

Doctrine of Puppets

Are Men Mere Puppets on a String?

1. The *Bible* teaches there is a “chosen” people.

- *1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

2. **Question.** Since some are chosen to salvation, are individuals merely puppets on a string because they are chosen?

Answer.

First, it must be said that any view of God which creates hostility and anger and unworthy concepts of Him in the heart must be arrested

- *Rom 9:20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?*

Second, a proper view of God, man, and salvation must be rooted in reality. God is sovereign and will never surrender this attribute. God is making a lot of decisions on behalf of others such as sex, time of birth, place, etc. for it is He who works all things after the counsel of His own will.

- *Ephesians 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:*

Third, the heart of the natural man is in bondage and needs to be freed. Man can only act according to his nature. If man is going to be saved, if he is going to be set free from the bondage of sin, then it must be on the basis of grace.

- *Ephesians 2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*

3. All people are enslaved (a puppet) to someone—either the world, the flesh, the devil, or God.

- *Servants of the World. 1 John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*
 - *Servants of the Flesh. Titus 3:3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.*
 - *Servants of the Devil. John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*
 - *Servants of God. Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants [slaves] of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:*
4. True freedom is to move within the sphere of life for which one has been created. There is divine authority but there is also human responsibility.
 5. *Question.* Are men chosen in different ways in different dispensations?
 - Dispensationalism seems to teach that individuals were saved in the *Old Testament* in a different way than individuals are saved today. Whatever that basis of faith might have been it did not include Jesus Christ as the object of saving faith. After reviewing select New Testament passages (Acts 17:30; Romans 3:25; John 1:21; John 7:40; 1 Pet. 1:10-11) Charles Ryrie writes a conclusion. “*In examining salvation under the Mosaic Law the principle question is simply, How much of what God was going to do in the future did the Old Testament believer comprehend? According to both Old and New Testament revelation it is impossible to say that he saw the same promise, the same Savior as we do today.*” It does appear that Ryrie removes Christ as the object of faith for Old Testament believers.
 - In contrast to Dispensationalism, Covenant Theology argues that Christ has always been the object of saving faith for all that will be saved from Adam to the last soul converted. Concerning what the Old Testament saints under the Law understood about Christ, John Owen, the great Puritan, writes: “*Christ was ‘all in all’ to them, as he is to us. Take Christ and his offices out of the Old Testament ministry and they become of no value or significance.*” Consider the evidence.
 - ❖ Christ held men accountable for their rejection of Him even though all they had were the OT Scriptures. *Luke 24:25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: 26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? 27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.*

- ❖ Christ taught that Abraham rejoiced to see His day. *John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.*
- ❖ Jesus rebuked the Jewish leaders for their rejection of Him based upon the Old Testament scriptures. *John 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.*
- ❖ Paul states in 2 Timothy 3:15 that Christ was the object of salvation for those who were made wise unto salvation. *2 Tim. 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

6. *Question.* Who are those chosen by God? Whom will God choose for salvation?

Answer. Not many. God does not choose many for salvation.

- *Matthew 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen.*

7. Those chosen by God are called the “elect”.

- *Mark 13:20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.*

8. Christ is the one who chooses those who will be saved.

- *John 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*
- *John 15:19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*

9. Saul of Tarsus came to faith because God chose him unto salvation.

- *Acts 9:15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:*
- *Acts 22:14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth.*

10. Like Saul of Tarsus, Rufus was chosen in the Lord.

- *Romans 16:13 Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.*

11. The divine selection was made before the foundation of the world.

- *Ephesians 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:*

Special Note.

The elect are those who have been chosen to salvation, sanctification, *and* to service.

- *2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:*

12. It is God who chooses who will be saved, not men.

- *1 Peter 2:3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. [4] To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,*

13. The purpose of the divine undertaking is to bring glory to Christ.

- *1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

14. Those who are chosen will be with Christ for ever and ever to serve with Him and to help defeat His enemies.

- *Revelation 17:14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*