

THE SABBATH SCOOP

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Many Are Called but Few Are Chosen

Why are many called and few chosen? What's the difference between 'called' and 'chosen'?

By Gregory Dullum

In Mat. 20:16, Jesus Christ said, "For many are called but few are chosen."

Have you ever wondered what Christ meant when He said that? Did He *really* mean what He said? Are *WE* called? Are *WE* chosen? Are *we* sure? What's the difference between being CALLED and being CHOSEN?

To begin to answer these questions, let's look to the winter Olympics. Not the Olympics going on this month in Vancouver, British Columbia. Let's go back 30 years to the winter Olympics of 1980, when the U.S. hockey team shocked the world by beating the powerful Russian team and going on to win the gold medal for the first time in 20 years.

Herb Brooks Chooses Team

In July 1979, the Amateur Hockey Association put out a call to all amateur hockey players in the country to come to Colorado Springs, Colorado. MANY were called. They came from all over the country to skate for seven days and have a chance of being chosen for the U.S. Olympic team.

The Disney movie *Miracle* accurately tells the story of the 1980 Olympic hockey team. In one scene, the amateur hockey players are skating on the ice, showing off their stuff. Assistant Coach Craig Patrick joins Coach Herb Brooks in the press box, overlooking the ice. It's the *first day* of practice. After a few minutes, Herb gives Craig a piece of paper.

"What's this?" Craig asks.

"It's my team."

Craig looks at the list of 26 names. He glances out onto the ice at the many more skaters. He says, "You're missing some of the best players."

Herb replies, "I'm not looking for the best players, Craig. I'm looking for the right ones."

MANY amateur players were called



Photo courtesy of Bruce Bennett Studios, Inc.

As the U.S. Olympic hockey team was being put together for the 1980 Olympics, the call went out across the nation for amateur players to try out. Many answered the call. But just 20 were chosen to play on the team.

to Colorado Springs to try out for the Olympic team. But only a FEW were chosen. Only 26 were chosen to be on the team. And that number had to be pared down to 20 before the Olympics started.

God's Team

God is putting together a TEAM—not a *hockey* team but a *management* team. We, in the Church of God, are the FIRST-FRUITs of God's kingdom (Rom. 16:5, 1 Cor. 16:5, James 1:18, Rev. 14:14). We will be kings and priests (Rev. 1:6, 5:18). We will be part of the *management* TEAM of God's kingdom. Is God missing some of the best players? Did He pick the BEST—the wisest and noblest—for his team? Or did He choose the RIGHT ones?

"For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things that are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in his pres-

ence" (1 Cor 1:26-29).

Why Certain Ones Chosen

God chose us not because we are the BEST but because we are RIGHT for the job He has planned for us.

Herb Brooks needed a team that would *fit well together* and have a precision passing game—*FAR different* from the style of hockey these kids were used to playing. They had to learn a *completely new style of playing* hockey in order to beat the great European and Russian teams in the Olympics.

The Bible tells us in Eph. 4:16 we, too, are part of a body of people that is "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies." And we must learn, NOT a new way of playing hockey, but a *new way of living* life!

How did Herb Brooks pick his hockey team that would be fitly joined together on the first day of a seven-day tryout? He was asked this question when Walter Bush, a member of the Olympic Committee, approached him in the parking lot outside the skating arena.

Walter says, "We've got a problem here, Herb."

"What's that?"

"I've got a room full of people up there who want to have a say in this process and you've already picked the team. There's a right way to do this kind of thing and this is not it."

"You've got a job to do and if I were in your shoes, I'd probably be saying the same thing," Herb responds.

"All right. Let's go upstairs and help piece together a hockey team. All of us together."

"Walter, that's just not going to happen."

"Do you realize what the AHA went through to put this thing together? The best amateur hockey players in the coun-

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try on the ice for a week? Not just one day! "I didn't ask for that because I already know my team," states Herb.

"How do you know your team?" Walter asks. "Those kids haven't been on the ice for what? Maybe a couple of hours."

"Walter, every one of those boys was chosen for a specific reason. I've studied film on each and every one of those boys. I've seen 'em. I've watched 'em. And I've coached a lot of them. The ones I haven't, I've spoken with their coaches and scouts in the area. Now I know what I need to compete and the team I've chosen is it."

Did God study us before we were called?

"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. 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. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified" (Rom. 8:28-30, emphasis added).

Eight Steps

There are eight steps in our relationship with God. Rev. 17:14 says those who are with Christ at his coming are 1) called, 2) chosen, and 3) faithful. These are three separate steps! In Rom. 8:28-30, we read about four additional steps: 4) foreknew, 5) predestined, 6) justified, and 7) glorified.

In 2 Peter 3:9, God tells us that He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to *repentance*. Repentance is an eighth step.

Now let's put these eight steps into chronological order. When we do this, we will understand where being CALLED and being CHOSEN fit in the *whole scheme* of OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

1. Foreknew

The first thing that happened is God FOREKNEW us. He knew we would exist *before we were born*. God told Jeremiah, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you" (Jer. 1:5) God knew EACH ONE OF US would exist before we were born.

2. Predestined

God PREDESTINED that *we would be called* into his Church. What was predestined was the OPPORTUNITY to be called. John 1:12 tells us, "As many as received Him, to them He gave the right [or authority or privilege] to *become* children of God, even

to those who believe in His name." This is a guarantee of opportunity, not a guarantee of success. We are NOT predestined to SUCCEED. We are creatures of choice. We can choose whether to succeed or fail, just as a hockey player can choose not to play, or not to give 100 percent, and could be cut from the team.

3. Called

When God calls us, we become CONVINCED that the Church of God is the one true church. That call can come at any age. I was convinced at age 9. Our children, who attend church with us, are called!

Many are called, MANY come in contact with the Church of God and realize *it is the true church*. But many don't follow through, do they? They don't commit. Something happens to the many.

Jesus Christ explained what happens in the parable of the sower.

"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received the seed by the wayside. But he who received the seed on the stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. Now he who received the seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. But he who receives the seed on good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty" (Mat 13:18-23).

It is NOT *enough* to be called. There are more steps to take!

4. Repentance

In order to be one of those whose seed falls on good ground and bears fruit, *we must make changes* in our lives. The first thing we must do, after being called, is to repent. Repentance is the fourth item on our list.

On that day of Pentecost A.D. 31, when the Church of God began, many were called by God to be part of his church. Notice what they ask: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Peter answers, "Repent" (v. 38).

5. Justified

Justified means to be made right with God. When do we become justified?

Rom. 5:9 tells us we are justified by the

blood of Christ. When does that happen? When we accept Christ's sacrifice for our sins. That happens at baptism.

In Acts 2:38 we are told to be baptized "for the remission [forgiveness] of sins."

At baptism, Christ's blood washes away our sins (1 Cor. 6:11, Rev. 1:5). Acts 2:38 says we must first repent and then become baptized. After we come up out of the water, we are a new person. We are clean. We are justified.

6. Chosen

What happens next? We have hands laid upon us and we are given God's holy spirit (Acts 2:38).

God's Spirit SEALS us (Eph. 1:13, 4:30, 2 Cor. 1:22). When we receive his spirit, we become God's people. We are CHOSEN at this point.

MANY are *called* but FEW are *chosen*. Of the many people God's church reaches with the Gospel message—they receive a *call*—FEW come to the point of baptism and receiving God's spirit. Few are chosen by God to be part of the firstfruits.

WHY are *few chosen*? Because God isn't choosing everyone *at this time*. He is forming a management team—the firstfruits of the kingdom. Firstfruits are a very small sampling of a huge harvest. Other people will be chosen *later*, just as a great harvest of fruit, vegetables or grain follows the picking of the firstfruits of that crop!

7. Faithful

Once we are chosen by God, we must remain faithful until the end (Luke 12:42, 19:17; 1 Cor. 4:2, Rev. 2:10). This is a lifelong process.

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February's Five Fallacious Festivals

Five of this world's holidays arrive in February—and all are tied to the worship of pagan gods!

by Gregory Dullum

February is an action-packed month on the pagan calendar!

Groundhog Day

The month begins with Groundhog Day on Feb. 2. This minor holiday today was a *major* pagan celebration!



"In central and northern Europe, the natural year is measured by eight major festival days. These days are the equinoxes and solstices of the sun's year and the four cross-quarter days that come between them" (*The Pagan Book of Days* by Nigel Pennick, 1992, p. 13). Two of these days became Christmas (winter solstice) and Easter (spring equinox).

The four days between the solstices and equinoxes "were the most important festivals of the Druids, held on fixed dates in February, May, August and November" (Pennick, p. 14). February's date was Groundhog Day, Feb. 2.

The Roman Catholic Church named this day "Candlemas Day." Pope Innocent XII openly admitted it came from paganism in a sermon when he said, "Why do we in this feast carry candles? Because the Gentiles dedicated the month of February to the infernal gods, and as at the beginning of it Pluto stole Proserpine, and her mother Ceres sought her in the night with lighted candles, so they, at the beginning of this month, walked about the city with lighted candles. Because the holy fathers could not extirpate this custom, they ordained that Christians should carry candles in honor of the Blessed Virgin; and thus what was done before in the honor of Ceres is now done to honor the Virgin" (*Curiosities of Popular Customs* by William S. Walsh, 1925, pp. 168-169).

Ceres was the goddess of corn, flowers and harvest. The pagans thought weather on this day, connected with Ceres, had a bearing on their harvest!

Germans brought to America a superstition about a badger seeing the sun on this day and climbing back into his hole. Since badgers are not as common in America as they are in Germany, the fable has been transferred to the woodchuck or groundhog (Walsh, p. 171).

Valentine's Day

Less than a fortnight later comes Valentine's Day on Feb. 14. Valentine's Day is

not an innocent day to show love and affection. It is a pagan day of worship.

"St. Valentine's Day is a festival of love that amalgamates the pagan traditions of Rome and northern Europe. It is also dedicated to the Norse deity Vali, the archer god, son of Odin, and to Juno Februa, goddess of love" (Pennick, p. 42).

Vali is the Norse equivalent of Tammuz, son of Semaramis (Juno), wife of Nimrod (Odin). This archer god is most likely the source of the cute Valentine Cupid.

"The Roman Festival of Lupercalia, held in the middle of February, was a romantic occasion and probably the origin of St. Valentine's Day.... In some Roman eras, 'licentious games' were also part of the festivities (*The Illuminated Book of Days*, Kay & Marshall Lee, eds., 1979, p. 209).

Although named for Roman Catholic saints, the origin of Valentine's Day has NO connection with the lives of those saints ("Valentine, Saint, *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1956, Vol. 17, p. 8422). The Catholic Church attached their names to a pagan celebration in an attempt to make it appear Christian.

Mardi Gras

Another festival known for raucous, licentious behavior is Mardi Gras, which falls two days later, on Feb. 16.

Mardi Gras is the conclusion of a 40-day festival called Carnival, which is observed in Roman Catholic countries. Carnival begins on Jan. 6, which once was considered the winter solstice and was celebrated as the birthday of Nimrod.

Nimrod was a "mighty hunter before [in place of] the LORD" (Gen. 10:8-9). He started the Babylonian Mystery Religion, upon which most false religions are based.

Carnival was a wild, 40-day *feast* honoring the birth of Nimrod. The final day of this feast became Mardi Gras. It was followed immediately by Ash Wednesday, the beginning of a 40-day *fast* called Lent. Lent was considered a time of solemn, strict adherence to Catholic laws. Mardi Gras, the final day of Carnival, became the opposite of Lent: a time when "anything goes."



Ash Wednesday

Feb. 17 is Ash Wednesday, when Catholics, Lutherans and Anglicans can be seen displaying on their foreheads an ashen cross, or letter "†." The marking is supposed to be a sign of penitence; the cross representing Christ's crucifixion. There is NO instruction in the Bible to do such a thing!

Sometimes the ashes come from burnt palms from the previous year's Palm Sunday. This is NOT Biblical; Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem was most likely on a Friday evening after sunset. Palm Sunday is a fabrication originating in sun worship. The cross is a symbol used by pagans to worship Tammuz, son of Nimrod (it was the first letter of his name).



Lent

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent, a 40-day "fast" that lasts until Easter. Believers give up something they like for those 40 days, such as chocolate or soda pop.

Lent isn't commanded in the Bible. Actually, it's condemned. Its origins go back to when pagans mourned for Tammuz.

"In the religious literature of Babylonia Tammuz appears as the youthful spouse or lover of Ishtar, the great mother goddess, the embodiment of the reproductive energies of nature.... [E]very year Tammuz is believed to die, passing away from the cheerful earth to the gloomy subterranean world...."

"Laments for the departed Tammuz are contained in several Babylonian hymns, which liken him to plants that quickly fade...." (*Adonis, Attis, Osiris: Studies in the History of Oriental Religion* by Sir James Gregory Frazer, 1961, pp. 6, 8-9).

God condemns mourning for Tammuz in a vision to Ezekiel: "So he brought me to the door of the north gate of the LORD's house; and to my dismay, women were sitting there weeping for Tammuz. Then He said to me, 'Have you seen this, O son of man? Turn again, and you will see greater abominations than these'" (Ezek. 8:14-15).

The Bible tells us not to use pagan practices to worship the true God (Deut. 12:28-32; Rev. 18:4; 2 Cor. 6:14-18).



College Letters:

Lessons of Life Learned at Ambassador College

Exercising helps you feel better. Our growth may not be seen by others.

[Editor's note: During the summer of 1975, while I was home in Minnesota, I received the following correspondence.]

Undated

Hi! Our flight was really great—a little bumpy but we survived! We had a 2-hr. stop-over in Chicago and called my parents. Was so great to hear from them. My dad is a deacon now. He's really happy about that.

Germany is *so* beautiful. It is a very rich country. All the fields are so green. The people all live in small villages grouped & work in the fields around it. They keep everything so *neat* & clean. There is hardly any trash along the highways even. The women dress more modern than Am. women even. Most are thin & wear quite a bit of make-up. The prices seem a bit higher for food, but we all are getting along fine. Classes start Monday and so does my job. We'll sure have a busy summer.

Try and write if you can & keep in touch with Marie more 'cause she'll need the letters in Pasadena. Take care!

Patrice [Backfish]

Postmarked June 13, 1975

Dear Greg,

Well, how's my old friend doing? I've taken up exercising again, it makes a lot of difference in how I feel. While on the subject of exercise, would you excuse me while I do just that before the gym is backed up?

I'm back, that felt good. I'm in the student center right now waiting for my cheeseburger, since I don't have it too much at home. Oh I forgot, I haven't told you that I moved off campus on May 21. You might have heard of the place—off campus dorm in Del Mar. I might be moving again in a month or so.

Greg, we should get together and form our own little group, let me see, what shall we call it? How about the unfortunate ones or we have had enough group? Well, anyway, to make a short story long, my bike was stolen yesterday from where I lock it while I work. I can't even use the loss for tax purposes.

Maybe I'll buy a car now. Hope to in the near future.... maybe I can swing up

to your place, maybe.

How are you enjoying your work? I'm still working in the Radio Dept. Sunday our department is going to Catalina all expenses paid and a steak dinner award afterwards. Not bad.

How do you like the card? By the time you get this card, Grant will be married off. Poor guy. I tried to let him see the light but it was too late.

Take it easy, Greg. Have you heard from M.G. [Mystery Girl]? Miss her? Don't work too hard.

Ex-R.A.

Santana

July 6, 1975

Hi, Greg!

Say, I bet you've given up on hearing from me, haven't you? Man, I'm terribly sorry that it's taken me over a month to sit down and answer your letter. This isn't at all like me. Thanks a lot for writing. You and your gimmicks—cards, jokes (quote, unquote), the works! Sorry this couldn't be a card.

Well, it's July already, and that leaves just a few more weeks to the end of this lousy summer. I'm beginning to wish I had stayed in Pasadena for, if no other reason, financial stability. I left a pretty good job to come home, remember me telling you that? I'm more in a struggle to make ends meet now than I was at AC. I have a job working on building maintenance like last summer but that hardly provides the bare minimum amount of cash to get me anywhere.

But the big problem I have is living at home. My sister and brother have changed, and they have turned hostile toward me, especially my brother. That gets me down. And my Dad and Mom—it seems I can't relate to them because they don't understand me. No one at home has seen any change in me, and I think I've changed somewhat from last year. But being at home depresses me. It also makes me lazy. This is how it was last summer. But once at AC I was happy. So I guess one reason why I go to AC is to escape from home. It's sad that's how it is. It's not being back in Dayton that gets me down, it's living at home with the family.

Well, enough of depressing news! I have been busy this summer. Oh, incidentally,

the plane trip home was nice. On the night flight the stewards were real "sweet" guys. Jeff Dobbek and I found them amusing if not appalling. I wrote my log of the day (yep, I still do that) while on the flight. I was sitting beside a girl whom Jeff wished he was sitting beside, anyway, she asked me what I was writing and I told her. On the day flight the stewardesses were very nice. We were served breakfast. Jeff and I got off at the Dayton Municipal Airport and met our families walking down the hall toward us.

After picking up my luggage, Dad drove us [our family] to get some ice cream to eat when we got home. I got in and saw that we have new furniture in the living room and all the old furniture is in the basement.

We went to services in the afternoon. I saw a lot of my old friends, also my minister. We went to Cincinnati early next morning for Pentecost. Nothing spectacular—after services we stopped to eat at a steak house then came home. Home again.

My car was in Springfield, Ohio, being worked on when I came home. So that next Sunday Dad and I drove out to pick it up. And that's been half of my troubles this summer, that car. To tell about all of them briefly would fill about three pages. It has just come down off the jacks after having been sitting for a month with no transmission! I'm not the only one who's glad my car is working again. I've been using Dad's, and at times that was an inconvenience. I put a radio in my car, now I have music when I travel.

I'm getting new glasses in a couple of weeks. They won't be the wire rims that I've been wanting, though. My doctor thinks that plastic frames are better for me. According to him, wire rims (1) would look bad with the thick lenses I need (2) would cost more than plastic frames, and (3) are going out of style (I don't *know* about that!). Anyway, I'm getting two pairs of glasses, one for normal use and another for sports so that what happened to my glasses this past year won't occur again.

On June 21 our family drove to Cleveland to visit our grandmother on my mother's side. She had gone to Cleveland from Arkansas, and all the relatives from surrounding nearby areas came to see her.

We stayed in Cleveland overnight and got home late the next night. My Dad had rented a '75 Oldsmobile with air conditioning to make the trip. It was nice.

Last Sunday our church teen club held a garage sale. It was more like a yard sale since there was so much merchandise. I bought some things there (records and books) as well as help set up, price items and sell them.

A radio personality was there, a talkmaster from station WAVI, Dayton's talk radio station. His name is Mark Scott. Mark has been friendly with our church for a long time. He used to be a member of the WWCG [Worldwide Church of God], working in the television studio in Pasadena, writing the script for Mr. GTA's TV programs. So he knew Mr. Armstrong personally; he also knew Norman Smith and Steve Szabo. And I know all this from talking to him at the garage sale.

We got into conversation when he noticed that I was wearing a shirt with "Ambassador College" on it. He asked me, "Do you go to Ambassador College?" and it went on from there. I told him I listen to his show all the time, which is true—his is perhaps the most interesting show on the station, it is to me, at least. He throws out Bible questions left and right. Although he isn't a member anymore, he keeps up with its doctrines and believes in it. So we talked about that. Oh yes, I told him about KAC [our campus radio station], and how I made it big as a DJ (ha!). It was nice to talk to a real live jenoowine DJ. I might even call him on his show sometimes. My mother has called WAVI twice, once to him.

This brings me up about to the present. Are you doing anything you like this summer (besides ogling the girls at Farrell's, I mean)? Looks like I won't get any dates this summer. There's absolutely no one for me to date, no one that I would care to date, at least. They're all too young. Hope you enjoyed (or will enjoy) your date with the girl you've been checking out who lives in North Minneapolis.

A couple here, engaged, in their early 20's, are getting married early in August, and they've asked me to play [flute] at their wedding. This will be the first time I have played at a wedding. Hope it goes okay.

Jeff Dobbek has bought a car to drive back to college in; he and I, along with another fellow who will be a freshman at AC this year, are getting together making our plans on splitting expenses and sharing in the driving. We plan to pick up Gary Richards on the way out there. So this will be a new experience for me; I've never driven long distances before. I've driven five different cars since I've been home, but all the time it's been around Dayton.

How about your plans on returning to

AC? I betcha you're flying again, right? Have you written anyone else from AC since you've been home? I sure haven't. I want to write Glen Williams and see how he is getting along.

My sister, Linda, says hi. When your letter came in, I wasn't there, so she got the envelope. She read what you had written on the envelope, and she passed it around to some visiting friends that had come. They all laughed. Greg, you're just too much.

Greg, again let me apologize for not having written sooner. I haven't been putting it off, there just hasn't been any time. I need your earnest prayers for me and my financial situation. I got another BEOG grant in the mail. So I have at least \$950⁰⁰ for next year. But that is just the grant; if I hadn't got that I would have *nothing* for next year! And I'm still paying on the first two loans I acquired last year. So please pray for me. And I'll be doing the same for you, and I look forward to seeing you again next year.

Sincerely yours,

Steven [Brooks]

P.S. I'm sorry to hear about what happened regarding M.G.!

July 14

Dear Greg,

Sorry it has taken us this long to answer your letter but you know how busy things get before and after a wedding. Everything went real well for us and the weather that day was made to order. Perhaps we'll send you a picture to remember us by.

I guess you're getting anxious to head back to college. You won't have too long to wait. Paul Krautmann is back here for two weeks. He brought our things back and is on his way to Puerto Rico and then British Guyana.

Grant has an uphill struggle finding a job but it appears that things are finally opening up for him (he's not the greatest letter writer either).

Coleen is being her own nasty self—her wedding is set for Sept. 7 so she won't be back to college.

I've been busy helping Mom around the house—cooking, cleaning, mending, etc. But I enjoy it. Also we've been busy in the garden—but this past weekend the weather has been rainy, otherwise we've had some real nice weather. Grant says he wants to be a farmer eventually—well, he's getting first hand experience!

Things are going well for us as far as the church area goes. They all like Grant except for a couple and that has nothing

Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS

The word *Carnival* comes from the Latin words for "goodbye to meat." As early as the Middle Ages a tradition developed that called for feasting prior to the 40-day period of fasting known as Lent. This became the Carnival.

Witerature

Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.

The Oregon Trail by Francis Parkman, 1994 (reprint of 1892 edition), Bison Book, pp. 284-285.

The Way of Peace...

"When we were both tired of this, I lay down by the side of a deep, clear pool, formed by the water of a spring. A shoal of little fishes of about a pin's length were playing in it, sporting together, as it seemed, very amiably; but on closer observation I saw they were engaged in cannibal warfare among themselves. Now and then one of the smallest would fall a victim, and immediately disappear down the maw of his conqueror..."

"'Soft-hearted philanthropists,' thought I, 'may sigh long for their peaceful millennium; for, from minnows to men, life is incessant war.'"

Isa. 2:4, 48:22, 59:8, Ezek. 13:16

Rom. 3:17

Quotable Quote

"This is the foundation of success nine times out of ten—having confidence in yourself and applying yourself with all your might to your work."

—Thomas A. Wilson

Memory Scripture

"And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all the work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made."

—Gen. 2:2-3

Called and Chosen

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8. Glorified

At Christ's return, we will be glorified—changed into spirit beings (Rom. 8:17, 1 Cor. 15:43, 51-54, Philip. 3:21, Col. 3:4).

Summary

Being called is NOT the FIRST step in our relationship with God. It might be the first one of which we are aware. However, *before* God called us, He *foreknew* us and *predestined* us. Then He called us.

Being called and chosen are NOT *the same thing*. We were *called* when we were convinced that God's church is the true church. After being called, we repented. Then we were justified. Only *when we received God's spirit* after baptism were we *chosen* by God.

WHY did God choose us? For the same reason Herb Brooks chose certain hockey players to be on the 1980 Olympic team: "I'm not looking for the best players, Craig. I'm looking for the right ones." We may not appear to be the *best* ones to be firstfruits of the Kingdom—we're not the wisest and noblest by this world's standards. But we're the *right* ones—we're willing to learn a new way of life that we'll teach to others in the kingdom.

It is an AWESOME calling we have received. 1 Cor. 1:26 says we should "consider" it—think about it, meditate on it. The fact that we have been chosen by God is a GREAT *honor* and *privilege*.

Now, let us *remain faithful* until the end, when at last, we'll be GLORIFIED.

College Letters

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to do with anything Grant's done (an old boyfriend & his parents). Grant plays bass in a group—guys from the church. They sound really good—especially since they have the bass. They call themselves the "Agents."

Too bad MG doesn't call. I guess you miss those long talks even if you didn't know who she was. Hey—have you heard from Santana? We haven't heard so much as a peep. Do you have his address?

Well, I guess I better go check on supper—Dad will be home soon & since it's rained he can't go directly to the field so we will eat when he gets home.

Take care & drop us a line again soon. Work hard & don't get too bored.

Love,
Jenny & Grant [Spong]!



Big Quakes Shake Haiti, California

"The largest earthquake to hit Haiti in more than 200 years rocked the Caribbean nation Tuesday [Jan. 12], collapsing a hospital where people screamed for help and heavily damaging other buildings. U.S. officials reported bodies lying in the streets and an aid official described 'total disaster and chaos.'

"Communications were widely disrupted, making it impossible to get a full picture of damage as powerful aftershocks shook a desperately poor country where many buildings are flimsy. Electricity was out in some places" (" 'Chaos' in Haiti after big earthquake" by Jonathan M. Katz, The Associated Press, *Southeast Missourian*, Jan. 13, 2010, p. 9A).

The 7.0-magnitude quake struck 10 miles southwest of the Haitian Capital, Port-au-Prince, at 4:53 p.m. local time Jan. 12. "Besides its strong magnitude, the earthquake's shallow depth of roughly 8.3 kilometers (5.2 miles) ensured that the densely populated capital would suffer violent shaking. Schools, hospitals, government buildings, aid centers, and homes collapsed. Authorities reported thousands were feared dead. Survivors scrambled to rescue trapped friends and family members without the benefits of electricity or phone service while more than 30 aftershocks rocked the area" (NASA's Earth Observatory Web site).

The Haiti quake followed a 6.5 tremor that struck northern California on Sabbath, Jan. 9.

"Residents of a Northern California county gingerly cleaned up Sunday after the area dodged a catastrophe, escaping a 6.5-magnitude earthquake with little more than bumps, cuts and broken glass....

"The quake's location—offshore, deep under the ocean and away from urban areas—helped the region escape relatively unscathed what could have been a major disaster. A quake of similar size—6.7 magnitude—killed 72 people and caused \$25 billion in damage in 1994 in the Los Angeles area" ("California dodges major quake damage" by Don Thompson, The Associated Press, *Southeast Missourian*, Jan. 11, 2010, p. 8A).

When asked what would be the sign of the end of this age and of his return to Earth, Jesus Christ responded, in part, "earthquakes in various places" (Mat. 24:3, 7). Earthquakes would be part of the "beginning of sorrows" which would lead up to the end time, just as labor pains lead up to childbirth (v. 8).

China Becomes Economic Giant

"As much of the world struggles to clamber out of a serious recession, a gradual flow of economic power from West to East has turned into a flood.

"New high points, it seems, are reached daily. China surged past the United States to become the world's largest automobile market—in units, if not in dollars, figures released Monday [Jan. 11] show. It also toppled Germany as the biggest exporter of manufactured goods, according to year-end trade data. World Bank estimates that China—the world's fifth-largest economy four years ago—will shortly overtake Japan to claim the No. 2 spot" ("As China Rises, Fears Grow on Whether Boom Can Endure" by Michael Wines, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Jan. 12, 2010, p. 1).

God promised to bless Israel if the nation obeyed him. As descendants of Israel, the U.S. and British people are inheritors of that blessing. God prophesied about us, "You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the LORD your God" (Deut. 28:12-13).

Disobedience to God will bring an end to those blessings: "The alien who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower. He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail" (vv. 43-44). This is happening!

Also, at the end time, a great army will be raised by "kings of the east" (Rev. 16:12-16). It takes money to raise an army. The economies of Japan and China could be used to fund that army!