

3/27/22

What About Election?

Eph. 1:4

Paul has expressed his gratitude to the Father for the benefits in salvation indicating three things. Eph. 1:3

- I. The source of salvation. vs. 3a
- II. The sufficiency of salvation. vs. 3b
- III. The sphere of salvation. vs. 3b

We must remember that all three persons of the Trinity are involved in the process of salvation.

- 1. The Father. vs. 3-6
- 2. The Son. vs. 7-12
- 3. The Holy Spirit. vs. 13-14

* All three end with “to the praise and to the glory” for each person of the Trinity in their part in salvation! vs. 6a, 12, 14b

Keep in mind that verse 3-14 is one complete sentence in the Greek.

* Paul indicated that God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ, so now he begins to indicate some of the blessings.

The first blessing presented is the doctrine of election, characterized by three things: Eph. 1:4-6

- I. The proclamation of election. vs. 4
- II. The explanation about election. vs. 5
- III. The exultation for election. vs. 6

We want to look at the proclamation of election, which is marked by three truths: Eph. 1:4

- I. The one who did the choosing. vs. 4a
- II. The time of the choosing. vs. 4
- III. The purpose of the choosing. vs. 4b

I. The one who did the choosing. vs. 4a

A. The apostle Paul revealed that the Father is the One who chose us.

* “Just as He chose us.”

- 1. This is indicated by the personal pronoun “He”.
 - a. The Father remember is the source of salvation. vs. 3a
 - b. The Father blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. vs. 3b
- 2. The word chose “eklegmoai”, means to pick out.
 - a. The tense is the indicative aorist middle voice, indicating that He did it by and for himself.
 - b. The word is found 21 times in the New Testament.
 - c. Three times it is used for the choosing of the 12 apostles. Jn. 6:70; 13:18; 15:16

B. The apostle Paul revealed the Father chose us sovereignly.

1. The sovereignty of God is the right to do as He pleases with His creation.
2. The sovereignty of God means He can do as He will, when He will, to who He wills, as often as He will, yet He will never violate any of His attributes or the free-will of man.
3. The sovereignty of God is manifested perfect wisdom, the result from all the attributes of His that are perfect.
4. God sovereignly makes all the right decisions in perfect justice, having the benefit of man in mind always.
5. Keep in mind the sovereignty of God, like foreknowledge never violated the free will of man.
 - a. It is the major theme as he deals with Israel and the Gentiles. Rom. 9
 - b. For Esau and Jacob, it refers to the nation of Edom and Israel, not individual election. Rom. 9:11-16; Gen. 25:23; Mal. 1:2-3
 - c. For Pharaoh, who hardened his own heart, so God honored his decision and strengthened his will with the illustration of the potter and the clay. Rom. 9:17-24
 - d. Seeing that God is all powerful, all present, all knowing, possessing foreknowledge, the epitome of perfect wisdom, that He is eternal, infinite, immutable, should His sovereignty worry

us in regards to whether it will be fair and just? No!

- C. The apostle Paul revealed the Father chose us in relation to the person of Jesus.
- * “in Him.”
1. “In Him” refers in union by being in Jesus Christ, mentioned six times, seven times in various forms in the first three verses.
 2. In Him we have redemption. Eph. 1:7
 3. In Him those in heaven earth will be gathered to Him. Eph. 1:10
 4. In Him we have obtained an inheritance. Eph. 1:11
 5. In Him we trusted after hearing the word of truth, the gospel. Eph. 1:13
 6. In Him we have boldness and access with confidence through faith. Eph. 3:12
 7. So those chosen “in Him” is synonymous with “in Christ”.

Illustration

God’s Divine election and man’s free-will has been explained as two parallel line that we will find out how they cross when we get to heaven.

Application

1. The one thing we do understand by the doctrine of election is that it does not mean what the first and second point of five-point Calvinism teaches, under the acronym of TULIP.

- a. The first point is an erroneous definition of the “Total depravity of man”, teaching man is so dead that he can not respond to the gospel, so God has to first regenerate him then he has faith to believe, as a result he is born again.
- 1) This teaching of “inability” is presented as biblical truth, but it cannot be found in the Scriptures, not one verse substantiates it.
* The prefix “Total” is added, it is not in the Bible.
 - 2) The Scriptures say we are dead in trespasses and sins, but in no way does it mean spiritually dead people have no ability to respond to the gospel, as the Holy Spirit illuminates and convicts them of sin. Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13
 - 3) They teach two births, being foreign to Scripture, contradicting the order of faith first, then regeneration. Rom. 10:17; Jn. 3:3-5; Tit. 3:5
- b. The second point equally wrong re-enforces the first point by teaching “Unconditional Election”, that God elected some to be saved, while electing the remainder of humanity to be damned, without ever giving them a chance for salvation.
- * Again the prefix “unconditional” is added, not found in the Bible.
- 1) Yet the person is condemned by God for failing to respond and believe, yet was “elected” by God to not respond or believe!

- 2) R. C. Sproul declares, “A cardinal point of Reformed theology is the maxim, “Regeneration precedes faith” (Chosen By God:10)
 - 3) Their analogy of equating spiritual death to physical death is not an equal parallel, it breaks down.
 - 4) The apostle Paul told the Athenians that man can believe and respond to the gospel he hears, “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands **all** men everywhere to repent”, How can God command all to repent, if He predestined some to not respond? Acts 17:30
2. The doctrine of election is Biblical.
- a. The doctrine of election or predestination focuses on the Divine side of salvation, God being the initiator through the proclamation of the gospel.
 - b. The doctrine of free-will focuses on the human side of salvation, being the responder to the gospel.
 - c. The two doctrines are not in contradiction to each other, but rather complementary to each other and Biblical.
 - d. The two doctrines are scriptural, but we cannot understand them by our logical or ratiion process to see how they reconcile, not having Omniscient or foreknowledge like God!
 - 1) Election is very scriptural. 1Pet. 1:2

- 2) Election is based on God's foreknowledge.
Rom. 8:29-30

The one who did the choosing was God!

II. The time of the choosing. vs. 4a

- A.** The apostle Paul revealed that God's sovereign choosing was before creation, prior to time as we know it.
 * "before the foundation of the world."
 1. The particular time is before the creation.
 a. God being Omniscient, He knows all things past, present and future, He can not learn anything.
 * The word foreknowledge is a noun, not a verb, it is not causative, but rather describing a thing.
 b. God having foreknowledge, the result of His Omniscience, knows all thing beforehand, so nothing surprises Him or catches Him unawares.
 2. The inception of creation is stated to be, In the beginning, "beresit" referring to the framework of creation.
 a. Marking out the starting point of creation.
 b. This point marks the introduction of time as man knows it, chronological, running from present to future.

- c. The implication being that time as we know it, did not exist in this fashion, prior to creation.
 d. Time itself being temporal was created and came to be at a set point, at it's introduction "In the beginning".
 3. The gospel of John opens with the words, "In beginning was the Word". Jn. 1:1
 a. The article is not present before the word "beginning".
 b. Therefore the declaration indicates going back earlier than this first verse of Genesis, to timeless eternity before time.
B. The apostle Paul referring to timeless eternity prior to the inception of time as we know it implies that time will one day come to an end.
 1. You can not have a starting time without an ending time, any more than you can have a starting point without an ending point.
 2. The nature of time as man knows it is temporal, running down, forwards, wasting away.
 3. Tiime has three dimensions, past, present and future.
C. The apostle Paul referring to eternity prior to the beginning of time can only lead us to one conclusion by way of deduction.
 1. If time was introduced at a set time.
 2. If time is temporal.

3. If time is winding down.
4. If time as we know it is winding down forwards towards an ending point.
5. Then what existed before chronological time as we know it, has to be eternity.
 - a. That which by nature is infinite.
 - b. That which has no end.
 - c. That which is not bound by the limitations of the temporal.
6. Therefore from the very beginning God chose us “before the foundations of the world”, revealing to man that after this period of finite time is over, eternity awaits man.
 - a. John tells us “from the foundation of the world”. Rev. 13:8; 17:8
 - b. Paul tells us “from the beginning of time”. 2Thess. 2:13
 - c. Paul says again, “before time began”. 2Tim. 1:9
7. Which means that God knew all along that He would create the world and man, that all of it would be ruined by man and He would work out the plan of redemption through salvation history, so that man would be able to spend eternity with Him one day.
 - a. God is not willing that anyone perish and has granted man to be a free moral agent with the ability to make choices, one being to determine his eternal destiny. 2Pet. 3:9

- b. Those responding to God’s initiation through the gospel in faith are part of the elect from the foundation of the world, the called out ones!

Illustration

The following has been said about election and free-will, the “whosoever wills” are the elect and the “whosoever won’ts are the non-elect”.

Application

1. The use of the term “elect” “elected” and “election” in the Scriptures.
 - a. The word appears 27 times in the Bible.
 - 1) The Hebrew word “bachiyr”.
 - 2) The Greek word “eklektos” and the varied forms.
 - b. The term is used for different individuals, therefore the context is of the utmost importance for proper interpretation.
 - 1) The term is used for Israel. Is. 45:4; 65:9; 22; Matt. 24:31; Mk. 13:27
 - 2) The term is used for a lady. 2Jn. 1:13
 - 3) The term is used for a church. Rom. 8:33; Col. 3:12; Tit. 1:1
 - 4) For Israel and the church. Matt. 24:24; Mk. 13:22; Lk. 18:7
 - 5) For angels. 1Tim. 5:21
2. Examining all the places the term appears, not once is the term ever used to indicate a select group who alone have been predestinated to be saved, never!

* Dr. Ironside declared, “Nowhere in the Bible are people ever predestinated to go to hell, and nowhere are people simply predestinated to go to Heaven, look it up and see...predestination is always to some special place of blessing.” (In The Heavens:34)

- a. The word “elect” appears 4 times in the Old Testament, 1 for the Messiah, 3 for Israel. Is. 42:1; 45:4; 65:9, 22
- b. The word appears in the New Testament as “elected”, 17 times, “election” 6 times, “elect’s” 3 times and “elected” 1 time.
- c. When you sift through the 27 passages, one is left with only 5 pertaining to the general subject of election. Rom. 9:11; 11:5; 1Thess. 1:4; 1Pet. 1:2; 2Pet. 1:10
- d. All five have to do with election to service and blessing, not salvation, examine the context!
* Marvin R. Vincent, an authority of Biblical languages explains, “ekloge”, election is used of God’s selection of men or agencies for special missions or attainments...Nowhere in the New Testament is there any warrant for the revolution doctrine that God predestined a **definite number** of mankind to eternal life, and the rest to eternal destruction. (Hunt: 231)

3. The “elect” of Calvinism are “Unconditionally Elected”, without anything on their part and since there is no election or predestination stated in the

Bible by the word “decree” as they teach, they say it is in the hidden mystery of God’s will.

- a. The word mystery “mysterion” is never used in the New Testament to mean something hidden, but just the opposite, to reveal a thing previously hidden, but now made known. Rom. 11:25; 1Cor. 15:51; Eph. 3:3; Col. 1:26; 2Thess. 2:7; Rev. 17:7
- b. The third chapter of the Westminster Confession of Faith is entitled “Of God’s Eternal Decree.”, Calvinists Buswell and Hodge state that the decrees of God may be regarded as one complex decree, including all things.” (Vance:250)
- c. The word “decree” occurs 49 times in 48 verses, the word “decreed” 5 times in 5 verses, the word “decrees” in the plural occurs twice in as many verses, yet out of the 56 times the word “decree” is used, only 8 times is it connected to God. (Vance:255)
- d. These 8 concern the rain, the sea, Jesus Christ, the heavens, a consumption, the sand and Nebuchadnezzar. Job 28:26; 38:10; Prov. 8:29; Ps. 2:7; 148:6; Is. 10:22; Jer. 5:22; Dan. 4:24
- e. Out of these 8 passages none is said to be “eternal”, none involves “election” or “predestination.”
- f. Yet according to Calvinism God’s decree is His sovereign will imposed to override the free-will of man from choosing either way, they have no

choice, claiming this as the “secret things of God”. Deut. 29:29

- g. Ignoring and denying the responsibility of man to believe in faith and repent.
- 4. God always gives reasons for saving some and damning others in the Bible.
 - a. To Isaiah he says, “Come now, and let us reason together...Is. 1:18
 - * He is pleading that they repent, if they were “elect”, why plead?
 - b. God tells Israel that He punishes Israel for the wickedness of their doing. Deut. 28:20
 - * If they were “elected to damnation”, then they have to be “elected for the wickedness they do” based on God’s decrees, yet He punishes them for what He made them do? No! That would make God unjust and evil!
 - c. God tells Jeremiah Israel had forsaken His Law. Jer. 9:13
 - * If they were “Unconditionally elected”, how could they forsake the Law, if they have no free will or respond to the Law?
 - d. The unloving depiction of God presented by Calvinism is insulting to God and the Scriptures, attributing evil to God, then merely saying it is just, because God is sovereign, while being clearly contradictory to the revelation of God, His nature and His word!
 - 1) “He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son

shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” Jn. 3:36

- 2) Believes”, not “unconditionally elected” and if they are why do they have to believe?
- e. The two doctrines of Divine election and man’s free-will are not in contradiction, but rather complementary and Biblical.
 - 1) The elect are constituted, not by absolute decree, but by acceptance of the conditions of God’s call. (Beacon Com:146) Jn. 3:16; Rom. 10:13
 - 2) Again we just cannot understand them by our logical or ration process to see how they reconcile because we are not Omniscient, nor have foreknowledge!

The time of the choosing was before the foundation of the world!

III. The purpose of the choosing. vs. 4b

- A. The apostle Paul associated those chosen by the Father with His holiness.
 - * “that we should be holy.”
 - 1. The holiness of God is a moral attribute and is communicable, able to be imparted to us, his creatures.
 - 2. Since God is morally pure to perfection, then we must conclude that God has to be separated from sinful man.

3. These are the two basic and most common ways the word “holy” and “holiness” are used in the Old and New Testaments.
 - a. The perfection of God’s holiness.
 - b. The separation, sanctification, or consecration to God.
 4. Holiness is the attribute that most glorifies God and stands out in Scripture.
 5. Some have called it the attribute of attributes, others think it is not an attribute, but His very essence.
 6. The word holy is found about 45x’s in Exodus, 77x¹s in Leviticus, 32x’s in Numbers and 20x’s in Deuteronomy.
 7. He is called “The Holy One of Israel” thirty times in Isaiah and only twenty times in the rest of the Old Testament.
- B.** The apostle Paul revealed that the Father chose us “in Christ” with a purpose. vs. 4a
 * “that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.”
1. The design of election is for purification.
 - a. Sinners are sinful by nature, due to the fall.
 - 1) Yet fallen man has a potential for doing good.
 - 2) Being created in the image and likeness of God, though fallen.
 - b. Sinners saved have the potential for holiness, due to God’s intervention.

- 1) They are holy “hagios”, expressing the inner and moral distinction once a person is saved by the grace of God working in his heart.
 - 2) They were without spot and excepted by God, without any inherent defect now being saved.
 - 3) The words saint, sanctify, sanctified, sanctification in the New Testament are all related to the word “holy”.
- c. The instant a person is saved their sins are forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ and regenerated.
- 1) This holiness is the outcome of regeneration, being justified by the atoning work of Jesus, imputing the righteousness of Jesus.
 - 2) The result being the saved sinner is holy before Jesus in fellowship with God, having access to His throne, a member of the family of God.
2. The goal for saved sinner is also to be without blame before Jesus in outward conduct, as the result of the choice by God and the sinner.
 - a. The phrase without blame “anomos” means without rebuke, faultless. Eph. 5:27; Col. 1:22; Heb. 9:14; 1Pet. 1:19; Jude 24; Rev. 14:5

- b. The idea is blame or fault acquired, the word is used in the LXX for the sacrifices presented to the priest.
 - c. This does not mean sinless perfection, but rather ongoing cleansing by confession of sins to Jesus. 1Jn. 2:1
 - d. The fact of being without blame is by the imparted righteousness of Jesus for sanctification.
3. The passion of a saved sinner is to be before Jesus motivated by His the love.
- a. The word love “agape” is God Divine love, appears 10 times and “apapao” 9 times in the letter.
 - b. Some say the word love goes with verse 4 which would mean we are to be found living in love.
 - c. Others say the word love should go with verse 5 and that it refers to the motive of God’s predestination of us.
 - d. While both expressions can be found in Scripture, it seems more preferable that it be taken with verse 4, since it would be kind of redundant in verse 5, “in love having predestinated us” and the end “the good pleasure of His will”. Jn. 4:17, Jn. 3:16
 - e. The Received text KJV and NKJV keep it in verse 4, the RSV and other with verse 5.

Illustration

The late founder and leader of Calvary Chapel Chuck Smith are important, “We neither are Five-Point Calvinists nor are we Arminian. We do believe in the security of the believer. We don’t believe that you can lose your salvation because you lost your temper or told a lie and, as a result, need to go forward next Sunday night to repent and get resaved. We believe in the security of the believer, but we also believe in the “perseverance of the saints.” We don’t believe that because you are a saint you will necessarily persevere—but that you need to persevere because you are a saint.” Jesus said, “If you continue in My word, then you are My disciples indeed.” Jn. 8:31 Then he quotes Jesus again, “If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. Jn. 15:6-7 “Jesus Himself brought up the possibility of a person not abiding in Him. So we seek to take a balanced position rather than getting on one side and pressing the Five Points of Calvinism.” (Calvary Distinct;115)

Application

1. Holiness is commanded of the believer, “Be holy, for I Am holy”. 1Pet. 1:16
2. Holiness is the will of God, “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how

to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor.”

1Thess. 4:3

3. Holiness makes us one with God and His holiness keeps us. Jn. 17:11

4. Holiness comes through the word. Jn. 17:17

5. Holiness is the evidence that I believe He is coming and desire to be with him when he returns. 1Jn. 3:3

6. We are to present our body . . . Rom. 12.1-2

7. Paul say, “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”. 1Thess. 5:23

8. Jesus is the holy mediator sanctifying His church. Eph. 5:26-27; Heb. 4:14-16; 1Tim. 2:5

9. “Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present *you* faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, *Be* glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.”
Jude 24-25

10. The threefold division of the letter is by the love of God.

a. The wealth of the believer by the love of God.

Eph. 1-3

b. The walk of the believer in the love of God.

Eph. 4-6:9

c. The warfare of the believer through the love of God. Ep. 6:10-24

The purpose of the choosing is to be transformed!

Conclusion

This is the proclamation of election marked by these three truths:

- I. The one who did the choosing was God!
- II. The time of the choosing was from before the foundation of the world!
- III. The purpose of the choosing is to be transformed!