

Pastor Jim Jackson, 9/18/16
IDENTITY, pt. 3—I am Chosen
1 Peter 2:9

“You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” 1 Pet. 2:9

A divine CHOICE

Before the beginning, God chose to make the universe (Gen. 1:31). After sin entered the world, God chose to make a way of forgiveness through sacrifice bringing relational repair (Gen. 3:21). As Adam and Eve had to choose to put on the clothes of forgiveness offered by God, so people are to respond to the forgiveness offered by Jesus. However, as humans are spiritually dead because of sin and can’t respond to God on their own, God must draw them (John 6:44; Eph. 2:1-5). While the salvation call is for all of humanity, God chose some to be saved before creation, thereby guaranteeing the work of Jesus (Eph. 1:4, 5). As with choosing Israel, this divine choosing (Gr. *eklektos*, ‘to select as by favorite’) is a mysterious, paradoxical, supernatural reality that doesn’t supersede a person’s freedom of choice. God wants all people to be saved (His general desire), but sovereignly chooses those who then believe the truth (His specific purpose) without manipulation (John 3:16, 17; 1 Tim. 2:3-5; Rev. 3:20). *God’s freedom to choose doesn’t negate man’s freedom to choose.* Like the theological tension in the incarnation of the God/man Jesus, the salvation reality isn’t either/or but both/and. *We have been freely chosen by God to freely choose God!*

A chosen PEOPLE

Once Jesus died for the sin of all humanity on the cross, those who trusted in him were given a new nature in their old bodies (Rom. 8:10; 2 Cor. 5:17). This new nature became alive to God and transformed the believer’s character to begin making godly choices. All those predestined to respond to God’s salvation become a new people (Gr. *genos*, ‘relatives/countrymen/offspring’) group based on their new spiritual ‘genes’. For the believer, this new association brings peace and security as they have not been responsible for the strength to choose God or maintain their salvation or continue their relationship to God’s people—it has been God’s choosing and power from beginning to end (John 10:28, 29). *God’s choosing brings freedom for God’s people to live lives worth of the choice* (Eph. 4:1)!