

# The Way Salvation Works

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**Q.** Did God leave all mankind to die in sin and misery?

**A.** From all eternity and merely because it pleased Him God chose some to have everlasting life. These He freed from sin and misery by a covenant of grace and brought them to salvation by a redeemer.

(Westminster Shorter Catechism Q&A #20)

“Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.”

(Ephesians 1:4-5)

As far back as I can remember I've always loved to read. In fact, whenever I have a free moment, my nose is usually buried in a good book. I absolutely love to learn, to discover and to be swept away into a great story. When I was a little child in elementary school there were always a ton of books in my home (*thanks to my mom who also loves to read*), but there was one book in particular that always fascinated me, and that book was titled "*The Way Things Work*". Essentially, the book was an encyclopedia for children that described the interworking's of common devices, machines and household items. If I wanted to know how a lightbulb worked, this book had the answer. If I wanted to understand how an automobile engine functioned, again, this book had the solution!

As human beings we have a natural fascination with discovering how things work. We love to investigate and to explore. Our world is filled with the history of men and women who dedicated their lives to exploration and investigation. We think of men like Christopher Columbus and Ferdinand Magellan who were passionate to discover new lands and new frontiers. We love to hear the stories of Albert Einstein, Isaac Newton and Galileo Galilei, scientists whose lives were committed to understanding what makes our world tick. And while there is an innumerable amount of things that we could spend our time discovering and investigating in our world, there is one pursuit that stands infinitely above the rest in terms of its significance, importance and beauty. And that is, the Bible's doctrine of salvation. You see, the Scriptures teach that while the world and everything in it: the sun, moon, stars, galaxies, planets and nature are amazing works of God's creation, they are merely the work of God's fingers (Psalm 8:3). But salvation, the work of God reconciling lost sinners to Himself through Jesus Christ is the mighty work of God's right hand (Ps. 108:6; 138:7; 139:10; Isa.41:10).

Over the next few days we will be taking a look at the doctrine of salvation. We will be taking a look at the way salvation works. And the first thing we must understand is that a person's salvation begins, not with themselves, it begins with God. The Westminster Shorter Catechism says, *"From all eternity and merely because it pleased Him God chose some to have everlasting life..."*. Salvation begins with God. Salvation begins with God's sovereign decree by which He chose from eternity past those whom He would save *"by a redeemer"* who is Jesus Christ. Salvation begins with the doctrine of divine predestination. Our salvation begins, not with us choosing God, but with God choosing us. This is the very teaching of Jesus Himself! In John 15:16 we read, *"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit"*. Again in the book of Ephesians the Apostle Paul writes, *"just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."* (Ephesians 1:4-5)

Salvation begins with God's choosing or predestining certain sinners to salvation. And this choosing didn't have anything to do with the fact that we were in some way more *"choosable"* than others. Just the opposite in fact! There was nothing special about us that caused God to choose us (Deuteronomy 7:7-8; Romans 3:10-18). He chose to save us as our catechism says, *"From all eternity and merely because it pleased Him"*. In theology we refer to this as the doctrine of UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION. And when this biblical doctrine is understood correctly it should lead God's people to feelings of immense gratitude and worship (Ephesians 1:6,12,14). If you are a believer in Christ, take a moment today to praise God for choosing to save unworthy sinners like you and me!

## Dig Even Deeper into God's Word!

2 Thessalonians 2:13

Romans 8:29-30

Romans 9:11

Ephesians 1:4-8

Acts 13:48