14:4

"Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then also you can do good who are accustomed to do evil." Jeremiah 13:23

"A sound tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit." Matthew 7:18

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

Conclusion:

The thrust of the Bible is to tell us that man should fear God and keep His commandments, but this is exactly what he doesn't want to do. As a result, he stands condemned by God. God is under no obligation whatsoever to save guilty man, but would be just in condemning the whole human race to hell.

1. Pray that the love of Christ and the reality of hell will motivate you to share the Words of life with those who are dead in sin.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Romans 1:16

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel." Mark 1:15

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SALVATION: THE GIFT OF GOD

A SUMMARY OF MAN'S CONDITION

THE COMPLETE INABILITY OF MAN TO COME TO GOD THE REALITY OF MAN'S INABILITY:

There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who searches for God. Romans 3:11

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

Behold, you scoffers, and marvel, and perish; for I am accomplishing a work in your days, a work which you will never believe, though someone should describe it to you. Acts 13:41

THE REASON OF MAN'S INABILITY:

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins. Ephesians 2:1

THE RESULT OF MAN'S INABILITY:

Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. Romans 3:19

IN THE LIGHT OF MAN'S SIN, GOD SEPTS IN TO SAVE MAN THROUGH PREDESTINATION: REDEMPTION AND THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Salvation is from the Lord.

The Biblical teaching of predestination is that God chose for Himself an unaccountable number of people before the world was created to be His very own. He did this, not because He had to, but because of His great love and mercy.

Again, God did not have to choose anyone, but could send them all to hell. In this light, predestination is a very precious doctrine, because God marks out for Himself condemned sinners to be saved.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ, 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 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 1:3-6

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance.

Psalms 33:12

Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.

Romans 8:33

But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

2 Thess. 2:13

GOD'S CHOICE OF HIS PEOPLE WAS NOT BASED ON ANY FORESEEN FAITH OR GOOD WORKS THAT THEY WOULD HAVE--IT IS BASED ON HIS PURE MERCY ALONE.

Not only that, but Rebecca's children had one and the same father, our ancestor Isaac. 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 was told, "The older will serve the younger." Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For He says to Moses "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.

Romans 9:10-16

FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND GODLY LIVING IS THE RESULT AND EVIDENCE OF GOD'S ELECTION--NOT THE CAUSE OR GROUND FOR IT.

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

Brothers loved by God, we know that He has chosen you, because our gospel came to you, not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction.

I Thess. 1:4-5

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10

You did not choose me, but I chose you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last.

John 15:16

IT IS FAITH AND GOOD WORKS THAT CONFIRMS THE SINNER'S CALLING AND ELECTION.

Therefore, my brother, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:10-11

THE ACT OF ELECTION DOES NOT SAVE MAN--IT SIMPLY MARKS HIM OUT FOR SALVATION.

What then? That which Israel is seeking for, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened. Romans 11:7

For this reason I endured 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. 2 Timothy 2:10

ELECTION WAS BASED ON THE SOVEREIGN DISTINGUISHING MERCY OF ALMIGHTY GOD. IT WAS GOD'S WILL, NOT MAN'S, THAT DETERMINED WHICH SINNERS WOULD BE ELECTED AND SHOWN MERCY.

I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion. Exodus 33:19

For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the Lord loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the Lord brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh King of Egypt. Deut. 7:6-8

And what was God's answer to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace. Romans 11:4-6

THE SINNERS RESPONSE TO THE BIBLICAL TEACHING OF GOD'S ELECTION.

O the depth of the riches, the wisdom
and the knowledge of God!
How unsearchable His judgments,
and His paths beyond tracing out!
Who has known the mind of the Lord?
Or who has become His advisor?
Who has ever given to God,
that God should repay him?
For from Him and through Him and to Him
are all things.
To Him be the glory forever! Amen Romans 11:33-36

SALVATION IS FROM GOD THE SON IN THAT HE REDEEMED THOSE WHOM THE FATHER HAD CHOSEN, BY DYING ON THE CROSS FOR THEM.

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace, which He has freely given us in all wisdom and understanding. Ephesians 1:7,8

CHRIST CAME NOT TO ENABLE MEN TO SAVE THEMSELVES, BUT TO SAVE SINNERS.

For the Son of man came to seek and save what was lost. Luke 19:10

This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance - Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I Timothy 1:15

For Christ died for your sins once and for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. I Peter 3:18

CHRIST'S DEATH ON THE CROSS SECURED SALVATION FOR THOSE WHOM HIS FATHER HAD CHOSEN. (DEFINITE ATONEMENT)

HE SECURED RECONCILIATION

For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through His life. Romans 5:10

All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. 2 Corinthians 5:18,19

HE SECURED RIGHTEOUSNESS

For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the One man, Jesus Christ. Romans 5:17

HE SECURED OUR PARDON AND FORGIVENESS

He entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats, calves, but His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

So Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many people, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for Him. Hebrews 9:12,28

HE SECURED JUSTIFICATION

They are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Jesus Christ. Romans 3:24

Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Romans 8:33

HE SECURED THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT AND ALL INVOLVED IN IT.

He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Titus 3:5,6

CHRIST'S SAVING WORK WAS DEFINITE IN DESIGN AND WAS INTENDED TO INFALLIBLY SAVE THOSE WHOM HIS FATHER HAD CHOSEN.

She will give birth to a son and you will give Him the name Jesus, because he will save His people from their sins. Matthew 1:21

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. Eph.5:25,27

Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with His own blood. Acts 20:28

JESUS CHRIST, IN ALL HE DID AND SUFFERED FOR HIS PEOPLE, FULFILLED THE GRACIOUS ARRANGEMENT WHICH HE HAD ENTERED INTO WITH HIS HEAVENLY FATHER BEFORE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.

JESUS WAS SENT INTO THE WORLD TO SAVE THE PEOPLE WHICH THE FATHER HAD GIVEN HIM.

All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My will, but to do the will of Him who sent Me. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that I shall lose none of all that He has given Me, but raise them up on the last day. John 6:37-40

JESUS, AS THE GOOD SHEPHERD, LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS SHEEP. (NOTICE THAT THE FATHER HAD GIVEN THE SHEEP TO CHRIST).

I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. I am the Good Shepherd: I know My sheep and My sheep know Me - Just as the Father knows Me and I know the Father - and I lay down My life for the sheep. I have other sheep which are not of this flock. I must bring them also. They will listen to My voice, and there shall be one flock and One Shepherd. John 10:11,14-16

But you do not believe because you do not belong to My flock. My sheep listen to My voice: I know them, and they follow Me. I give to them eternal life and they shall never perish: no one can snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one can snatch them out of My Father's hand. John 10:26-29

THE WORK OF GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT - CALLS, CONVERTS, AND SEALS THE ELECT FOR ALL ETERNITY.

THE SPIRIT'S IRRESISTIBLE CALL.

THE SPIRIT CALLS THE ELECT TO GOD THROUGH THE GOSPEL. (OUTWARD AND INWARD CALLS). THE OUTWARD CALL IS THE GOSPEL MESSAGE PROCLAIMED. THE INWARD CALL IS THE CALL OF THE SPIRIT THROUGH THE GOSPEL.

"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile." Romans 1:16

"Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the Word of Christ." Romans 10:17

THE ELECT ARE CONVICTED OF THEIR SIN BY THE SPIRIT AS THEY HEAR THE GOSPEL. ALONG WITH THIS CONVICTION THEY EXPERIENCE THE INWARD CALL OF THE SPIRIT TO COME TO CHRIST.

"What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Far from it! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what it was to covet if the law had not said, 'Do not covet'." Rom.7:7

"When He comes, He will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment." John 16:8

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ONE WHOM THE FATHER HAS ELECTED TO RESIST THE CALL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"For God's gifts and His call are irrevocable." Romans 11:29

"My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of My Father's hand." John 10:27-29

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVERTS THE ELECT.

GOD'S PEOPLE ARE GIVEN NEW HEARTS TO OBEY HIM.

"A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to observe My ordinances." Ezekiel 36:26-27

CONVICTION OF SIN AND THE CALL OF GOD WORK IN THE HEART OF THE ELECT TO THE POINT WHERE THEY WANT AND ARE GIVEN FAITH TO BELIEVE IN CHRIST.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God." Ephesians 2:8

"But what about you? he asked. 'Who do you say I am?'" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by My Father in heaven." Matthew 16:15-17

AT THE MOMENT THE SINNER BELIEVES, CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IS APPLIED TO HIS CREDIT. THE PAYMENT OF HIS SIN, WHICH WAS ACCOMPLISHED AT CALVARY, IS APPLIED TO HIM.

"But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus." Rom. 3:23,24

THE SPIRIT, AT THE MOMENT THE SINNER IS SAVED, BAPTIZES THE BELIEVER INTO THE BODY OF CHRIST AND WORKS IN HIM TO MAKE HIM MORE AND MORE LIKE CHRIST.

"He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit." Galatians 3:14

"Do you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body." I Corinthians 6:19,20

THE HOLY SPIRIT SEALS THE BELIEVER FOR ALL ETERNITY. THEREFORE, ALL WHOM THE FATHER HAS CHOSEN, THE SON HAS BOUGHT, AND THE SPIRIT HAS CALLED WILL POSITIVELY RECEIVE A CROWN OF GLORY.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16

"For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the Lord who has compassion on you." Isaiah 54:10

"Those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Application of the doctrine.

1. THE PEOPLE OF GOD NOW HAVE AN IDENTITY: WE ARE CHOSEN CHILDREN OF THE KING. THIS IDENTITY COMMANDS OUR ALLEGIANCE TO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND TO HIS SERVICE.

"You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us."

I Peter 2:9-12

2. THE PEOPLE OF GOD NOW HAVE A FREEDOM, TRUSTING IN HIS SALVATION WHICH HE HAS MERCIFULLY GIVEN TO THEM. A FREEDOM TO LOVE, HONOR, AND OBEY GOD.

"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death."

Romans 8:1-2

3. THE PEOPLE OF GOD NOW HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY, TO TURN FROM AND RESIST THE SIN THAT CRUCIFIED THEIR LORD.

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God."

Colossians 3:1

"If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in His love."

John 15:10

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD: WORSHIP AND ADORATION.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.

I Peter 2:9-11

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S PEOPLE: A RESPONSE OF LOVE AND COMPASSION.

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love which binds them all together in perfect unity.

OUR RESPONSE TO THOSE WHO ARE NOT FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST: THE RESPONSE OF SHARING THE GOSPEL.

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.

2 Tim.2:10

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This has been a study of one of the hardest and most difficult teachings of God, a teaching that make man look very bad and makes God look very good. There is nothing that cuts as deeply into our pride as the truth that God has revealed in this doctrine. But Jesus says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 5:3

1. THE PEOPLE OF GOD NOW HAVE AN IMPERATIVE TO LIVE IN THE LIGHT OF THE TRUTH OF THIS IDENTITY COMPARED OUR ALIENATION TO THE WORLD AND THE SERVICE.

"You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, longing for God, that you may declare the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Formerly you were living in ignorance, but now you are the people of God, who have received mercy."

Dear friends, I urge you to abstain from what is shameful and what is obscene in the light of God's mercy. It is your duty to love one another as you love yourselves, with all your heart, mind, and strength, for love is the fulfillment of the law. Do not be overcome by the world, the flesh, or the devil, but stand firm in the truth, so that you may receive the reward of God's grace and glory forever. Amen.

2. THE PEOPLE OF GOD NOW HAVE AN IMPERATIVE TO LIVE IN THE LIGHT OF THE TRUTH OF THIS IDENTITY COMPARED OUR ALIENATION TO THE WORLD AND THE SERVICE.

"Therefore, since we have received such mercy, let us love one another, because through love the law is fulfilled. Love your neighbor as yourself. Love is the fulfillment of the law. Do not be overcome by the world, the flesh, or the devil, but stand firm in the truth, so that you may receive the reward of God's grace and glory forever. Amen."

3. THE PEOPLE OF GOD NOW HAVE AN IMPERATIVE TO LIVE IN THE LIGHT OF THE TRUTH OF THIS IDENTITY COMPARED OUR ALIENATION TO THE WORLD AND THE SERVICE.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the Father of compassion, who will surely fulfill all our desires according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. He has rescued us from all iniquity and purified to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good deeds. Do not be overcome by the world, the flesh, or the devil, but stand firm in the truth, so that you may receive the reward of God's grace and glory forever. Amen."

4. THE PEOPLE OF GOD NOW HAVE AN IMPERATIVE TO LIVE IN THE LIGHT OF THE TRUTH OF THIS IDENTITY COMPARED OUR ALIENATION TO THE WORLD AND THE SERVICE.

But you have a special obligation to love one another, because love is the fulfillment of the law. Love your neighbor as yourself. Love is the fulfillment of the law. Do not be overcome by the world, the flesh, or the devil, but stand firm in the truth, so that you may receive the reward of God's grace and glory forever. Amen."

5. THE PEOPLE OF GOD NOW HAVE AN IMPERATIVE TO LIVE IN THE LIGHT OF THE TRUTH OF THIS IDENTITY COMPARED OUR ALIENATION TO THE WORLD AND THE SERVICE.

Therefore, since we have received such mercy, let us love one another, because through love the law is fulfilled. Love your neighbor as yourself. Love is the fulfillment of the law. Do not be overcome by the world, the flesh, or the devil, but stand firm in the truth, so that you may receive the reward of God's grace and glory forever. Amen."

6. THE PEOPLE OF GOD NOW HAVE AN IMPERATIVE TO LIVE IN THE LIGHT OF THE TRUTH OF THIS IDENTITY COMPARED OUR ALIENATION TO THE WORLD AND THE SERVICE.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the Father of compassion, who will surely fulfill all our desires according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. He has rescued us from all iniquity and purified to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good deeds. Do not be overcome by the world, the flesh, or the devil, but stand firm in the truth, so that you may receive the reward of God's grace and glory forever. Amen."

7. THE PEOPLE OF GOD NOW HAVE AN IMPERATIVE TO LIVE IN THE LIGHT OF THE TRUTH OF THIS IDENTITY COMPARED OUR ALIENATION TO THE WORLD AND THE SERVICE.