

THE SAINTS HIGH PRIVILEGE AND DUTIES IN CHRIST: 1 PETER 2:9-10

Introduction:

Have you ever heard someone say, “It doesn’t get much better than this”? I think we all have, and I think its a great lens by which we look at this passage of scripture.

By way of introduction, let me briefly provide some helpful context to our passage of scripture. 1 Peter is written by the Apostle Peter, an eye witness of Christ’s sufferings. His audience consisted of Christians scattered across five (5) Roman provinces in Asia Minor. These believers were Gentile converts and were subject to persecution and suffering. Chapter 2 specifically serves as a bridge: it defines the believers new identity in Christ, then applies that identity practically through holy living, submission, and endurance of suffering. Our sermon today is focusing on the identity of these Gentile believers in Christ and the superior nature of these privileges as compared to Old Testament Israel. Let’s read our passage:

(v.9) “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. (v.10) Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy”.

So what Doctrine do we learn?: Saints have the high privilege of election and its corresponding benefits, and the duty of proclaiming the excellencies of Christ (REPEAT).

I. Saint, you have been chosen by God (v. 9a)

1 Peter 2:9a “But you are a chosen race...”

C.F. Deut. 7:6 “The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth”.

This is the doctrine of **Election**. Just as God chose for Himself a nomadic people that would ultimately become a nation of people called Israel and usher in the Messiah, the Apostle Peter is referring to his Gentile audience in the same manner as Old Testament Israel, a people chosen by God. The doctrine of Election is one of the most humbling and God exalting truths in scripture. This doctrine is humbling because it demonstrates that God chose a people for Himself while they were still dead in their trespasses and sins. The recognition that God requires perfection and you and I are wholly unable to meet His righteous requirements, is pride-crushing.

So, what do we need to learn about Election?

I) First, the election of God makes no consideration of your works

According to **2 Timothy 1:9** “...who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began”.

In a world of “works-righteousness” or a “pull yourself up by your bootstraps” mentality, it cannot be stated enough how crucial it is we forsake the notion of a works based salvation. This is what so clearly distinguishes Christianity from other religions and worldviews. To have God, you must humbly lay your works at the feet of Jesus and repent of all unrighteousness. Your works are as filthy rags. It is only then that one is saved by God. However, when the Scripture speaks of God choosing a people for Himself, the emphasis is on a decision in the mind of God that is outside of time— before the ages began.

II) Two, the election of God gives assurance

Romans 8:30 “And those whom He predestined He also called, and those whom He called He also justified, and those whom He justified He also glorified”.

John 10:27-29 “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand”.

If the proposition is that assurance is dependent upon our choice(s), the assurance cannot actually be sure. Assurance that is rooted firmly in God’s sovereign choice is the only choice that we can confidently say will never change. If God has elected you, which is evidenced by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you can be confident that God has chosen you and will preserve you unto the end. God does not change His mind. “He is not a man that He should lie”.

Hear what Thomas Watson has to say: “Believers are a chosen generation because their election is a fixed, eternal act of God's sovereign grace, which is a source of great comfort and blessedness for the saint. This choice is not subject to alteration”.

III) Thirdly, the election of God motivates holy living

If the electing promise of God applies to you, it should motivate you unto holy living. The commonly regurgitated conflict between James and Paul with regard to faith and works is simply, no conflict at all. The Apostle Paul clearly articulates that our legal standing, our justification before God, is not by any works lest man

should boast, but by faith in the risen Son of God. And in the case of James, his use of the word “justified” is bound to works that provide proof. James is articulating the important truth that holy living flows from a salvation that has been freely gifted. Without such proof, the outside observer has no confidence that this person is truly saved, or chosen, by God.

II. Saint, you have been given access to the holy presence of God (v. 9b)

1 Peter 2:9b “...a royal priesthood”

C.F. Exodus 19:6 “...and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests...”

This is the doctrine of the **Priesthood of all believers**. In Old Testament times, priests were the mediators between God and man; only they were allowed to enter the tabernacle and into the presence of God. The tabernacle was a holy place. Not due to its architecture, but because of the abiding presence of God. When the Apostle Peter speaks to believers in the risen Messiah and says that they have been given access to the holy presence of God, he is revealing a greater reality now had in Christ Jesus. Rather than a select few afforded strict rights into the presence of God, all who profess Christ as Lord are now able to boldly come into His presence. This is an earth shattering reality. Think about it! How do sinners come into the presence of a perfectly holy and just God? Remember in Exodus where *“the Lord said to Moses, 'Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to the Lord to look and many of them perish. Also let the priests who come near to the Lord consecrate themselves, lest the Lord break out against them’”* (Exodus 19:21-22). God’s holiness is incompatible with human sin; this sin leads to death. So how then can the Apostle Peter emphatically state that you have been given access to the holy presence of God? This tension is resolved through Christ who makes atonement for our sins so that man does not stand before God exposed to His judgment and wrath. This is a profound truth that you must wrestle with!

To the **Saint** in this room, remind yourself of this profound reality. You can come directly into the presence of God and be certain of His good pleasure. You and I, many times, take this for granted by expecting God to receive all those who approach Him. However, without Jesus as your representative, you and I cannot initiate God. If this doctrinal truth seems obvious to you, praise God. But consider the prevalency of error even taught by the Roman Catholic Church in Vatican II:

Instruction: 1) Quote: Confession to a priest is necessary for the forgiveness of mortal (grave) sins committed after baptism; and 2) The priest acts in the person of Christ when pronouncing absolution.

Consider the omission of coming directly to God due to Jesus Christ. Let me make it abundantly clear: any teaching that requires a mediator other than Christ for the confession of sin, is a bastardization of New Testament teaching. Consider **1 Timothy 2:5**: *“For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus”*. This passage clearly underscores the exclusive mediatorial role of Jesus. When you and I seek forgiveness, we pray to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ. It is an absurd notion that we should resort to mediatorial shadows when the perfect mediator has already come. For those that are in Christ, you can come boldly to the throne room of God.

Unbeliever—those who have yet to confess Christ Jesus as Lord, consider this truth. You may call on God in prayer, seek His help, and expect a listener ear, but hear what the Scripture clearly says: *“Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear”* (Isaiah 59:1-2).

You that have yet to repent and turn to Christ Jesus, you cannot come before God and expect Him to gladly receive you or answer your prayers. The Scripture is quite clear.

Warning: Tomorrow is not promised. Your supposed “good deeds” are not good enough. God does not grade on curve. However, those who believe the simplest of messages, the good news of Jesus Christ, shall be saved and accepted by God. God will then gladly receive all those who come to Him in the name of Jesus Christ. Repent of your sins and believe. It really is that simple.

III. Saint, you have been set apart to worship God and enjoy Him forever (v. 9c)

1 Peter 2:9c “...a holy nation”

C.F. Leviticus 20:26 ‘You shall be holy to me, for I the Lord am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine’.

Holy nation (*ethnos hagion*) refers to a group of people united by common identity, culture, or purpose. This “holy nation” emphasizes a collective identity as God’s chosen people, set apart for His purposes, much like Israel in the Old Testament. In passages like Exodus 19:6, the translation refers to a people or nation, often with a sense of shared covenantal identity rather than simple ethnicity. Nation in the context of 1 Peter 2:9 and Exodus 19:6 means a distinct group of people bound by their relationship with God.

Therefore, the application of this verse is that Christians are to be “set apart”, living a life that honors and glorifies our creator and redeemer. Now, given that statement, consider this **Question: Is your life marked by attributes and characteristics that demonstrate you are a child of God?**

Thomas Watson is helpful here when thinking about holy living. He says, “Holiness is essential to being God’s; God is pure, and "All God's temples are made in some measure like Him". A holy nation implies that God's people must be characterized by purity and separation from wickedness. He challenges the believer, "Have we holy and chaste affections? Is the love of sin purged out?”. Holiness is the "true token" of this new spiritual nationality”.

Let this be a sobering reminder. If your life is not marked by holiness but habitual sins and a lack of concern for the things of God, you cannot continue professing the name of Christ. You must be born again.

On the other hand, if the magnifier of life does not demonstrate a deep love for God and all His commands, but you hear these words and can say, “I want to be marked by holiness. I truly desire to put my sin to death”, I exhort you to repent of known sins and ask the Lord to strengthen your desire for Him. God sanctifies those whom are His. We should be able to say with King David, *“O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day” (Psalm 119:97).*

IV. Saint, you have been purchased by Christ (v. 9d)

1 Peter 2:9d “...a people for His own possession”

C.F. Ephesians 1:4-5 ”In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will”.

C.F. 1 Corinthians 6:19 “You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”

This is the doctrine of **Adoption**. All whom the Father elects, the Son purchases by His blood so that they would become children of God. This doctrine refutes one of the most repeated errors within the evangelical church that says, “everyone is a child of God”. The universal title of children of God undermines the special privilege it is to be adopted into the family of God. Even Jesus Himself combatted this error when speaking to a Jewish audience in **John 8:41-44**: *“If God were your Father, you would love me... You are of your father the devil and your will is to do your father’s desires”*. To become a child of God is a sovereign act of God; hence the name, “adoption” and the simple logic, *“I cannot make myself someone else’s child”* (REPEAT). To be considered a child of God, you must have been adopted into the family of God, by God. This adoption was particularly purchased on the Cross of Calvary. Question: Can you hear this doctrine and say, *“Yes, I have been purchased by Christ and am now therefore a Child of God?”*.

If the answer is yes, consider earthly adoption and how it so closely mirrors our spiritual adoption and the legal rights, privileges, and obligations associated with it.

I) First, the Father provides an inheritance to His children

Colossians 1:12-14 *“Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light”*.

Just as physically adopted children are afforded rights to inheritance from their adoptive parents, children of God are provided an inheritance. The inheritance for the children of God is eternal citizenship. Parents that leave an inheritance for their children have done an honorable thing, but those earthly blessings do not last forever. God the Father, on the other hand, provides an inheritance to His children that is incorruptible, unfading, and eternal. *“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the*

foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:34). This is a heavenly citizenship guaranteed to us because Christ purchased it on the cross. This is a costly adoption.

II) Secondly, the Father has freed His children from the covenant of works

Romans 7:6 “But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code”.

In Genesis, God made a covenant with Adam. This covenant required perfect obedience to all that His creator commanded. Although this covenant was made with Adam, its obligations were also applicable with all future posterity. Those covenantal obligations still stand today however, no one can meet its requirement of perfect obedience. Thankfully, there is a New Covenant where it is not by our works that we are accepted by our heavenly father, but by faith in the one who actually did. **Do you see what I am saying here?** The Father sent His son, Jesus Christ, to fulfill all the necessary obligations for you and I to be the children of God.

Once again, consider physical adoption. A child’s behavior is not the metric by which a parent claims them as their children. An adopted child has a legal right to that status and mere behavior cannot dissolve the legal contract.

III) Thirdly, the Father preserves his children and cares for their needs

Psalm 23:1, 5-6 “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever”.

In the most unfortunate situations where earthly parents forsake their children and leave them without, our heavenly Father never leaves us, nor forsakes us. When you are adopted into the family of God, you never have to doubt the Father’s love and those promises which have been granted to you. In the most basic sense, the Father assumes full parental rights and responsibilities for His children. Not only does the Father have the right to require obedience of His children, but He also bears full responsibility for their needs.

Here is great **comfort**, believer. Just as a child petitions their earthly father for food or clothes, or even luxuries that are not truly needed in this life, our heavenly Father always satisfies our needs. Even more so, He provides so many of our “wants” to further show us how good He is to His children. The Father loves you, Saint. Continually remind yourself of that truth.

IV) Fourthly, the Father has compassion and pity on his children

Psalm 103:13 “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him”.

Although seemingly small and insignificant, your Heavenly Father is sympathetic towards you and all your concerns. He is not a distant God that cannot relate to His children. His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, endured all so that He may sympathize with you in your weakness.

V) and Fifthly, the Father has a listening ear

Matthew 7:11 “How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him”?

Remember this simple truth, Saint. Your Heavenly Father hears you and does not ignore nor forget. His mind is not clouded by the busyness of life that He should forget. Nor is He unloving that He should ignore. Come to your Heavenly Father knowing for certain that He listens to you.

II) Now, let's see the many obligations of the children of God

I) First, a child of God seeks to love His Heavenly Father by obeying His commands

Psalms 119:47-48 “For I find my delight in your commandments, which I love. I will lift up my hands toward your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes.

This is a joyful obligation. An obligation that is happily obeyed because it pleases your Heavenly Father and brings great joy and satisfaction.

II) Secondly, and very importantly, you **must** submit yourself to the discipline of your Heavenly Father

Hebrews 12:5-11 “And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? ‘My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.’ ... For the moment all

discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Fatherly discipline is executed by more than one method. The Father disciplines His children by limiting their assurance, removing temporal blessings, as well as through church discipline. Concerning church discipline, it cannot be stated enough how vitally important it is for the discipline of God's children. However, church membership and its blessing of discipline, is one of the most disregarded and disliked teachings of scripture. Submitting yourself to a local church body is a means by which children of God submit themselves to their heavenly Father. The catalyst by which God preserves and protects His children is through the local church.

Listen to **Matthew 18:15-17** "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

Matthew 18 is our instruction for church discipline. Our heavenly Father instructs us to utilize this process as a means to deal with sin. Consider a few important points about this passage. It is presupposed that those individuals who go and tell their brother of his sin, know him more than a casual acquaintance. It may be said that the individual sinned against is not a member of the same local church or gathering, but that perspective fails miserably in that the other two individuals must also be confidently

aware of the sin and have a level of interaction that warrants their confidence to charge another brother of sin. To further contextualize this encounter, the refusal of the brother to listen and the involvement of the church certainly identifies the nature of this conflict and the context in which it occurs. Local church membership is a means by which the children of God **submit** themselves to the discipline of their heavenly Father.

Exhortation: Let me exhort you fellow members of Ekklesia. Do not hide in the shadows and avoid close relationships with one another. It is in those relationships that your heavenly Father will strengthen & preserve you, as well as protect you from your own indwelling sin. If you're not in close community with your members, ask yourself the tough questions. Why do you prefer to live in isolation? Do others know you well enough that they could even speak into your life, offer correction, and pray for you? When corrected, do you immediately recoil and assume you've been wronged?

V. Saint, you have the duty to proclaim the excellencies of Christ (v. 9e)

1 Peter 2:9e "...that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light".

Matthew Henry is worth quoting here: *"And all this honour and dignity is conferred upon them for a special end and purpose: That ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. The command is, to show forth his virtues, that is, his excellencies, perfections, and praise. Christians must do this, by their profession of his truth, and by their good conduct"*.

If Christ has purchased for you many great blessings, can you remain silent? Certainly, not! Not only does our gratitude warrant a proclamation of Christ's excellencies, but God requires it. Consider two contexts where we must proclaim the excellencies of Christ our Lord:

I) First, Proclamation of the excellencies of Christ in corporate worship

Each and every week we have the opportunity to fulfill this duty by gathering with others that have been purchased by the blood of Jesus. Reorient your perspective about weekly gatherings. Rather than viewing it as merely something you receive, such as the preaching of the Word of God, consider it a duty to give attention to the very Word of God. God is not only glorified in the preaching of His Word, but also in the attentive ears that listen. You and I proclaim His excellencies by managing our schedule in a way that prioritizes Christ. You and I proclaim His excellencies by singing loudly. You and I proclaim the excellencies of Christ when taking the Lord's Supper. The eating of the bread and the drinking of the cup is a proclamation that Christ's body has been broken, His blood spilled, so that we would be forgiven.

II) Secondly, Proclamation of the excellencies of Christ in the public square

There is no sphere of life where Christ does not say, "It is mine". The proclamation of the excellencies of Christ are not reserved for these gatherings only. It is not solely reserved for family worship. The proclamation of the excellencies of Christ is owed in every sphere of life. Christ is sovereign in all spheres. Therefore, our worship should reflect such.

Children: you must never forget that Jesus is Lord over all. He is Lord over every person, every place, every animal, and every thing. Therefore, Jesus must be exalted in all of life. Don't be afraid to proclaim the excellencies of Christ every where you go. He deserves it, and it is for your neighbors good.

VI. Saint, remember the mercy you have received in Christ (v. 10)

1 Peter 2:10 "Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy".

John Calvin correctly states, "*The change from not a people to the people of God is attributed to God's gratuitous goodness, which makes of no people a people to God, and reconciles the alienated. The only reason God counts them as his people is because he, having mercy on us, graciously adopts us*" (John Calvin).

The Apostle Peter concludes by reminding his audience of the great mercy they have received in Christ. This mercy is two-fold. First, God **did not** give them what they deserved. Second, God **gave them** what they do not deserve. The mercy of God in Christ Jesus should be continually on our minds lest we become prideful and consider ourselves deserving of any the blessings we have been given. Verse ten should cause you to think about the following:

- 1) You once had no heavenly citizenship and were destined for hell;
- 2) You once had no Heavenly Father; and
- 3) You once had no hope or everlasting peace

Conclusion:

1 Peter 2:9-10 is directed to those that are united to Christ. Those of you who have faith in Christ Jesus can hear these words and say, “yes and amen!” These two verses are packed with all the privileges that have been purchased by Jesus. Juxtaposed to these glorious privileges is the reality that not all who hear these words can confidently say, “I am chosen by God; I have access to the holy presence of God; I have been purchased by Christ”. The numerous blessings I have mentioned should be a comfort to those resting in Christ our Lord, but a reminder that not all share in these heavenly privileges.

Let me exhort those of you who **have not** embraced Jesus Christ. All that I have proclaimed in this sermon **CAN ALSO** be said of you. All that is required of you is an acknowledgment of your sin, need for Christ as savior, and the simple faith of a child. It is my hope that you can affirm with me that you are chosen by God, given access to His holy presence, and purchased by the blood of Christ.

For those who hear my voice and can say, “Christ is my savior”, take great comfort in these final statements:

- Before the foundation of the world, God saw you and said, “MINE”!
- When you were alone, God said, “COME”!
- When Christ was brutally beaten and suffering on the cross, He said, “FORGIVEN”!

Take these truths and go proclaim them to the World! Pray with me.