"Chosen From the Beginning"

2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

7-22-2026

INTRODUCTION:

***Let the truth that God picked you to salvation impact your life!**

I. God's Choice of You is:
A TRUTH WORTHY OF <u>THANKS</u> (v. 13-14)

A. The <u>Basis</u> of His Choice
(*"Beloved"* - He loved you!)

B. The <u>Timing</u> of His Choice
(*"From the beginning"*)

C. The <u>Goal</u> of His Choice
(*"To salvation"*)

D. The <u>Means</u> of His Choice
(*"The Spirit and belief. . . He called you by our gospel"*)

E. The <u>End Result</u> of His Choice
(*"The obtaining of the glory"*)

II. God's Choice of You is:
A TRUTH FROM WHICH YOU MUST <u>NEVER DEPART</u> (v. 15)

III. God's Choice of You is:
A TRUTH THAT WILL GIVE YOU <u>NEEDED STRENGTH</u> (v. 16-17)

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INTRODUCTION:

ILLUS: The thrill of being picked (chosen) for a special task or to receive a special prize.

V. 13

"But" - this word marks a sharp contrast between the horrible doom of the unbelievers (v. 10-12) and the wonderful bliss of believers (v. 13-17).

"Because" - This word introduces the reason why God must be thanked.

"Chosen" - (*haireo)* = to take to oneself. Another Greek word *eklego* means to pick out, select, or choose; whereas the special significance of *haireo* "is to select rather by the act of taking, than by showing preference or favor" (Vine, p. 189).

The Septuagint uses this word to describe how God took the nation of Israel unto himself. (Dt. 7:6, 7; 26:18 - *"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God; the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the fact of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people." . . . And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep his commandments."*)

***Let the truth that God picked you to salvation impact your life!**

I. God's Choice of You is: A TRUTH WORTHY OF <u>THANKS</u> (v. 13-14)

V. 13

"We are bound to give thanks" - We are obligated or indebted to thank God whenever someone trusts Jesus Christ as Savior. The reason why God gets the glory is because salvation is of Him. He is salvation's originator and applicator. He planned it for us and imparts it to us. No man (soulwinner, prayer warrior, etc.) can take the credit for another's salvation. All the thanks goes to God.

"Thanks alway to God for you" - Do you have an unselfish practice of thanking God for the salvation of others? Who have you thanked God for lately?

A. The <u>Basis</u> of His Choice
(*"Beloved"* - He loved you!)

The Thessalonians are described in two ways which shows their special relationship to each other and to the Lord.

"Brethren" - As adopted children of God we are related. We are brethren because we have the same Father, share the same name ("Christian"), have inherited the same blessings, will live eternally int he same house (Heaven).

"Beloved" - the Lord has loved us in the past and still does. The perfect passive participle points to a continual love that belongs to God and is outpoured on us. Nothing can separate us from it (Rom. 8). The same word is used of God the Father's love for His Son (Eph. 1:6).

B. The Timing of His Choice
(*"From the beginning"*)

"From the beginning" - This phrase gives us the timing of when God chose (took) you to Himself.

Before you were born, even before sinful man populated the earth, God planned to take you unto Himself. The Bible teaches that people's names were either written or not written *"in the book of life from the foundation of the world."* (Rev. 17:8)

God's pretemporal beginning of the program of redemption:

> I Cor. 2:7 - *"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory"*
>
> Eph. 1:4 - *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love"*
>
> II Tim. 1:9 - *"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."*
>
> Titus 1:2 - *"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began"*

C. The Goal of His Choice
(*"To salvation"*)

"To salvation" - This salvation in context describes not only the deliverance of our souls from eternal damnation (cp. v. 12), but also the deliverance of our lives from Satanic deception (v. 10-11).

Since the Thessalonians were shaken over lies that they were in the Day of the Lord (v. 2), Paul now assures them that they cannot enter that day because God has saved them from His wrath.

D. The Means of His Choice

(*"The Spirit and belief. . . He called you by our gospel"*)

Paul describes two ways by which God took you unto Himself and His salvation:

1) *"Through sanctification of the Spirit"*
2) *"And belief of the Truth"*

"The salvation unto which they were chosen does not operate automatically; the electing purpose of God is carried out *"in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth"* (Hiebert, p. 323).

In two brief phrases God unveils one of the greatest paradoxical mysteries of salvation: namely, God's part and man's part in salvation.

God's activity is seen by the work of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5), who sanctifies (or sets apart) those whom the Father has selected to be saved (cp. I Pet. 1:2).

Since the belief is subsequent to salvation, it is apparent that the reference to the sanctifying work of the Spirit is a work subsequent to salvation.

God's work and man's response is also evident in other passages:

> Acts 13:48 - *"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."*
>
> John 6:37 - *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."*

How does the Holy Spirit "sanctify" us so that we would be saved?

--He preserves our lives long enough so that we will be saved
(Physically, He kept us alive; spiritually, He guards us from deception)

--He provides contact with Christians and the Gospel

--He prompts our heart and draws us

--He persuades us of the truth of the Gospel

"Belief of the truth" - faith, trust, reliance, dependance on the Truth. This phrase describes man's responsibility toward God's salvation.

Note: This phrase is in stark contrast to those who *"believed not the truth"* (v. 12).

The working of the Spirit is subjective, but belief is objective.

The reason why you can know you are saved is if you *"believe the truth."* Your belief is the objective evidence of the Spirit's working. Belief is not a "work," it is a response. All who believe are saved (Acts 16:31; SEE: John

3:15-16, 18, 36; 5:24).

"The truth" - Note: that it is not mere belief that saves; it is belief in "the truth" as revealed in the Holy Bible. *"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God"* (Rom. 10:17).

"The same God who ordained the end (salvation) also ordained the means to the end ("belief of the truth")" (Wiersbe, p. 153).

I agree with Warren Wiersbe, who said: "It is dangerous to engage in idle speculation about divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Both [mysteries] are taught in the Bible. . . we must not use the doctrine of election to divide the Church or disturb the weak, but to glorify the Lord" (Wiersbe, p. 153).

"Whereunto" - unto which salvation He [God] called (invited) you.

How does God "call"? Answer: *"By our gospel"* - which means by the Good News we preach.

God's only method of calling lost souls to salvation is by the Gospel (which according to I Cor. 15:1-3 is the substitutionary death of Christ for sinners and His bodily resurrection).

E. The <u>End Result</u> of His Choice
(*"The obtaining of the glory"*)

"To the obtaining of the glory" - The goal or end result of the salvation God called us to is the obtaining (total possession or complete attainment) of the glory (which includes our glorified bodies when we meet Christ in glory at the Rapture).

II Thes. 5:9 uses the word "obtain" this way: *"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."*

The word "obtain" is a beautiful word describing the security of the believer. Christianity is not theory; it is fact that will actually realize its promises.

Our future glory is something we will literally lay hold of and completely and certainly possess (Rom. 8:17, 18, 21, 29-30).

"Of our Lord Jesus Christ" -

--He is the One who <u>gives</u> us the "glory"
--It is <u>His glory</u> that we will have imparted to us because of our oneness with Him.

II. God's Choice of You is:

A TRUTH FROM WHICH YOU MUST <u>NEVER DEPART</u> (v. 15)

"Therefore" - in light of the blessed promises (v. 13-14), God draws a practical application. The Christian life should not be a weak, down in the dumps, drift through the swamps of despair!

"Stand fast" - Because of confidence in God's love and salvation, stand on these precious promises. Don't let anything move you, stumble you or blow you off course. Hold your ground! Remain firm in your confidence.

God's encouragement for us to STAND:

I Cor. 16:13 - *"Watch ye, **STAND fast in the faith**, quit you like men, be strong"*
Galatians 5:1 - *"**STAND fast** therefore **in the liberty**, wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."*
Ephesians 6:11- *"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **STAND against the wiles of the devil**"*
Philippians 4:1- *"...**STAND fast in the Lord**, my dearly beloved"*
Colossians 4:12- *"...**STAND** perfect and complete **in all the will of God**"*
I Thess. 3:8 - *"For now we live, if ye **STAND fast in the Lord**"*

"Hold the traditions" - firmly grasp and don't let go of that Word of God which was passed on or handed down to you.

The word "traditions" is referring to God's teaching, not man's (Mk. 7:1-13; Col. 2:8). God's Word which has been instilled in your hearts either by *"word"* (preaching) or by *"epistle"* (written letter).

"Traditions" - that which is passed on or handed down from one to another (not necessarily referring to oral tradition but God's word as passed on through any means).

Never let it slip. "Each generation of Christians must receive the truth from others, guard it, and make sure it is kept intact for the next generation" (Wiersbe, p. 155).

III. God's Choice of You is:
A TRUTH THAT WILL GIVE YOU <u>NEEDED STRENGTH</u> (v. 16-17)

V. 16

This verse begins a wish; a desire that Paul has for the Thessalonians.

"...Christ <u>Himself</u>" - It is amazing that Jesus personally encourages us! He sends no vicar; He needs no angel. He *"Himself"* as our Master lifts our burdens and consoles our spirits.

"<u>Loved</u> us and hath <u>given" -</u>God's love is not theoretical but practical. it <u>gives</u>! (Jn. 3:16).

That which God gives is always good (Ja. 1:17) and it glows from His agape love.

What does God give?

1) *"Everlasting consolation"* - eternal, never-ending comfort and encouragement (His encouragement never ends because our relationship to Him never ends)

2) *"Good hope"* -Good confidence. Since our hope will never let us down or fail, it is called "good." What good would a hope be that was not guaranteed? Or that was not eternal? Or that was not knowable? (I Jn. 5:13).

The two names *"Jesus Christ"* and *"God the Father"* (v. 16) are governed by the same verb action (v. 17), indicating that the Father and the Son are one (equal) (cp. I Thes. 3:11).

"Comfort" - the same Greek word as "consolation" (v. 16) meaning encouragement

Our hearts need God's rousing encouragement!

V. 17

"Stablish" - to support, strengthen, to steadfastly set something in a fixed position. The word "comfort" points to our need for <u>emotional</u> encouragement, whereas the word "stablish" points to our need for <u>physical</u> stamina.

"Good" - God does not bless the words and works of the pagans (ILLUS: how worldly entertainers and singers credit God for their words and works).

"Every <u>word</u> and <u>work</u>" - Whatever we <u>say</u> for God or <u>do</u> for God, we need His strength.

The greatest impetus or incentive for good words and works is a blessed assurance of God's abiding love and eternal salvation!