

Election

The word *election* simply means "to be chosen." In Scripture, it refers to God's choice of people for a special relationship and purpose. Throughout the Bible, election is less about privilege and more about responsibility. Those whom God chooses are called to live in a way that reflects God's love and faithfulness.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, election is most often associated with the people of Israel. God chose Israel to be his covenant people and to be a light to the nations. This choice was not based on Israel's power or greatness, but on God's love and faithfulness. The prophets continually reminded the people that being chosen was not enough; they were also called to live faithfully according to God's covenant. Over time, the focus shifted from the nation as a whole to those who remained faithful to God, even in times of hardship, exile, and persecution.

In the New Testament, the understanding of election expands. The chosen people of God are no longer identified solely with the nation of Israel but with all who respond to God's call through Jesus Christ. St. Peter describes Christians as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9). Through Baptism, believers become part of God's people and share in Christ's mission.

The Church teaches that Christians are called the elect for two reasons. First, God has freely chosen them through his grace. Faith is always a gift before it is a response. Second, Christians are called to live lives worthy of that gift. Being chosen by God is not something to boast about; it is a call to discipleship, service, and holiness. Catholics do not understand election as meaning that God chooses some people for salvation while excluding others. Rather, the Church teaches that God desires all people to be saved and continually invites everyone into a relationship with him. The mystery of election reminds us that God always takes the first step. He calls us, loves us, and offers us his grace long before we are aware of it.

When Jesus says, "Many are called, but few are chosen," he reminds us that God's invitation requires a response. Election is not simply about receiving an invitation; it is about accepting it and allowing our lives to be transformed by it. Ultimately, the doctrine of election reminds us that our faith begins with God's initiative. Before we ever reached out to God, God reached out to us. Our task is to respond to that call with faith, gratitude, and a commitment to live as disciples of Jesus Christ.