



[Matthew 20:16](#)

(16) So the last shall be first, and the first *shall be* last; for many are called, but few *are* chosen."

A Faithful Version

In a sense, everybody is called to recognize [God](#) through the natural world, but the word "chosen" shows that God must personally rescue us from our self-centered blindness. Using the term "elect," [Titus 1:1](#) reinforces the idea that God separates some few from the many who are called: "Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of [Jesus Christ](#), according to the [faith](#) of God's elect. . . ."

[Romans 9:11](#), 14-16 confirms God's active participation in this process of separation:

. . . (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). . . . What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! For He says to [Moses](#), "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion." So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

[Satan](#) has done his work so well that even God declares that he "deceives the whole world" ([Revelation 12:9](#)). Thus, God mercifully separates some away from their blindness. He directly and personally favors a small number for His purposes. Jesus tells us in [John 6:44](#) that no one can come to Him unless the Father draws him. Many other scriptures show that God personally separates a few from the masses of humanity for His purposes.

"Election" is the noun form of the verb "to elect." *To elect* means "to select, pick, choose, determine, or separate." [Romans 9:11](#) tells us that God personally determines whom He

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Matthew 20:16 (<http://www.theberean.org>) will favor for His purposes. In the example Paul uses, He favored [Jacob](#), but the same is true of all whom God calls.

Such people are named the "elect" in the Bible. [Romans 11:5](#), 7, 28 clarifies this term further by revealing that "elect" becomes the title of a distinct people.

Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of [grace](#). . . . What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded. . . . Concerning [the gospel](#) [Israelites] are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.

The "chosen" and "elect" are synonymous terms designating the group with whom God is personally working through Jesus Christ. In [Matthew 24:24](#), the term "elect" appears, as it almost always does, as a favorable reference. However, we need to realize that *elect* does not mean "better than others," though it certainly implies one more blessed because of something for which God is completely responsible.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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