

Predestination

Yes, the Bible teaches that Christians have been predestined for salvation!

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*)

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son” (*Romans 8:29*)

These verses send some people to picturing God, before the creation of the world, with a list of all the names of everyone who will ever be born, choosing some for salvation and others for eternal condemnation. But this idea contradicts the teachings of several passages:

“He Himself [Jesus] is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.” (*1 John 2:2*)

“The Lord is . . . not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (*2 Peter 3:9*)

“God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.” (*Acts 10:34-35*)

So how can we understand the verses about predestination? By picturing God selecting a group of people, rather than individuals by name, and allowing people their free will choice to enter the group, or not, based on conditions that God determines.

Illustration: I’m having a “*Let’s-Eat-Asparagus*” party! I’ve made all the preparations, and I know who will be there, before I even tell anyone about the party. How? By the specific, narrow purpose of my party, I have *predetermined* that some people will come, while many will not. I don’t know the *names* of the ones who will come, but I know something about them – they like asparagus! Everyone is “predestined” to come (or not) based on his or her love for asparagus. So, I have *predestined a category of people*, rather than selecting individuals’ names, and all are free to attend, or not, and to change their minds, as they choose.

So it is with God. He’s having a “*Let’s-Worship-The-Son*” party. Everyone is invited, but only those who love the Son will come. We are predestined, not based on our works, but according to our faith – according to our decision to believe in Him. As our spiritual blessings are described in Ephesians 1, we read that “He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world... [and] predestined us to adoption as sons” (*Ephesians 1:3-5*) Whoever will believe in Him and live for Him will belong to a *special category* – “in Him” – and will be adopted by Him, and will be conformed to the image of the Son.

He has chosen those who will choose Him.

(*Wonder how we get “into” Him? Read Galatians 3:26-29.*)