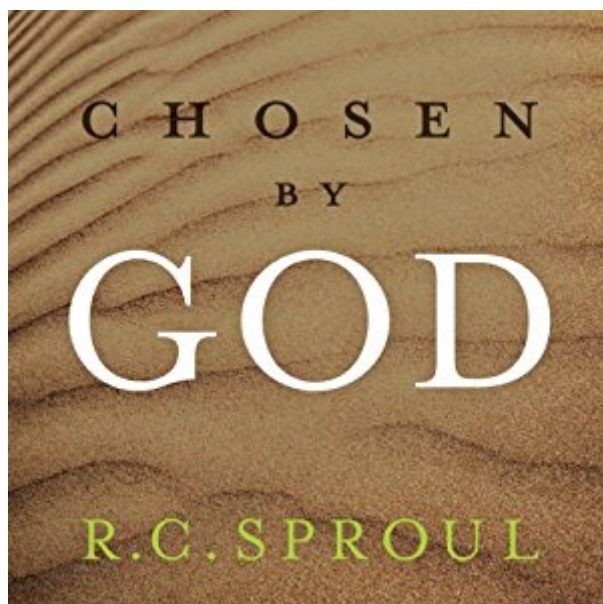


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Chosen By God



Synopsis

In *Chosen by God*, Sproul shows that the doctrine of predestination doesn't create a whimsical or spiteful picture of God, but paints a portrait of a loving God who provides redemption for radically corrupt humans. We choose God because he has opened our eyes to see his beauty; we love him because he first loved us. There is mystery in God's ways, but not contradiction. Dr. Sproul shows how election is entirely compatible with human freedom, dignity, and responsibility.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 3 hours and 2 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Ligonier Ministries

Audible.com Release Date: July 30, 2013

Language: English

ASIN: B00E8UTI42

Best Sellers Rank: #37 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Free Will &

Determinism #77 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology > Salvation Theory #141

in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > Philosophy

Customer Reviews

Agree or disagree with the thesis of the book, but you will get a clear, straight forward presentation of the doctrine of election. Dr. Sproul is a churchman. By this I mean Sproul has a healthy respect for all Christians and it shows in this book. While he presents the Calvinist view of election, he does so without making light of those who disagree. If you are interested in knowing what the issues are, the Biblical bases for election and have your questions answered, you will benefit from this book. This is true even if you don't agree with the conclusions. For a deeper presentation on the subject by the same author see "Willing to Believe" and/or "Grace Unknown." Dealing with subjects such as election, it is necessary that we have more light than heat. Dr. Sproul's unique gift to the church is helping take difficult issues and making them understandable by all. Again, agree or disagree with the author, but if you read this you will be armed with an understanding of the issue that will help you draw informed conclusions.

Before I read *Chosen by God*, I didn't know much about Calvinism or the Calvinist view of

predestination. I had read one other book by a strict Calvinist that I thought was mean-spirited in its criticism of anyone who didn't accept the author's point of view. I had also heard brief discussions of the doctrine in various Bible studies I attended. After reading Sproul's book however, I have a much better understanding of Calvinism in general and predestination in particular. Sproul is quite convinced of his position but doesn't belittle those with whom he disagrees. He knows the arguments of both sides and clearly explains why he thinks his views are the best explanations of the subject based on Scripture. He addresses many of the common issues associated with predestination including the nature of man's free will, the nature of the atonement and God's infinite sense of mercy and justice. This book is highly recommended for anyone who wants to tackle this controversial issue.

In "Chosen by God," R.C. Sproul does a fabulous job of explaining and defending the Christian doctrines of election and predestination from a Calvinist viewpoint. This book has proved to be an invaluable resource -- and a source of validation -- for people who, like me, are constantly bombarded by Arminian theology. Dr. Sproul takes the classic acronym TULIP and expounds on each of its five major elements, actually suggesting alternate letters to comprise the acronym -- I think he ended up with something like RSLEP, which doesn't exactly roll off the tongue. Much of the book focuses on the critical need to understand the concept of human depravity and fallenness -- the "T" in TULIP. Once that doctrine is adequately communicated, the remaining four points follow almost of logical necessity. I personally love his nutshell summary of these great truths: "Some receive justice; others receive mercy. No one receives injustice." Dr. Sproul is very thorough in defending the Calvinist model against all of the main criticisms and arguments leveled by Arminians. No stone is left unturned as he debunks each of these unbiblical myths. And he does it all in an extremely readable manner. The book is written for the layperson, and is very successful in speaking to its target audience without sounding like a dry dissertation. When I finished this book, I was left with a new appreciation for just how marvelous God's grace is to us as sinful human beings. I was at the same time truly grateful and humbled that God would choose me of all people to enjoy his mercy, salvation and eternal blessings. In other words, Dr. Sproul provides a gift of perspective by articulating these wonderful doctrines clearly and in a way that hits the reader right where he lives. This book is a "must read" for every Christian. Having a fuller understanding of these truths can only strengthen your walk with God.

Dr. Sproul is a superb theologian, but I was disappointed at the lack of exegetical work done in this

volume. He goes to great lengths to set forth logical and reason-based arguments for the doctrine of predestination, but often neglects the passages which speak clearly to the very points he is debating. (For instance, Romans 9 isn't even touched on until more than halfway through the book). Certainly his doctrine is founded in the teachings of scripture, but I longed for more direct application of the texts which teach predestination and more in-depth interaction with those which seem to be problematic for the Reformed view. I would recommend this book, therefore, only to those who are unacquainted with or uncertain of the doctrine of election. Those who are convinced of the doctrine or who, like myself, willingly admit that it is taught in scripture but find the contrived interpretations of Shank and Geisler to be of little use, should consider this book only as a supplement to another more scripturally-centered book such as Luther's *Bondage of the Will*. Again, it is not that I feel this is a bad book. It is, in fact, an excellent book, but it is not what I was looking for. I needed a straight-forward exposition of the passages which speak of predestination--most notably Romans 9 and Ephesians 1. I had hoped that Dr. Sproul would use these passages to set forth the Reformed doctrine of predestination. He makes many good and logically accurate points, but I find that I cannot accept human logic apart from scripture. Interestingly, what I felt was Sproul's best point seems to conflict with the style of much of the rest of the book. It is found on page 12 in the middle of the autobiographical introduction. "YOU ARE REQUIRED TO BELIEVE, TO PREACH, AND TO TEACH WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS IS TRUE, NOT WHAT YOU WANT THE BIBLE TO SAY IS TRUE." Amen, Dr. Sproul.

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