

rc sproul chosen by god

rc sproul chosen by god is a topic of profound theological significance, exploring the doctrine of election within the Reformed tradition, particularly as articulated by the influential theologian R.C. Sproul. This article will delve into the core tenets of predestination, God's sovereign choice, and what it means for believers to understand themselves as chosen. We will examine Sproul's teachings on divine sovereignty, the nature of election, and its implications for salvation, assurance, and Christian living. Understanding this complex doctrine can bring immense comfort and bolster faith, affirming that our salvation is not a product of human merit but a gracious gift from a sovereign God who has eternally chosen His people.

- Understanding the Doctrine of Election
- R.C. Sproul on God's Sovereign Choice
- The Biblical Basis for Being Chosen
- Implications of Being Chosen by God
- Assurance and the Chosen Life
- Living as the Chosen of God

Exploring the Doctrine of Election and God's Sovereign Choice

The concept of election, often understood as predestination, is a cornerstone of Reformed theology. It posits that God, in His infinite wisdom and perfect sovereignty, has eternally chosen certain individuals for salvation. This choice is not based on any foreseen merit or action on the part of the individual but is solely an act of God's grace. R.C. Sproul was a steadfast defender and clear explainer of this doctrine, often articulating it with precision and pastoral sensitivity. He emphasized that God's choice is absolute and unconditional, flowing from His good pleasure and purpose.

The Sovereign Power of God in Salvation

Central to R.C. Sproul's understanding of being chosen by God is the doctrine of divine sovereignty. Sproul taught that God is sovereign over all things, including the salvation of sinners. This means that God is not reacting to

events but actively orchestrating them according to His eternal plan. His sovereignty is not a tyrannical rule but a benevolent decree that ultimately leads to the good of His people. The election of individuals for salvation is a direct outflow of this sovereign power, demonstrating God's absolute control and His ultimate authority in all matters, especially in bringing sinners to Himself.

Unconditional Election: God's Gracious Initiative

R.C. Sproul expounded on the concept of unconditional election, highlighting that God's choice to save is not dependent on any condition within us. It is not because God foresaw that we would believe or that we would live a life worthy of salvation. Instead, God's election is a free and sovereign act of grace. He chooses to bestow His saving grace upon individuals for reasons entirely within Himself, rooted in His own perfect will and glory. This understanding combats any form of human boasting in salvation, directing all glory to God alone.

The Biblical Foundation for Being Chosen by God

The affirmation that believers are "chosen by God" is deeply rooted in Scripture. R.C. Sproul consistently pointed to various biblical passages to illuminate this truth. These texts not only declare God's election but also provide comfort and encouragement to those who find their identity in Christ. Theologians and laypeople alike have wrestled with the implications of this doctrine, yet its biblical basis remains a powerful testament to God's faithfulness and His plan for redemption.

Key Scripture Passages on Divine Election

The New Testament is replete with affirmations of God's sovereign election. Passages such as Ephesians 1:4-5 speak directly to this, stating, "even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will." Similarly, Romans 8:29-30 elaborates on this, noting that those whom God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son. R.C. Sproul frequently cited these verses, among others, to demonstrate that election is a foundational aspect of God's redemptive work.

Interpreting the Term "Chosen" in Scripture

Understanding what it means to be "chosen" in a biblical context involves careful exegesis. It is not a passive status but an active calling and equipping for a divine purpose. Sproul often explained that being chosen by God implies being set apart for Him, destined for salvation, and ultimately conformed to the image of Christ. This choosing is not arbitrary but purposeful, aimed at the glory of God and the salvation of His people. The emphasis is on God's initiative and His gracious bestowal of blessings.

The Profound Implications of Being Chosen by God

The doctrine of being chosen by God carries significant weight for a believer's life. It impacts one's understanding of salvation, provides a secure basis for assurance, and shapes the way one lives out their faith. R.C. Sproul often discussed how this truth fosters humility, gratitude, and a profound sense of security in the divine love that has eternally embraced them.

Salvation as a Gracious Gift

If believers are chosen by God, then salvation cannot be earned. It is entirely a gift of God's grace, received through faith in Jesus Christ. This understanding liberates individuals from the burden of trying to achieve salvation through their own works or merits. R.C. Sproul consistently preached that our salvation is secured not by our performance but by God's perfect work on the cross and His sovereign choice to apply that work to the elect. This doctrine magnifies the grace of God and minimizes human pride.

Assurance of Salvation and God's Faithfulness

The doctrine of election provides a strong foundation for the assurance of salvation. Knowing that God has sovereignly chosen one for salvation means that this choice is immutable and eternally secure. Sproul often reassured believers that their salvation is guaranteed because it rests not on their wavering faith but on God's unwavering decree. This leads to a deep-seated confidence in God's faithfulness and the security of one's eternal destiny, knowing that God will never abandon His chosen people.

The Chosen Life: Living for God's Glory

Being chosen by God is not merely about a secure future; it also has profound implications for present living. Those who are chosen are called to live lives that honor and glorify God. R.C. Sproul taught that the elect are chosen not only for salvation but also to be conformed to the image of Christ and to bear fruit for God's kingdom. This means actively pursuing holiness, engaging in good works as an outflow of gratitude, and proclaiming the gospel to others, thereby fulfilling God's eternal purpose for their lives.

- Understanding salvation as a gift, not an achievement.
- Finding security in God's eternal promises, not human performance.
- Living a life of obedience and gratitude, reflecting God's grace.
- Actively participating in God's redemptive plan through evangelism and discipleship.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is R.C. Sproul's core teaching on God's sovereignty and election?

R.C. Sproul was a staunch defender of the doctrine of unconditional election, a key tenet of Reformed theology. He taught that God, in His sovereign will and before the foundation of the world, chose certain individuals for salvation based solely on His good pleasure, not on any foreseen merit or faith in them. This election is a gracious act of God, not a result of human decision or worthiness.

How did Sproul explain the relationship between God's sovereignty and human responsibility in salvation?

Sproul consistently maintained that God's sovereign election and human responsibility are complementary truths that must be held in tension, not contradiction. While God unilaterally chooses who will be saved, humans are still responsible for responding in faith and repentance when the gospel is presented. He often used analogies to illustrate this, emphasizing that the Bible presents both realities without attempting to harmonize them into a logical system that negates either truth.

Did R.C. Sproul believe in a limited atonement, and if so, how did he articulate it?

Yes, R.C. Sproul was a proponent of the doctrine of limited atonement (or particular redemption), another tenet of Reformed theology. He taught that Christ's atoning sacrifice was intended to actually save the elect, securing their salvation definitively. This doesn't mean Christ's death was insufficient for all, but rather that its efficacy was specifically applied by God to redeem His chosen people.

What role did Sproul see for God's grace in the process of someone being 'chosen'?

For Sproul, God's grace was absolutely central to the concept of election. He emphasized that being chosen by God is entirely an act of unmerited favor. God's grace is not a response to anything good in humanity but a sovereign, unprompted initiative to save sinners who are utterly undeserving. This grace is what enables the elect to respond to the gospel call.

How did Sproul address the question of why some people are chosen and others are not?

R.C. Sproul generally deferred to the mystery of God's will when addressing the question of why some are chosen and others are not. He believed that God's reasons are ultimately inscrutable and beyond human comprehension. He would often quote Romans 9, emphasizing that God has mercy on whom He has mercy and hardens whom He wills, and that the potter has the right to make vessels for honor and vessels for dishonor. He cautioned against trying to rationalize or find fault with God's sovereign choices.

Additional Resources

Here are 9 book titles related to R.C. Sproul's teachings on being chosen by God, presented in a numbered list with short descriptions:

1. The Sovereign Grace of the Chosen

This book delves into R.C. Sproul's robust defense of God's absolute sovereignty in salvation. It explores the biblical foundation for election and how it impacts our understanding of God's glory and human responsibility. Sproul argues that being chosen is not an arbitrary act but flows from God's perfect and unchanging love.

2. Undeserved Blessing: The Mystery of Election

Here, Sproul grapples with the profound and often challenging doctrine of election, emphasizing its mysterious yet undeniably biblical nature. He explains why God chooses some and not others, ultimately pointing to God's inscrutable wisdom and His desire to receive all the glory. The book seeks to comfort and assure believers of their secure standing in Christ.

3. From Eternity's Decree: God's Unfailing Choice

This title examines the eternal perspective of God's choosing, highlighting that our salvation is not a last-minute decision but a plan set in motion before the creation of the world. Sproul unpacks the implications of this timeless decree for our faith and how it guarantees our ultimate perseverance. It's an encouragement to rest in the certainty of God's eternal plan.

4. The Immutability of the Chosen

Sproul's work here focuses on the assurance that comes from knowing God's choice is unchanging. He asserts that once God has chosen someone for salvation, that choice is irrevocable and unbreakable. This book aims to bolster the confidence of believers by grounding their hope in the steadfastness of God Himself.

5. For the Glory of the Elect

This exploration centers on the ultimate purpose behind God's choosing: His own glory. Sproul meticulously explains how the salvation of the elect serves to display the riches of God's grace, mercy, and power. The book encourages readers to see their election as a means to magnify the greatness of God.

6. Chosen in Christ: Our Identity in Him

This title emphasizes that our election is not an independent action but is intrinsically linked to Jesus Christ. Sproul clarifies that believers are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, making Him the very ground of our salvation. It's an invitation to understand our identity through the lens of Christ's redemptive work.

7. The Unqualified Call: God's Purpose in Choosing

Sproul addresses the common question of why God would choose seemingly unqualified individuals. He argues that God's choice is not based on human merit but on His own sovereign good pleasure. This book reassures believers that their acceptance by God is not earned but freely given through His gracious purpose.

8. Guaranteed Inheritance: The Certainty of the Chosen

This book presents election as the foundation for the assurance of our future inheritance. Sproul demonstrates how God's choosing secures our eventual destiny and guarantees that nothing can separate us from His love. It provides a robust theological framework for the believer's confident hope of eternal life.

9. The Mystery and Might of God's Choice

Here, Sproul delves into both the awe-inspiring power and the profound mystery of divine election. He acknowledges that certain aspects of God's choosing are beyond full human comprehension. However, he consistently directs readers back to the trustworthiness of God's Word and the love demonstrated through the act of choosing.

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