



Living as a member of God's Family

Class 4: You cannot serve God & Mammon

Who do you serve?

Matthew 6:24

24 "**No one can serve two masters;** for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and mammon.**

We have to make a choice!
You can't have it both ways



What is Mammon?

Mammon may have originated with the Aramaic word "mamon" which meant riches or money or a Hebrew word meaning "that which is to be trusted"





Naaman is cured of leprosy

2 Kings 5:15-27

15 And he (Naaman) returned to the man of God (Elisha), he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, "Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, **please take a gift from your servant.**"

16 **But he said, "As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing." And he urged him to take it, but he refused.**

17 So Naaman said, "Then, if not, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord. 18 Yet in this thing may the Lord pardon your servant: when my master goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon — when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the Lord please pardon your servant in this thing."

19 Then he said to him, **"Go in peace." So he departed from him a short distance.**

Elisha understood God had healed Naaman

Gehazi bowed down to Mammon

2 Kings 5:15-27

20 But **Gehazi**, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "Look, my master has spared Naaman this Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; **but as the Lord lives, I will run after him and take something from him.**" 21 So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw him running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, "Is all well?"

22 And he said, "**All is well. My master has sent me, saying, 'Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments.'**"

23 So Naaman said, "Please, take two talents." And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed them to two of his servants; and they carried them on ahead of him.

Bowing to Mammon leads to lies

God knows where our treasure is

2 Kings 5:15-27

24 When he came to the citadel, he took them from their hand, and stored them away in the house; then he let the men go, and they departed. 25 Now he went in and stood before his master. Elisha said to him, "Where did you go, Gehazi?"

And he said, "**Your servant did not go anywhere.**"

26 Then he said to him, "Did not my heart go with you when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? Is it time to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants? 27 **Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever.**" And he went out from his presence leprous, as white as snow.

God uses events in our lives to reveal
our weaknesses & attempt to change us

Our treasure
reveals what
we really want
Mat 6:21

What's in
your
treasure
chest?



Ahab covets Naboth's vineyard

1 Kings 21:1-5

1 And it came to pass after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel, next to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

2 So **Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden,** because it is near, next to my house; and for it I will give you a vineyard better than it. Or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its worth in money."

3 But Naboth said to Ahab, **"The Lord forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!"**

4 **So Ahab went into his house sullen and displeased** because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no food. 5 But Jezebel his wife came to him..... (you know the rest!)

King Ahab had almost anything he wanted

SERVING TWO MASTERS

To serve his
covetousness, Ahab had
to throw his Bible away!



Covetousness defiles a person

Mark 7:14-23

14 When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear Me, everyone, and understand: 15 There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man. 16 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!"

17 When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. 18 So He said to them, "Are you thus without understanding also? **Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him,** 19 because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?" 20 And He said, "**What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts,** adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 thefts, **covetousness,** wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, **pride,** foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within and defile a man."

It comes from within, but God can provide us with the solution to overcome it!

Covetousness involves wanting more than God has given us



It can eat away at us and turn us into selfish, unthankful, unhappy people

**Covetousness drives us to work far too much
for ourselves. We then have little time
for God or our families**



Why did people quit working on the Temple

Haggai 1:3-6

3 Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, 4 "Is it time for **you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses**, and this temple to lie in ruins?" 5 Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: "**Consider your ways!**

6 "**You have sown much**, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; **You clothe yourselves**, but no one is warm; and he who earns wages, earns wages to put into a bag with holes."

Covetousness drives us to work too much for ourselves

Angels don't despise the day of small things

Zechariah 4:8-10

8 Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying:

9 "The hands of **Zerubbabel** have laid the foundation of this temple; **his hands shall also finish it**. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me to you.

10 For **who has despised the day of small things?** **For these seven (angels) rejoice** to see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. **They are the eyes of the Lord**, which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth."

**Angels get excited about the projects
they enable us to do today!**

Covetousness becomes Idolatry

Colossians 3:5-7

5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and **covetousness**, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, **7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.**

**God expects that our Faith & Trust in Him
will force covetousness out of our lives**

One of the
top 10
commands!



You shall not covet...
anything that belongs
to your neighbor.

This way of life must be left behind



Balaam the Greedy Prophet



God tried to stop Balaam

Balaam for hire

Numbers 22:7 (NIV)

7 The elders of Moab and Midian left, **taking with them the fee for divination**. When they came to **Balaam**, they told him what Balak had said.

Jude 4, 11-13 (NIV)

4 For **certain men** whose condemnation was written about long ago **have secretly slipped in among you**. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for **immorality** and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.

11 Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; **they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error**; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion.

12 **These men are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm — shepherds who feed only themselves.**

Greed for profit creeps into ecclesial life

A person is shown in silhouette on the left side of the image, with their arms raised high in a gesture of prayer or praise. The background is a vibrant sunset or sunrise scene with a bright sun low on the horizon, casting a warm glow of orange, red, and yellow across the sky and clouds. The overall mood is one of spiritual devotion and hope.

**Godliness with
contentment is great
gain (1Tim 6:6)**

It produces thankful, happy children of God

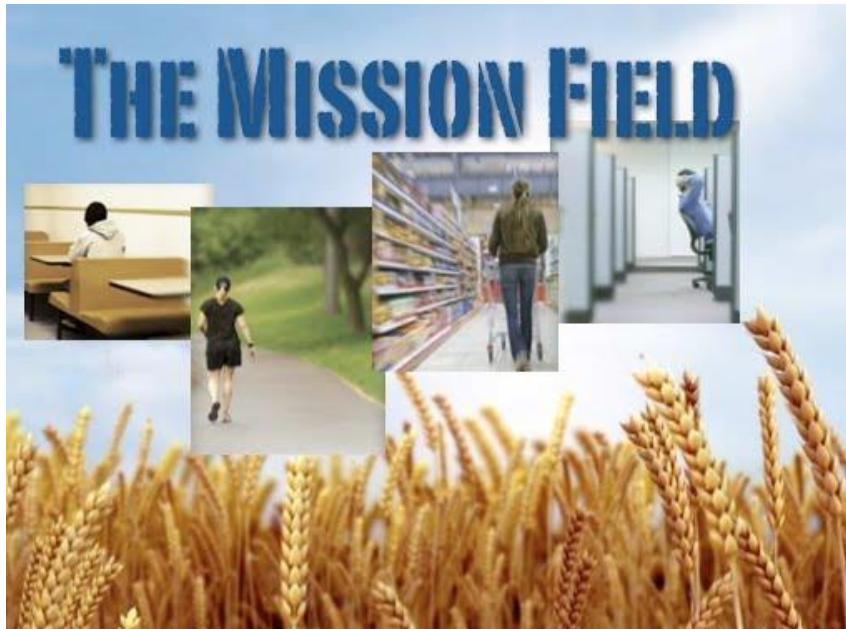
Paul's great secret of life....

Philippians 4:11-13 (NIV)

for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

Faith trusts whatever God gives us!

You have lots of choices ahead!

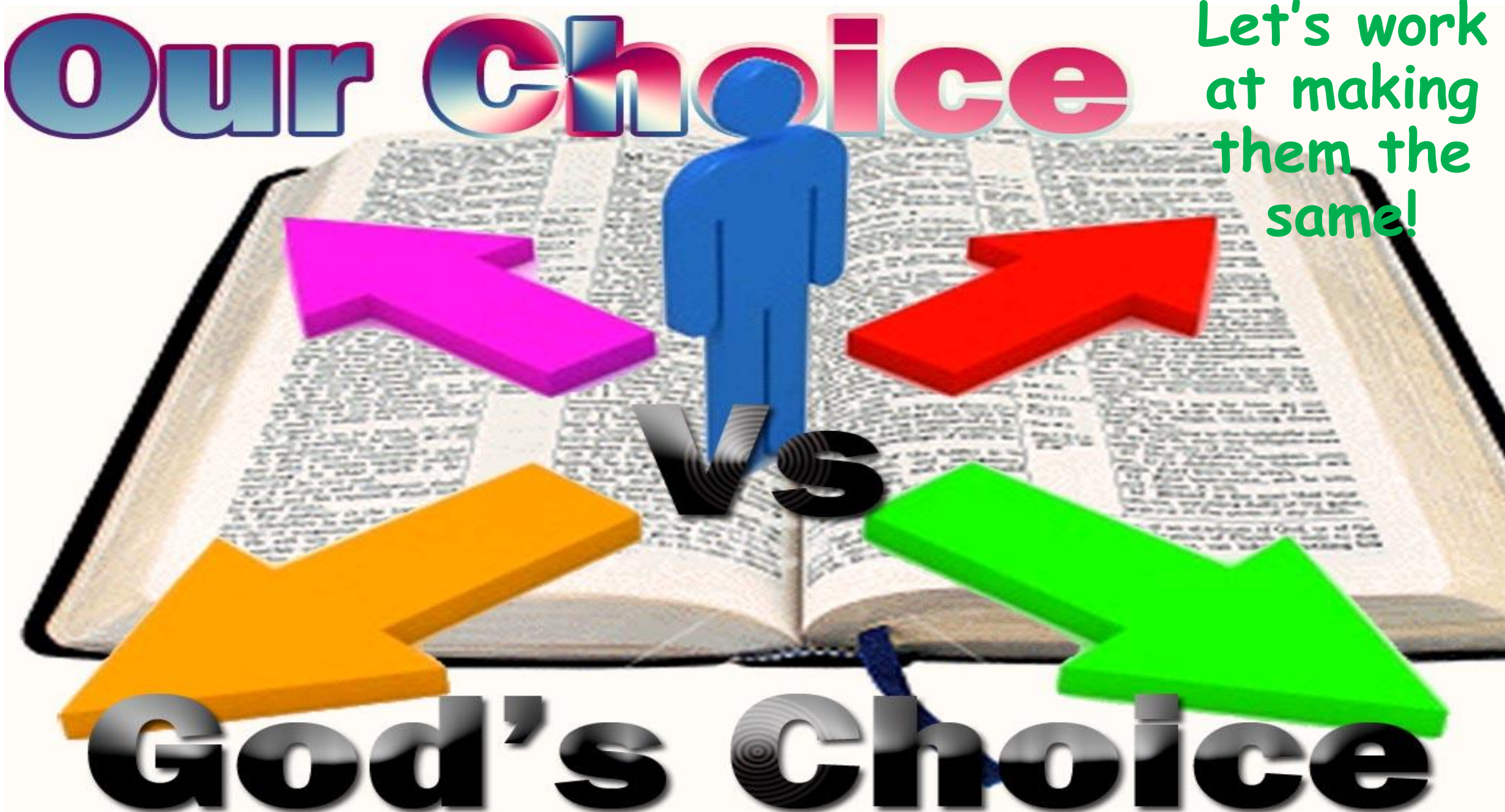


Our Choice

Let's work
at making
them the
same!

vs

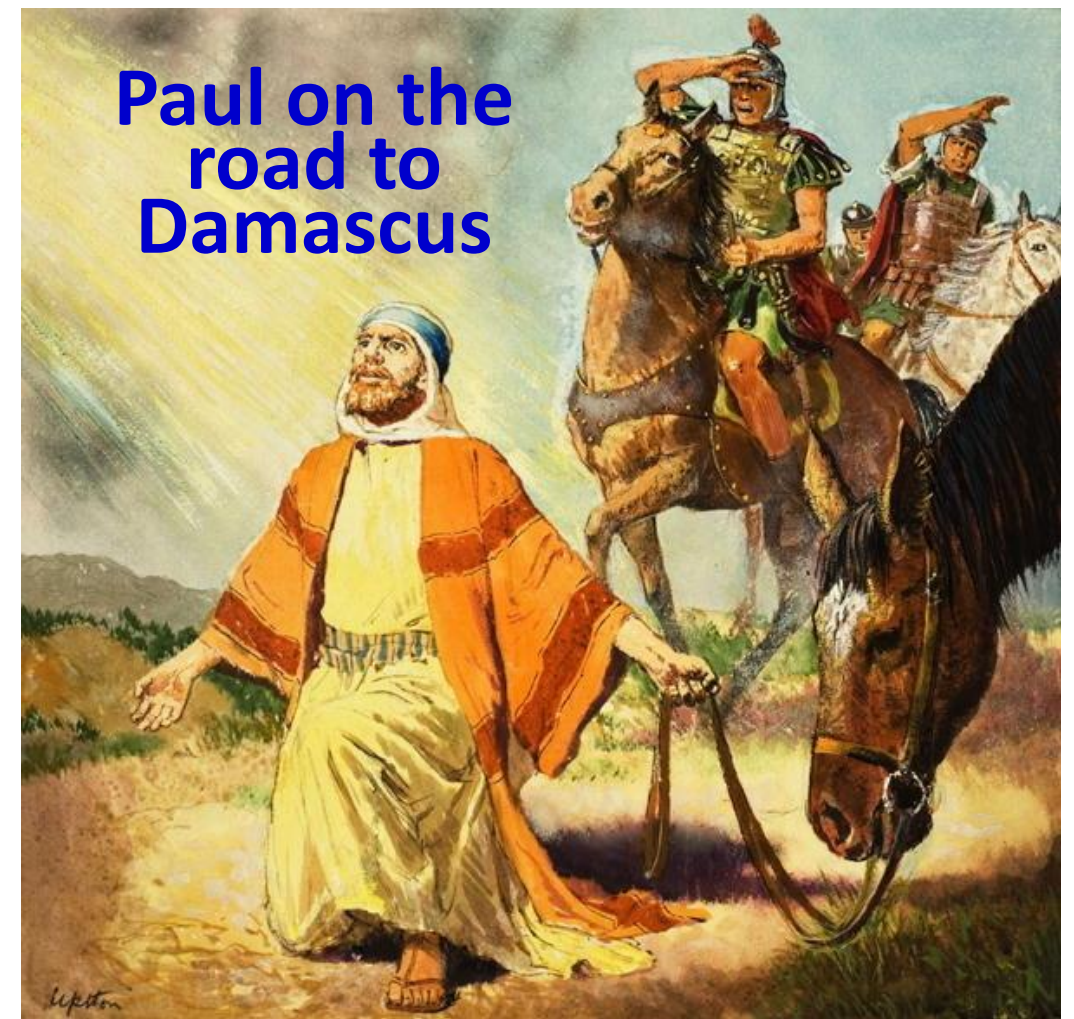
God's Choice



God's Election of His Family



Abraham & Isaac Hagar & Ishmael



It's His Family
and His choice



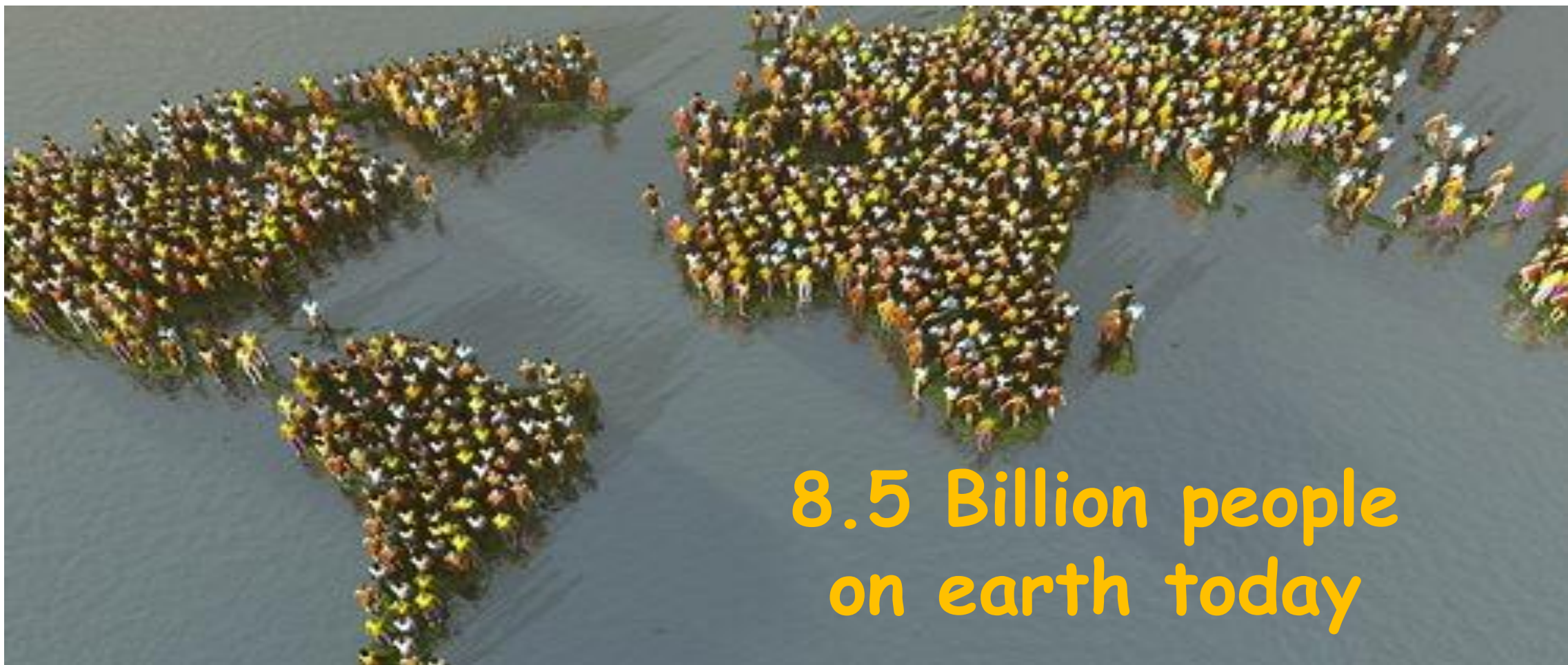
- This is NOT about who is accepted at the judgment seat of Christ
- It is about who has the opportunity to join God's family now and are responsible to the judgment seat

How does God get us to think outside
the cultural box we grew up in?



He brings
experiences and
troubles into our
lives that force
us to look for
another way

God has lots of choices today!

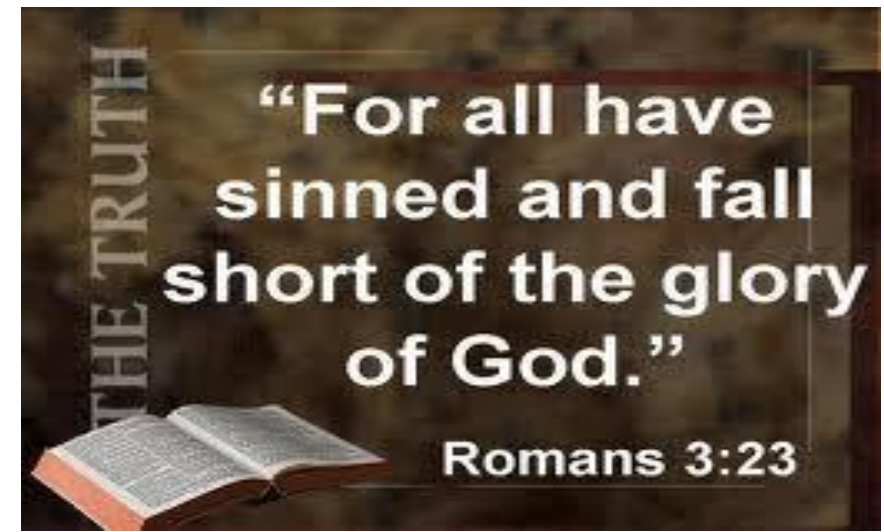


8.5 Billion people
on earth today

Does everyone get the same
opportunity to join God's family?

God's Election is totally His Right – it's God's righteousness

- **Basis: Everyone has sinned** and fallen short of God's glory (Rom 3)
- **No one deserves to be saved** – it's God's gift (Rom 5)
 - a promise he made to Abraham (Rom 4)
- **Without God's intervention** no one would make it
- **Very difficult to save any** – angels are extremely involved every moment to guide and save



God can pick and choose who He wants to invite to His family

God has not intended
for everyone to have
the same opportunities



It's God's family
and so He
chooses who he
wants to invite

Most of the people on earth today have
never heard nor understood the Gospel



That doesn't
mean they are
not "good soil"

8.5 Billion people on earth today
Most have been left out for now!
Many will be called when Jesus comes

Billions will respond in God's Kingdom

Jesus spoke in Parables - hard to understand!

Matthew 13:10-15

10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

11 He answered and said to them, "Because **it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven**, but to them it has not been given. 12 For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. 13 **Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.** 14 And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says:

'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; 15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.'

Parables were not clear & hard to understand.

Jesus did not intend for these Jews to understand!

God's choices in the Past

- From Adam, tried working with everyone.
- Then chose Noah & some of his descendants
- Chose Abraham & some of his descendants
- Chose Isaac & some of his descendants
- Chose Israel in Egypt & some of their descendants
- Chose Paul to carry the gospel to Gentiles
 - Paul understood God's election because of his past
- Chose Gentiles throughout the world & some of their descendants & friends



God has chosen you too!

God's Election

In Romans 9-11 Paul gives us the best exposition of God's election found anywhere in the Bible

It's God's choice, so no flesh will glory in God's presence!

Paul had to explain how God could have worked mainly with Jews for so many years, and then switched to calling mainly Gentiles



Paul's OT examples

Why did God allow Abraham to have two sons by two different women (Hagar & Sarah), and then make sure Isaac had twins by Rebekah?

Without Paul's NT commentary we may never have known!

Paul had great sorrow for Israelites

Romans 9:1-5

I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 **that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.** 3 **For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh,** 4 **who are Israelites,** to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; 5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God [*“God blessed forever” (NASB)*]. Amen.

Israel had the covenant, promises, Law

Not all of Abraham's offspring are children of Abraham by Faith

Romans 9:6-8

6 But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect [God's plan has not failed!]. **For they are not all Israel who are of Israel,**

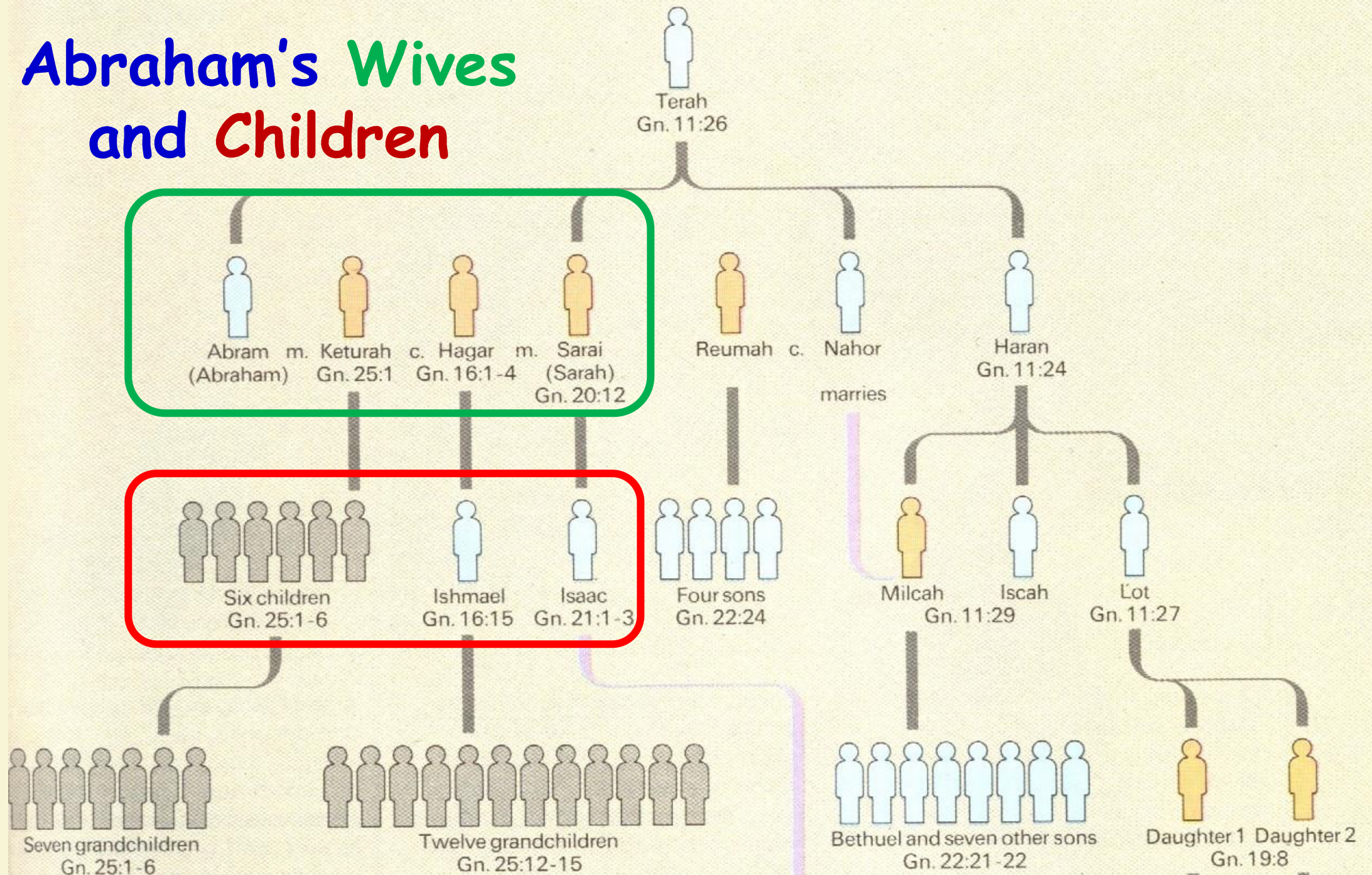
7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called."

8 That is, those who are the **children of the flesh**, these are not the children of God; but the **children of the promise** are counted as the seed.

So far: Not all of Abraham's children are God's children



Abraham's Wives and Children



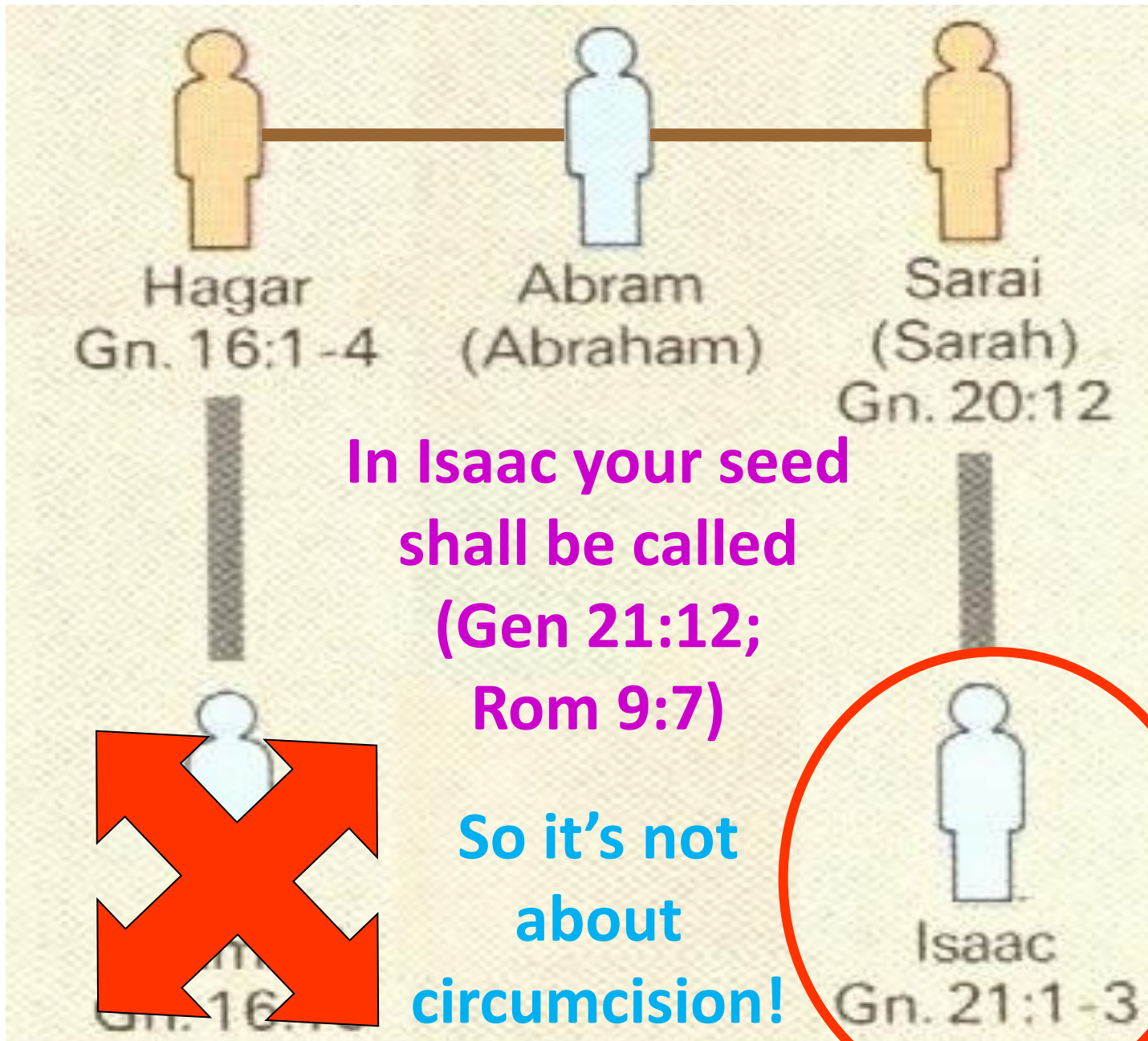
God's Election

One man,
two women,
(Hagar was a
bondswoman)

God doesn't call
Ishmael Abraham's
son (Gen 21:11-14)

Which one was
circumcised?

BOTH!



God did not call Ishmael because of how he was conceived

Romans 9:9

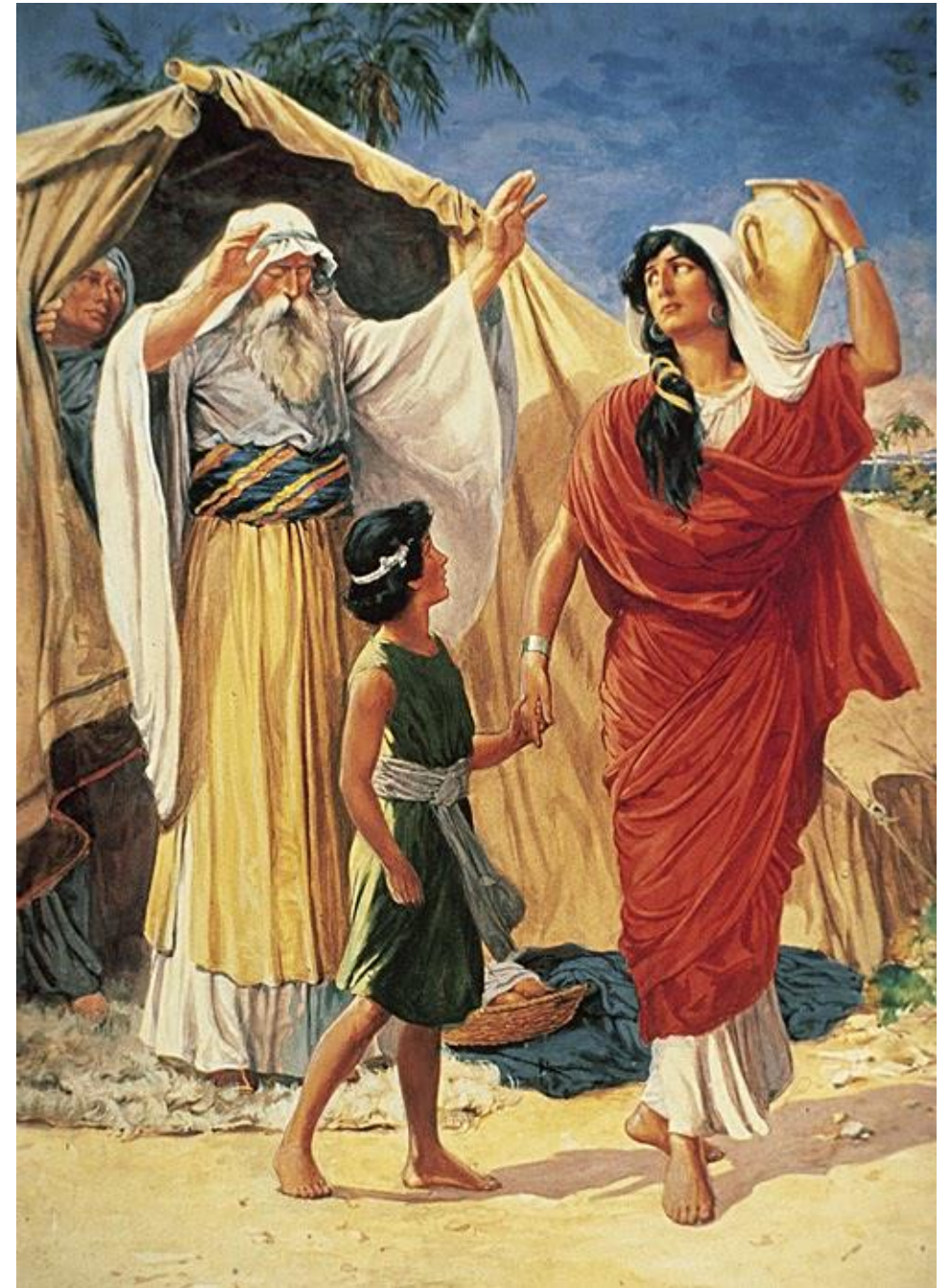
9 For this is the word of **promise**: "At this time **I will come** and Sarah shall have a son."

It's all of God! It's His election! His Choice! God did not choose Isaac just because he was Abraham's son! Isaac was God's miracle child.

"Take now your son, **your only son**, whom you love, Isaac (Gen 22:2)

The Jews thought God
rejected Ishmael
because he was the
son of a slave

Paul tries to get them to
realize that God rejected
Ishmael because he was
born of a plan conceived by
humans - not by God's
miraculous promise!



Basis for God's choice - His election

Romans 9:10-13

10 And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by **one man**, even by our father Isaac

11 **(for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls),**

12 it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger."

13 As it is written, "**Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.**"

**God made His choice before the kids
had done anything good or evil!**

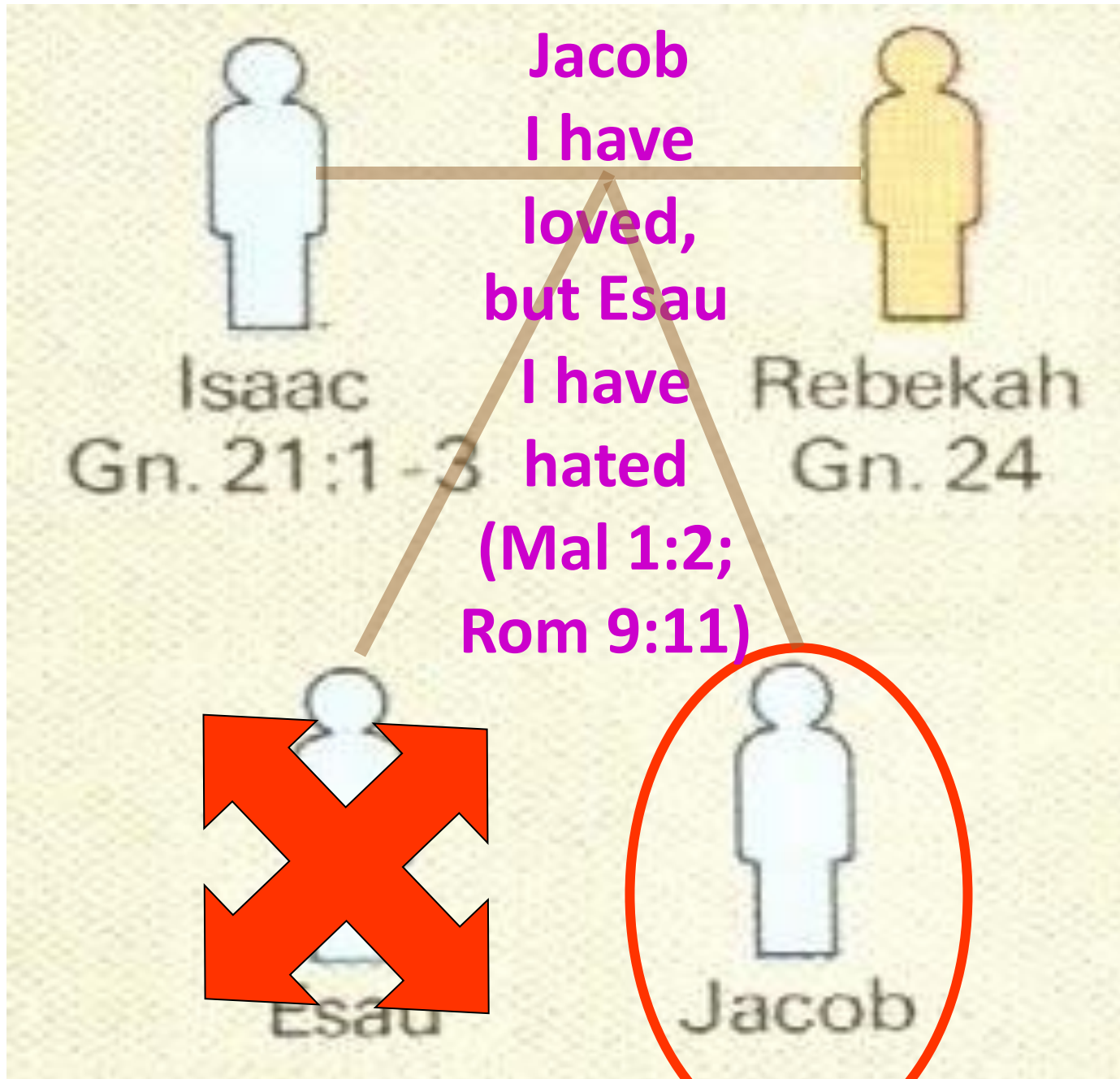
God's Election

One man, one wife

Two boys born at the same time!

God made his selection before they had done anything!

His selection involved 2 nations! Not just 2 boys! (Malachi 1:2-3)



If you think God chose Jacob because of God's foreknowledge, you make a joke of Paul's logical reasoning

Jacob was NOT a better person than Esau, but God worked with him and turned him into a child of God



God's Election: He's the Potter



8.5 Billion people
on earth today

What if God decides to only work
with the 500 million people in
South America? Is that fair?
Remember Abraham!

The Key: if God didn't intervene to save people,
no one would be saved! (Read Rom 1-3 before Rom 9)

How God's Election works

Not drawn
to scale!

All people alive

Those who God could work with

Those God calls (He opens their eyes)

Those chosen or justified
(they respond by free will)

Those glorified
(remain faithful to the end)

How can God do that? Is it Fair? (14)

Paul gives Bible proof! (Ex 33)

- Moses wanted everyone in the whole nation forgiven: “this nation is your people” (33:13)
- God says to Moses “for **you** have found grace in my sight, and I know **you** by name” (Ex 33:17)
- God will have mercy **on whom He chooses to show mercy** (Ex 33:19)
- God, when speaking to Moses, refers to the nation now as “**your people**” (Ex 34:10)
- God pardoned the nation, but did not forgive most individuals in the community! *Moses changed the pathway, but not the end result.*



It's not of him who wills (man's desire), or him who runs (man's effort), but God who shows mercy (9:16)

**Abraham willed Ishmael, Isaac willed Esau,
Moses willed his whole nation, but God chose!**

God used Pharaoh to show His power & declare His Name (9:17)



- **God used Pharaoh to show God's power** and demonstrate God's salvation
- **Pharaoh had a hard heart towards Israel all along** (Ex 8:15) – Angels made sure he rose to power at the right time.
- **God hardened Pharaoh's heart** – encouraged him to do what Pharaoh wanted to do (Ex 9:12)
 - God didn't make Pharaoh evil
 - Pharaoh was influenced by his counselors (Ex 14:5)

God will have mercy on whom He wills, and harden whom He wills (18)

**Don't
FORGET!**



Not ours!

It's GOD'S Family!



Implications for our children

- **Always pray for them,** that God will choose to include them in His family
- **Do everything you can to teach them God's ways,** but also realize that it's God's choice
- **If they do choose God's family,** thank God and appreciate what He has done for them
- **Never give up!** God sometimes waits till later in life to open the eyes of our children

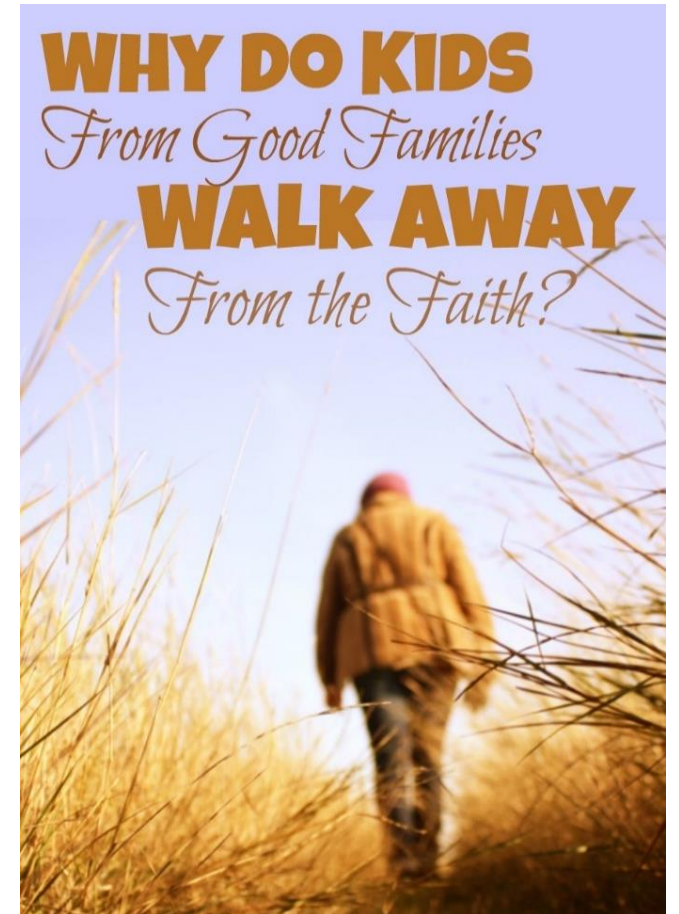


Remember Abraham's & Isaac's families!

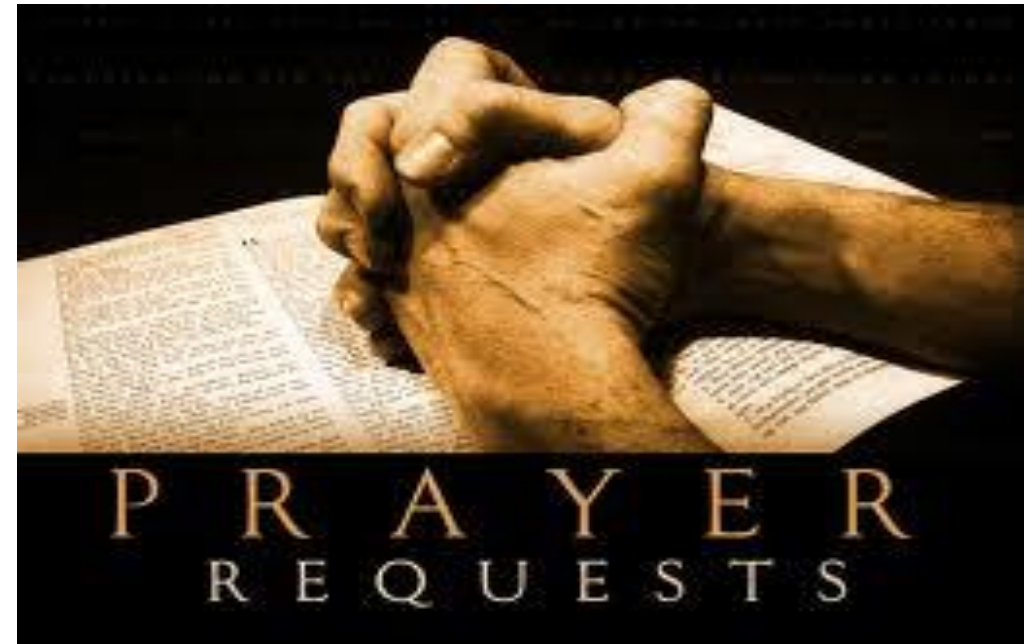
Brings some peace to those whose children have not all accepted God's Truth

- Abraham pleaded for Ishmael
- Isaac loved Esau & wanted him included
- David's family was a disaster
- God has to remind every generation that it's His family and He will call who He wants

**This is not the same as Cain & Abel.
God tried to work with them both!**



Pray for your family,
ecclesia and friends!



Ask God to graciously
include them in His election!



Not about Man's will

John 1:11-13

11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. 12 But as many as received Him, to them **He gave the right to become children of God**, to those who believe in His name: 13 **who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.**

Being born again or born from above is about being born of the will of God

God's Election - It's His choice

Luke 10:21-22

21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and **revealed them to babes**. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.

22 All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and **the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him**."

God has given Jesus the authority to choose

God's Election - It's His choice

John 6:37, 44, 65

37 **All that the Father gives Me will come to Me**, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

44 **No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him**; and I will raise him up at the last day.

65 And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that **no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.**"

It's not up to us to make someone believe

God's Election - It's His choice

John 15:16

16 **You did not choose Me, but I chose you** and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

It's clear in the lives of the Apostles & Paul himself that Jesus specifically chose and called them!

Jesus chose Judas, but he didn't make it

God makes the call

Acts 2:39

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, **as many as the Lord our God will call.**"

**God's promise is only available to
those who He chooses to call**

God's Election - It's His choice

Acts 16:11-15

13 And on the Sabbath day (in Philippi) we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there. 14 Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. **The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.** 15 And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us.

Until God opens, a veil lies over our minds

God calls & then enlightens

Ephesians 1:16-18 (ESV)

16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, **may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you,** what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

Without God's influence we would end up like unenlightened Paul as a Judaiser

God's Election - It's His choice

Luke 24:33-46 (NASB)

44 Now He (Jesus) said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." 45 **Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,** 46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day,

It's up to God who He invites to His Family

God's Election - It's His choice

Ephesians 1:3-6

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

4 **just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world,** that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

5 **having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,**

6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

God chose His family members before creation!

God's Election - It's His choice

Romans 8:28-30

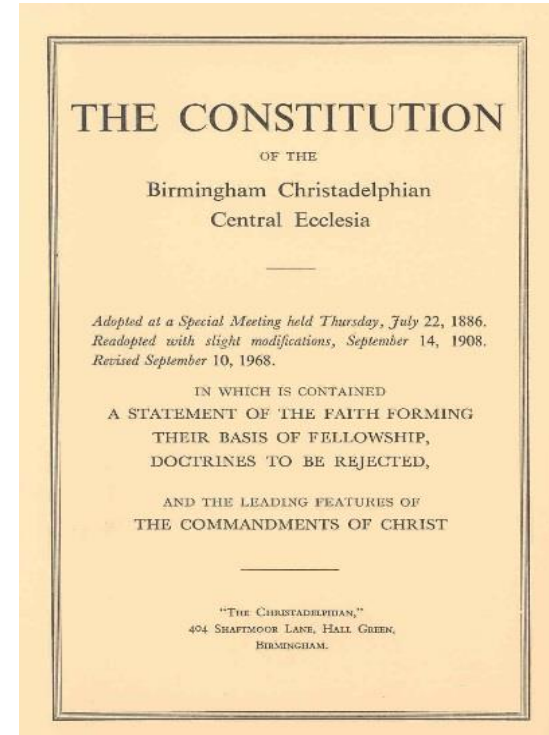
28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, **to those who are the called according to His purpose.** 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 **Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.**

He calls those who He chooses to include

Clause 24 of our BASF

24. That at the appearing of Christ prior to the establishment of the Kingdom, the responsible (namely, those who know the revealed will of God, **and have been called upon to submit to it**), dead and living – obedient and disobedient -- will be summoned before his judgment seat "to be judged according to their works," and "receive in body according to what they have done, whether it be good or bad." [2 Cor. 5:10](#); [2 Tim. 4:1](#); [Rom. 2:5-6, 16](#); [14:10-12](#); [1 Cor. 4:5](#); [Rev. 11:18](#).

We sometimes forget the essential part "and have been called upon to submit to it" or as Paul says "those who are called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28)



Don't make this common Jewish mistake!



"The sole purpose of non-Jews is to serve Jews. Goyim were born only to serve us. They have no place in the world - only

- **They believed they were God's special people** because they were better people than the Gentiles
- **They came to believe that they were the only people worth saving,** or that could be saved, because they were Abraham's children according to the flesh

They failed to understand that God considers Abraham's real children those who have his faith!