

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH
Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries

The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.

The Tree of Life from the week ending 08/06/06

What it means to be initiated into the secret of the mystery. Part 38.

Be all the more diligent to make certain about the calling and election.

We have completed two forms of mystery doctrine pertaining to the Church-age only: 1) The baptism of the Spirit and its results pertaining to the angelic conflict. 2) The unique predesigned plan of God (PPOG) taking its precedence from the dispensation of the Hypostatic union. We are now ready for the third category of mystery doctrine: The unique equality factor of the Church-age. This has to do with the subject of election and predestination as equal privilege and equal opportunity.

Under the principle of election, God wills His highest and best for each believer, and God has provided a plan for each believer to receive His highest and best. Every member of the Royal Family of God has equal privilege and equal opportunity to live in the PPOG. At the moment of salvation, no one is superior; therefore no one is inferior. No one is disadvantaged; race, sex, I.Q., nationality, economic situation, social status, none of these things help or hinder the believer in fulfilling God's plan for their life. Gal 3:26-28, *For all of you are the sons of God [Royal Family] through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you were baptized into Christ, and you have put on [clothed yourselves] with Christ. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.* The help that we all need lies entirely in the divine assets provided by God, and the only hindrance is the believer's refusal to learn Bible doctrine, and then utilize the divine assets made available in the Church-age.

Under the principle of election God made every believer a priest; this universal priesthood gives every believer equal privilege and equal opportunity. This is why every member of the Royal Family represents themselves personally before God. Under election, God also provides logistical grace. Logistics is the aspect of military science dealing with the support, maintenance, and transportation of military material and personnel. Logistical grace is the support that God gives each one of us to reach spiritual maturity. 2Co 9:8 defines logistical grace, *And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything [logistical grace support and blessing], you may have an abundance for every good of intrinsic value production.* Phi 4:19 says, *My God shall supply all your needs [logistical grace support] according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.* God will never run out of riches to support you. The logistical grace rationale is found in Mat 6:25-34, *“For this reason, I say to you: Stop worrying about your life as to what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor for your body as to what you shall wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: They do not sow, neither do reap, nor do they gather into barns. And yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of greater value than they? Now which of you by worrying can grow eighteen inches? And why are you worried about clothing? Observe the lilies of the field and how they grow. They do not work, neither do they spin. In fact, I say to you, that even Solomon in all of his glory did*

not clothe himself like one of these. And if God keeps clothing the common grass of the field [and He does], which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will he not do much more for you, believer of a little faith? Therefore, do not worry, thinking 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?' For all these things the Gentiles search for eagerly; furthermore, your heavenly Father knows that you have need of them. But seek first the kingdom and His righteousness [possessing the righteousness of God], and all these things [logistical grace support] shall be provided for you. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will take care of itself [under logistical grace]. Each day has enough evil of its own."

In this passage, there are four commands not to worry. We are commanded not to worry because God, in logistical grace, will provide for us, regardless of our spiritual status. Remember that logistical grace is for both winners and losers. There is no meter on God's grace. *You are more important than a bird (verse 26), more important than the lilies of the field (verse 28), more important than the grass of the field, which is {alive} today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace (verse 30), so then do not worry O ones of little faith and doctrine.* Fear, worry, anxiety, apprehension is rejection or ignorance of God's logistical grace provision; losers worry, and worry is fear and therefore sin. The more you surrender to worry, the more you increase the power of worry in your life; yet God still provides. Let's look at some principles concerning worry: 1) Worry is a self-induced mental attitude sin, and therefore soulish torment or anxiety regarding anything in life. Remember, adversity is inevitable; stress is optional. 2) Worry is a disquieting and painful state of mind involving undue concern over something in life. Therefore, worry separates believers from their inner resources of grace and cuts off the reception of divine logistics. Worry is the way the supply line is cut, not by God, but by the believer thinking wrong things, being in the wrong place at the wrong time. You are out of fellowship with God and out of the PPOG. You do not have that protection of the wall of fire; you are not quartered, supplied, or transported, which is the military meaning of logistics. Quartering, transporting, and supplying is the way you get relaxed and free. **Quartered** is life and residence in the PPOG; **transported** is the filling of the Spirit and walking in the Spirit as you advance in enemy territory, the devil's world. **Supplied** of course is the divine provision of near grace or greater grace. 3) Worry always anticipates the worst, and so becomes the apprehension or anticipation of danger, misfortune, trouble, or uncertainty. Worry is a state of restlessness and agitation, producing mental disturbance, uneasiness, anxiety, and painful uncertainty. Worry short-circuits the function of the faith-rest technique and causes the believer to be pinned down in the cosmic system and fall by the wayside. If you get pinned down too long in the cosmic system, you move into reversionism and go backwards. You were once going forward in the spiritual life, dedicated and devoted to the plan of God; then you do the very same things you despised in others: you gossip, malign, hate, have bitterness, jealousy, vindictiveness, etc. You cannot afford to be pinned down and retreat after you have reached the adult stage of the spiritual life, because the fall is great and the misery that follows is self-destructive. 4) Worry is a destroyer of the soul, and if unchecked, results in mental illness. Worry in the mind causes shock to the body, Pro 12:25, *Anxiety or worry in the right lobe of a person weighs it down, but a good word makes it glad.* Worry weighs us down; a cheerful word picks us up. 5) Worry is a satanic device to lead the believer into reversionism and the sin unto death. Eze 4:15-17, *Then He said to me, "See, I shall give you cow's dung in place*

*of human dung over which you will prepare your bread.” Moreover, He said to me, “Son of man, behold, I am going to break the staff of bread in Jerusalem, and they will eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and drink water by measure and in horror, because bread and water will be scarce; and they will be appalled with one another and waste away in their iniquity.” In Eze 12:18-19, “Son of man, eat your bread with trembling, and drink your water with quivering and anxiety or worry. Then say to the people of the land, ‘Thus says the Lord God concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the land of Israel, They will eat their bread with anxiety and drink their water with horror, because their land will be stripped of its fulness on account of the violence of all who live in it.’” 1Pe 5:5-9 says, You younger men [or comparative novices], likewise, be subject to your elders [under the authority and command of your pastor-teacher]; and all of you [in the congregation], clothe yourselves with humility toward one another [fasten yourselves to each other with grace orientation], for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble [grace-oriented believer]. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, Casting all your worries on Him, because He cares for you. Be stabilized, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. Worry is a great weapon in the hands of Satan because the forces of evil take over the soul as a result of worry. Worry makes you vulnerable to the enemy’s attacks especially when you’ve grown spiritually. More sacrifices of your time, talent, and treasure are required in exercising your spiritual gift in spiritual growth; therefore, there are more subtle attacks made against you to try to cause you to doubt the laying down of your life to serve and honor God. This is why the perpetuation of the function of perception, metabolization, and application of Bible doctrine becomes absolutely necessary to put muscle on your faith, as per the principle of Psa 55:22, *Cast your burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain you; He will never allow the supergrace believer to be shaken.* There is the use of the faith-rest technique in spiritual growth, Psa 37:4-5, *Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, and He will do it.* 6) Bad news can cause worry, Jer 49:23, *Concerning Damascus. Hamath and Arpad are put to shame, For they have heard bad news; They are disheartened. There is anxiety by the sea, It cannot be calmed.* 7) Worry can cause hysteria, Luk 10:41, *But the Lord answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things;”* Everyone has an area in which they are prone to worry. 8) People can cause worry. People who worry have to have an object to worry about, and you can always find something to worry about if you want to. 9) Economic disaster can cause worry (Jer 42:16). 10) Sin causes worry, and when people worry about sin it causes guilt (Psa 38:18, *For I confess my iniquity; I am full of anxiety because of my sin.*) 11) Therefore, we are ordered to stop worrying, Luk 12:29, *“And do not seek what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, and do not keep worrying.”**

So, back in Mat 6:33-34, *“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious or worried for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. {Each} day has enough trouble of its own.”* The application of verse 34 is that you can live so much in the past, that you do not live today. Grace gives you the ability to live one day at a time, not handicapped by the past,

and not distracted by the future. Logistical grace emphasizes the principle of living one day at a time, and each day as unto the Lord. Under equal opportunity every believer is given logistical grace and the predesigned plan with the power of God made available. This equal privilege and equal opportunity means inequality in the eternal state. Some believers respond to Bible doctrine and advance spiritually becoming spiritual winners; others reject doctrine and become spiritual losers. If the believer advances and uses the divine assets made available then, in the eternal state, he will be rewarded for taking advantage of his equal privilege and equal opportunity.

All believers in the Church-age have been elected! Election is the expression of the sovereign will of God in eternity past before the universe existed and before mankind lived on the earth. Election, along with foreknowledge, predestination, justification, and glorification are all from the sovereignty of God. Therefore, they belong only to the believer, as we have seen in Rom 8:28-30. Eph 1:4 says, *just as He chose us [elected us] in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.* Under election, equal privilege is your royal priesthood. 2Pe 1:10-11, *Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things [principles of virtue in verses 5-7] you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.* The phrase *more diligent* is the Greek adverb *mallon* meaning *more than*, and the verb *spoudasate* meaning *making every effort, doing one's best, being eager or motivated*. *Spoudazo* is the root word and is also translated *study* in 2Ti 2:15; it means to be eager and motivated about something and therefore applying oneself to a task with diligence. The most common meaning of *spoudazo* is *to do one's best*. So 2Pe 1:10 is saying, *Therefore, brethren, be motivated even more to make certain about His calling and election; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;*

The motivation comes from being aware of the PPOG, the angelic conflict, the distribution of your fantastic blessings, etc. It is simply a reference to the believer and his priorities motivating him to go on in the Christian life. Once your priorities are straight, you will be more motivated about the divine plan of God than anything else in life. So *be all the more diligent* means to be motivated even more, and more motivation calls for maximum metabolized doctrine. The Greek word for *make* is *poieis-thai* meaning to make, produce, work, accomplish, to perform; it has the connotation of works. Remember that we are not saved by works, but that doesn't mean that we shouldn't have any. What does the Bible say concerning works? In Mat 5:16, *“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your **good works**, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”* In Eph 2:10, *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for the purpose of **good works**, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.* In 1Ti 2:10, *but rather by means of **good works**, as befits women making a claim to spirituality.* To those who have the ability to give financially when there are needs, the apostle Paul said, 1Ti 6:18, *Instruct them to give graciously, to be rich in **good works**, to be generous and ready to share.* When we stand before God in eternity 1Co 3:13-15 says, *each man's **work** will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is {to be} revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of **each man's work**. If any man's **work** which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's **work** is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.* We

have encouragement to continue with the production of good works in 1Co 15:58, *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always **abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not {in} vain in the Lord.*** The pastor is given the spiritual gift to communicate Bible doctrine in Eph 4:12, *for the equipping of the saints for the **work of service.*** In Mat 16:27 we are told *“For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man **according to his deeds.**”* In 2Co 5:10, *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his **deeds in the body,** according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

There is a warning to those who are anti-works and every time they hear a message that challenges them to production they react and reject the message; the apostle Paul said in Tit 1:16, *They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient, and worthless for any **good deed.*** TLJC gave Himself for us, and one of the reasons is so that we can produce divine good in Tit 2:14, *He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.*

So, good deeds and works are a part of the election of God. Back in 2Pe 1:10, *Therefore, brethren, be motivated even more to make certain about His calling and election; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;* It is the sovereign will of God that all believers are motivated by two doctrines that are mentioned in verse 10. One of these doctrinal principles is found in the word *calling* which is the Greek noun *klesin* meaning calling, invitation, or a legal summons. Man has three systems of perception whereby he can perceive and understand things: Rationalism, Empiricism and Faith. Faith is the only system of perception that mankind has which is non-meritorious. Man can take credit for his ability to rationalize, saying that he thinks things out and he is intelligent and smart and has a high I.Q. He can even take credit for empiricism saying he has a lot of experience in certain areas and has certain training in those areas, but the one system of perception which he can take absolutely no credit for is faith! The merit of faith is in the object. Therefore the spiritually dead person can make legitimate decisions to listen to the gospel and can believe in Jesus Christ, but these positive decisions which originate from spiritual death have no ability apart from the ministry of God the Holy Spirit. This is called pre-salvation grace or common grace, and is divided into three parts: **Common grace**, in which the Gospel is presented and made understandable to all (Tit 2:11). **The divine call** in which the personal invitation to believe on TLJC is given to the hearers. **Efficacious grace** in which the unbeliever's faith is made effectual. Therefore you can see the importance of God the Holy Spirit in evangelism. The Holy Spirit is the one in complete charge in true evangelism. 2Co 6:1-2, *And working together with Him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain—for He says, “At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you; Behold, Now is the acceptable time, Behold, Now is the day of salvation.”*

It is not your job to force people or try to drag them across the line. A good soul-winner is not someone who witnesses to a lot of people; a good soul winner is someone who presents the gospel information **accurately and properly.** Soul-winners will be rewarded in heaven, not by how many souls they led to Christ, but how accurately they represented the Gospel to the lost. God will not hold anyone responsible for another person's volition. Our job is to present the proper information; it is the responsibility of

God the Holy Spirit to do the convincing and the convicting. The works then of a spiritually dead person have no place in evangelism. This means that both hearing the Gospel and believing in Jesus Christ are totally non-meritorious, and therefore totally compatible with the grace of God. The sovereign will of God and the free-will of mankind co-exist in human history by divine decree. However, in spiritual death the free will of mankind is totally separated from God and totally helpless to do anything about it; therefore the grace of God enters the situation. **First**, there is common grace, the work of the Holy Spirit in making the Gospel understandable. **Secondly**, there is the call of God, which is the invitation of God the Father through the Holy Spirit to believe in Christ. **Thirdly**, there is efficacious grace, the work of the Holy Spirit in making faith in Jesus Christ effective for eternal salvation. This is an invitation which is called in the N. T. *the calling of God*. 2Pe 1:10, *Therefore, brethren, be motivated even more to make certain about His calling and election;* The calling of God is without repentance; God never changes his mind. Rom 11:29, *for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable*. God does not revoke His call because He knows that some will not respond. God never changes His mind; He always invites everyone to believe in Christ. 2Co 5:14-6:2, *For the love of Christ motivates us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, that they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. Therefore from now on we recognize no man according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things have lost their power; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. And working together with Him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain—for He says, “At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you; behold, now is the acceptable time, behold, now is the day of salvation.”*

The grace of God refers to the three categories: **common grace**, in which the Holy Spirit makes the Gospel understandable, **the divine call**, the invitation of God the Father to believe in Christ, and **efficacious grace**, which is the Holy Spirit making faith alone in Jesus Christ effective for salvation. It is true there is an acceptance that takes place before salvation, but that acceptance is accepting the information that God the Holy Spirit has presented concerning TLJC and how to be saved. If a person receives the information, he still does not have the faith to believe, and therefore God the Holy Spirit takes the faith of the spiritually dead person and makes it effectual. That's the acceptance that takes place before salvation. Joh 1:12, *But as many as received Him [the information concerning TLJC], to them He gave the right to become [in the future] children of God, {even} to those who believe in His name*. There must be an acceptance before you become a child of God. You are to accept the information that God the Holy Spirit makes understandable to you! Eph 2:8, *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that [grace, salvation, faith] not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;*