

**A CRITIQUE of Thomas D. Ross's "Heaven only for the Baptized?"**  
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**Part III**

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Other verses Thomas Ross uses to justify "we enter the world with a sinful nature". He cites:

6. John 6:44 says "no one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day." Ross uses this to say that man will always choose evil "unless the Father draw him".

Before proceeding to the answer, if I were assured of a response by Mr. Ross -- I would ask: "Just what is it that causes God to draw a man in the first place? Is this "drawing" entirely of God? Or is there anything in the man himself, such as a yearning and seeking to find God, for which cause God will in turn see, and then 'draw' in response to that man's righteous desire?" Since it would seem certain Ross subscribes to "unconditional election" - which can be defined as "all of God's good pleasure in election toward man and due to nothing good (or "seeking to find God") in man himself" -- I will proceed on that assumption.

Answer: Certainly John 6:44 says the Father needs to draw a man, but why would God draw a particular man in the first place? Doesn't there need to be a *yearning* and a *seeking* on the part of man BEFORE he is drawn? If not, the drawing would be entirely arbitrary. Isn't that the necessary conclusion? Again, if God is not drawing due to ANYTHING within that man himself (such as a "seeker"), then what determines the basis where God chooses one man over another? If it is "all of God and none of man", the conclusion would have to be "God is arbitrary in His election". So - is this true? Is God arbitrary in choosing "the elect"? If so, how can this be reconciled with the following verses:

A. 1 Tim. 2:3, 4: "...God our Savior who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." If God draws men at random, then this necessarily means that He does NOT want all men to be saved. Why? If someone is drawn (chosen or elected) at random, then those who are NOT chosen, when they COULD have been chosen, proves that God does not WANT them to be chosen -- OR HE WOULD HAVE CHOSEN THEM!

B. 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." If God draws arbitrarily, then how can it be said that He does not wish for "any to perish"? If it's all of God, who does not desire any to perish - *why not just call all men and save them?*

C. John 3:17: "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him." Just as God sent his Son into the "world", it is the same "world" that has opportunity to be saved through Him. In other words, Jesus was sent to the same world (which is ALL of it) as those who have opportunity to find Him (which is ALL of mankind). These are NOT people chosen arbitrarily by God (with

no respect to whether they are searching or could care less; whether they are of obedient or rebellious disposition, etc.), but those who have a desire to please Him and follow him all of their lives. Those are the ones drawn by God.

D. Matt. 7:7ff. "Ask, and it will be given to you, seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." God draws those with eager hearts, searching for Him and how they might be able to please Him.

E. Ezekiel 18:23: " 'Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked', declares the Lord God, 'rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?' ". Is there choice involved here on the part of the wicked -- to choose life or death? If the wicked cannot choose life, then the passage is nonsense. Therefore the wicked can choose life (or death). How can this passage be reconciled with John 6:44 "no one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him"? If God draws this man -- and His call cannot be denied (according to the doctrine) -- there would be no volition in the statement "that he should turn from his ways and live". Yet the passage clearly involves volition. Further, how could he NOT turn from his ways and live, if he is one of God's chosen? Or how could he "turn from his ways and live" (of his own accord) if God has NOT chosen him? This teaches human responsibility and choice, and will or volition on the part of man. Again, this passage is rendered nonsense if God draws men arbitrarily, regardless of their heart, and they have no say in the matter. It teaches that MAN chooses life or death, and God honors the man who chooses life...with life, because "I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies....therefore, repent and live" (Ezek. 18:32).

E. Proverbs 8:17: "I love those who love me, and those who diligently seek me will find me." What about if they are not drawn by the Father? It would seem that Ross would argue against this and say they were first drawn by the Father. If they are first drawn by the Father, why does it matter if they love God? Could God perhaps see that they love Him FIRST? The answer is "Yes", which is affirmed in this very passage. Who is it that God loves? Those who love him FIRST is the clear implication.

1 John 4:19 "We love [Him] because he first loved us" certainly does not mean that God "draws" us in love first (and arbitrarily) and therefore initiates the process of salvation, as the proponents of unconditional election would have us believe. The meaning here is: we currently love each other (and God - i.e. we know how to love) because God first loved us by offering us a plan of reconciliation -- Jesus Christ - without whom we (and all who lived before Christ) would be doomed to destruction. A plan initiated in the mind of God before the foundation of the world (1 Pet. 1:18-21).

F. Acts 17:26, 27: "And He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him...". God determines the boundaries and times of life for each and every one of us -- in the hope that we will "seek God" and "grope for Him and find Him", all of which involves volition and effort on the part of every man.

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