

The Called of the Nations (9:22-24)

9:22 *What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? 9:23 And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, 9:24 even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.*

- Who are the “vessels of mercy”? Those “whom [God] also called.”
- God’s choice is known by His calling.

Those Whom God Calls Answer

- “...us, whom He also called” (9:24) refers to God’s effectual calling of His predestined, or elect. “As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so He hath, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto; wherefore **they who are elected**, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, **are effectually called unto faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season**, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power through faith unto salvation...**those whom God hath predestinated unto life, He is pleased in His appointed, and accepted time, effectually to call, by His Word and Spirit**, out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by His almighty power determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace” (1689 Baptist Confession of Faith, 3.6,10.1).¹

¹ Notice that God does not violate the free will of man; the problem is that man’s free will is inescapably held captive by sin so that man will

When our Baptist spiritual forefathers confess that God effectually calls “by His Word and Spirit,” it means by the proclamation of “His Word” by believers in the power of His “Spirit.”

- Does the Scripture back up the 1689 Confession’s description? “...the word of faith which we are preaching” (Romans 10:8) is “that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (10:9). This cannot happen apart from those sent out: “How then will they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him Whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written [in Isaiah 52:7], ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!’” (10:14,15). “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ” (10:17). How do those who hear “the word

never, on his own, choose the things of God. This is why the confession says those who are called by God “come most freely, being made willing by His grace.” Maybe a metaphor will help: prior to God’s saving work in us, we are locked in a prison of sin – sadly, we love and desire the prison. When God calls us, though, the prison door is thrown open, we see the beautiful light of freedom in Christ, and are given a desire to freely run out of the prison.

Baptist pastor Benjamin Keach (1640-1704) wrote this in his *Baptist Catechism* about God’s effectual calling of His elect:

Q. 35. What is effectual calling?

A. Effectual calling is the work of God’s Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, He does persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the Gospel (2 Tim. 1:9; John 16:8-11; Acts 2:37; 26:18; Ezekiel 36:26; John 6:44,45; 1 Cor. 12:3).

of Christ” savingly confess “Jesus as Lord”? “...no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:3b).

- In this letter to the Romans the apostle has repeatedly lifted up the powerful call of God:
 - “...God...gives life to the dead and **calls** into being that which does not exist” (4:17).
 - “...we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, **He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified**” (8:28-30).
 - “...they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; nor are they all children because they are Abraham’s descendants, but [as it says in Genesis 21:12]: ‘through Isaac your descendants **will be named** [lit., “called”].’ That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants” (9:6-8).
 - “...there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; for though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God’s purpose according to His choice would stand, not because of works but because of **Him Who calls**, it was said to her, ‘The older will serve the younger’” (9:10-12).

- For other passages describing God’s calling and our responsibility as “the called,” READ 1 Corinthians 1:26; Ephesians 1:18; 4:1,4; 2 Thessalonians 1:11; 2 Timothy 1:9; Hebrews 3:1; 2 Peter 1:10.

- When God calls through the proclamation of the Gospel, the spiritually dead come to life forevermore.² His voice is power.

The Mystery Now Revealed

- The inclusion of believing non-Jews along with believing Jews among the “called” of God is the great “mystery” of God’s work in Christ. Paul elsewhere speaks of “the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to be specific, that **the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel**” (Ephesians 3:4-6).
- This began the letter: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, **to the Jew first and also to the Greek**” (Romans 1:16).

Gospel: the Nations Blessed

- This plan was revealed to Abraham: “The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying [in Genesis 12:3], ‘All the nations will be blessed in you’” (Galatians 3:8).
- We see this fulfilled in heaven’s song to the Lamb: READ Revelation 5:9.

² In 2 Corinthians 4:6, Paul compares God’s effectual calling to the creation of light in the darkness by God’s command in Genesis 1:2,3.

Creation from Nothing: the Call of the Gentiles (9:25,26)

9:25 *As He says also in Hosea [2:23],*

*“I will call those who were not My people, ‘My people,’
And her who was not beloved, ‘beloved.’”*

9:26 [And as it says in Hosea 1:10] *“And it shall be that in the place
where it was said to them, ‘you are not My people,’
There they shall be called sons of the living God.”*

To Be God’s People

- God’s people are created by His calling, His Word.

Beloved

- The second part of the quote in 9:25 is a paraphrase of Hosea: *“...the LORD said to me, ‘Go again, love a woman who is loved by her husband, yet an adulteress, even as the LORD loves the sons of Israel, though they turn to other gods...’”* (Hosea 3:1).
- *“God is love”* (1 John 4:18), and that love is experienced through the one God Who is three Persons.³
 - *“...God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died*

³ “In this divine and infinite Being there are three subsistences, the Father, the Word or Son, and Holy Spirit, of one substance, power, and eternity, each having the whole divine essence, yet the essence undivided: the Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son; all infinite, without beginning, therefore but one God, Who is not to be divided in nature and being, but distinguished by several peculiar relative properties and personal relations; which doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with God, and comfortable dependence on Him...religious worship is to be given to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and to Him alone” (1689 Baptist Confession of Faith, 2.3; 22.2).

for us” (Romans 5:8; see also John 3:16; 1 John 4:9,10). He is *“God our Father”* (1:7) and *“the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”* (15:6). It is the Father’s love for us, sinners and His enemies, that motivated the giving of His Son to save us.

- The Father loves the Son, Who perfectly reflects His image and glory.⁴ When we trust Jesus alone for our salvation, we are united to Him by faith. Nothing *“will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Romans 8:39).
- We experience this love the Father has for the Son by the indwelling of His Holy Spirit: *“...the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who was given to us”* (Romans 5:5).
- God is love, and when we are saved by faith in Jesus Christ, we are brought into that eternal, infinitely deep (Ephesians 3:4-19), and unchanging love of the one God Who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We become *“beloved”* as the Son is *“Beloved.”*

Adoption

***“At earthly preferments men will stand amazed;
but seldom shall you find a man
that is ravished with joy in this, that he is the child of God.”
William Perkins (1558-1602)⁵***

⁴ On the love of the Father for the Son, READ Matthew 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:11; 9:7; 12:6; Luke 3:22; 20:13; John 17:23,24,26; Ephesians 1:6; 2 Peter 1:17. On the Son’s perfect imaging forth of the Father, READ John 1:1,14,18; 10:30; 14:9; 2 Corinthians 4:4,6; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3.

⁵ *“...God’s adopted children learn that the only place in the universe where true security can be found is in the household of the heavenly*

- Paul has already spoken of our adoption: READ Romans 8:14-17.
 - *“...it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants”* (9:8).⁶ In writing *“to the churches of Galatia”* (Galatians 1:2), Paul said, *“you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise”* (4:28).
- READ, give thanks, and worship the Father in these verses, as well: John 1:12; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Galatians 3:26-29; 4:6,7; Ephesians 1:3-6; 1 John 3:1,2; Revelation 21:7.

Father, Who is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing in life is secure except God...if our present privileges as God’s adopted children are so great that the world cannot grasp them, our future prospects are so glorious that even we cannot fully grasp them...the children of the heavenly Father embrace His will and purpose for them. Every adopted child of God also knows that holiness is an important part of God’s purpose for his happiness in God’s family...as God’s adopted sons and daughters, we have been placed in a great family. If we rightly understand this, our attitude toward our brothers and sisters in the family of God will be greatly affected (1 John 3:14-18). We have not been adopted to live apart from that family, but to live within its network of relationships.”

From *Heirs with Christ*, by Joel Beeke (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2008), pgs. 68-74.

⁶ Remember that this entire section of Romans (chapters 9-11) comes out of Paul’s grief over his *“kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites”* (9:3,4), who are *“accursed, separated from Christ”* (9:3) because of their unbelief. True Israel, true Jewishness, is not determined by ethnicity or nationality, but Spirit-wrought faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation (Romans 2:28,29; Ephesians 2:11-22; Philippians 3:1-3).

The Remnant: the Call of the Jews (9:27-29) That Which Remains (9:27,28)

*9:27*Isaiah cries out concerning Israel [in 10:22,23], *“Though the number of the sons of Israel be like the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved; 9:28*for the Lord will execute His word on the earth, thoroughly and quickly.”

- The *“sand of the sea”* promise (Genesis 22:17) was fulfilled in Israel’s Old Testament history (Judges 7:12; 1 Samuel 13:5; 2 Samuel 17:11; 1 Kings 4:20). God also purposed to reduce Israel to a remnant (Isaiah 48:19).
- The Lord’s *“word”* to save a remnant of His people was fulfilled by those Jews who believe in Jesus as Messiah.

The Remnant Is God’s Merciful Work (9:29)

*9:29*And just as Isaiah foretold [in 1:9], *“Unless the Lord of Sabaoth had left to us a posterity, We would have become like Sodom, and would have resembled Gomorrah.”*

- *“Lord of Sabaoth”* is a rendering of the Old Testament title, *“LORD of hosts.”* It describes God as power over all the armies of heaven and earth. The powers of the universe fulfill His will, whether they desire to or not. The title is often used in connection with God’s righteous judgment.

“I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures”

(1 Corinthians 15:3,4).

If you respond to God’s message about His Son by faith, you are His chosen child, called to be part of His beloved people forever. Rest and rejoice in this!