

Many Are Called, But Few Are Chosen.

by Hendrik Joubert

Generosity is noble, if you are distributing your own possessions and giving away your own money. It is much easier to spend someone else's money or to be generous with their goods. The grace of God is absolutely marvelous, however I want to suggest that the majority tend to spend it too freely, and that on themselves. Perhaps because they want to be saved with beer in hand and cussing on their lips. Jesus turned water into wine so we may become drunk, right...? Or perhaps because the adulterer and fornicator want to blaspheme God by suggesting that He gave them this "lucky break."

Putting it this way does not make it look good at all, and pointing it out is considered negative and judgmental; however consider how this attitude may be manipulative and therefore contribute to further abuse of the grace of God. Notice how accurately this situation is described in Jude's dilemma; he wanted to talk about the gracious chance of salvation, however he could not refrain from warning Christians in the first century *to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints*. Notice specifically what necessitated this serious warning: *For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. (Jude 1:3-4)*

Lewdness, or licentiousness describes immoral actions, and these were justified in the name of the grace of God. Those who seek to justify their lewdness by God's grace do not deny Jesus out rightly, they *creep in unnoticed*. Denying Jesus therefore involves more, or should one rather say *much less*, than denying that He came in the flesh, or that He is the Son of God and Savior of the world. Those who would not submit to His headship and who do not remain in His teaching denies not only Jesus, but also He who sent Him. (**Ephesians 1:22-23; 2John 9; Matthew 15:9; Luke 10:16**)

They seemed to compliment God and His Son by suggesting that those who would not repent are saved because salvation is by grace, and not by *any* works. Since repentance is considered to involve works, it therefore cannot be considered necessary. Notice how Paul describes the grace of God as a *teacher* and not a free gift in spite of moral decadence: *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, ¹² teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,...* (**Titus 2:11-12**)

Most want to discuss what they consider the essence of the gospel, *Jesus Christ and Him crucified*, and not that *the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24)* must be *obeyed*. Peter gave Christians this food for thought: *For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? (1Peter 4:17)*

When one reads the parable in **Matthew 22:1-14** a guest who entered without the proper dress is cast out *into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* (22:13) This does not seem gracious at all, especially when you consider that he at least accepted the invitation rejected by so many. The statement *"For many are called, but few are chosen"* Jesus makes in conclusion of this parable explains that many may react to the call, however few are eventually considered properly dressed by obeying the gospel so that they are *chosen*. (**1Thessalonians 1:8; 2Peter 1:10**)

In **Matthew 7:13-14** the Lord issues the warning in other words by explaining that the *way that leads to life is difficult and narrow*, and *few* will *find* it. Being elected is not an indiscriminate act of God, sinners become candidates when they reveal their respect and desire for God by searching Him, i.e. His will. Realizing this is the first principle of faith; one must believe, not only that He is, but also that he rewards *those who diligently seek Him*. (**Hebrews 11:6**)

In the same sermon (**Matthew 7:21-23**) the Lord explains more clearly who are the ones eventually *chosen*. They are not the ones who simply worship Him by *word* only, but also by their *deeds* – *doing the will of My Father in heaven*. James explains this well in chapter 2:14-16, and real life examples are listed in Hebrews 11. **Matthew 15:9** and **Mark 7:7** contains the simplest and direct statement pointing out the fact that when men make the rules of faith – synods and church counsels – worship becomes vain.

We can only be properly dressed if we will allow God to explain to us through His word what we need to do in order to accomplish His will. *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.* (2Timothy 3:16-17)