

The Sequence of Election

by David Cooper

Election is a complex and mysterious topic that should be approached with reverence and humility, recognizing that there are secret things that belong to God and are not to be understood.

Duration: 1:15:18

Scripture: 2 Timothy 2:24

Topics: "Election"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the parable of the workers in the vineyard from the Bible. The landowner hires workers throughout the day, promising to pay them what is right. The first group of workers, who were hired early in the morning, expected to receive more payment than the others. However, when they all received the same amount, they complained and accused the landowner of being unfair. The preacher emphasizes that this parable teaches us about the mysterious ways of God and His power in bringing people to salvation. The sermon ends with a thought-provoking question about the connection between being the elect and a wedding.

Transcript

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the freewill offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. So here's a stimulating question to pique your interest and cause you to search this morning and see if you can answer this question somewhere in the message.

What does being the elect have to do with a wedding? What does being elect have to do with a wedding? Turn in your Bibles, if you would, to 1 Peter 1. If you remember, some time ago I had a message on Peter and we talked about his life and the role that he plays in the church and a little bit of introduction to this book that was being written from Babylon, Jewish Babylon, eight hours from Jerusalem. That it was addressed to those that had been scattered, probably underneath the persecution of Claudius, Caesar.

And Peter is addressing them with those things that are of importance in their lives where they are scattered across the country.

This morning I would like to speak on the sequence of election. The sequence of election. Foreknowledge, sanctification, obedience, sprinkling, then grace and peace.

The sequence of election. Reading in verse 2, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, grace unto you and peace be multiplied. Well, I'd like to just look at this word to begin with, elect.

The word elect in the Greek is ek-lektos, which is a very common word that is spoken about. Ek-lektos. It comes from two words right here if you divide it.

Ek, which means out of or from, and lego is the root of the other, which comes from the word to say or speak. The meaning of the word simply means to select or choose in the verbal form. And in this case here, in the noun form, it is used as that which is chosen or that which is selected.

Not to be monotonous, but I'm going to be a little thorough this morning because this subject, I don't know if you understand it, but this subject, this word is the center of a major controversy in the church, and it is a major controversy in the church today. It's not just of old time, but election, the term election, brings all kinds of thoughts to minds all across this nation, across the world. Down through the ages, this word, elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, by the sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, grace and peace be unto you.

Those words have caused controversy all through the Christian age. I think it goes back to at least 300 A.D. So I'm going to be a little monotonous this morning and scholastic, if you'll allow me, and just be thorough enough that I don't let any of you fall through the cracks in what I'm having to say. Take note in this word that there are various shades of meaning in a word.

I don't know how many of you would understand the word verbal noun, but when you're studying language, sometimes there is not a tense for every meaning of the language, the word. But the noun sometimes is used in a verbal sense, and sometimes it is used in a substantial sense. One time, you might be talking about eklektos.

This is the chosen, let's say, but that is a noun, right? All you English teachers that are teaching at home, that's a noun, right? Eklektos, the chosen. But the chosen has senses to it. You might be talking about, when you use this in a sentence, you may be emphasizing in the sentence the fact that someone chose, and so they are the chosen ones.

And in your mind, you think they are chosen, depending on how it's used. God chose them. And in that sense, it has a verbal sense in the noun.

Or you might be talking about them as the chosen. And in that sense, it's a name of a group of people in which it's a nominative sense, and it's more substantial than the previous example I gave. Sometimes the chosen can be used as a plural.

You might be speaking of a group of people who are chosen by God, or you might be talking about a singular person, chosen. Or you may be talking about a group of people and emphasizing the fact that

each individual in that group is chosen. And I think there are a number of others that I'm not saying.

I wrote these things down at home and failed to put them in my notes this morning. But there are shades of meaning in a word, is what I'm trying to draw out. You just don't plug a meaning to a word and then use it carelessly in every sense, or think that it means everything in every sense.

You can end up in very dangerous places doctrinally if you do that, and some have. So this word, ek-lek-dos, the elect. What elect has meant to me in the past is, the elect, to me, I was taught and raised to believe that the elect were those whom God, looking down through eons of time, from eternity past, had my name in mind.

And my name was by His sovereign choice, not dependent upon any quality of mine, but in His book He wrote my name as the elect, David Cooper. And unbeknownst to me, at the fullness of time, that writing exploded into reality in my life, and I became that which He destined me to be eons ago. That is election, according to the way I was raised.

And so I found myself among the elect, believing that I was there due solely to the will and purpose of Almighty God, which cannot be altered and changed. Therefore, naturally and logically follows that since I came to be in that place by a will not my own, then my staying in that place belongs to that same will, and my will cannot change the fact that I am elect unto salvation, and hence the doctrine of eternal security, which I've already spent time saying I do not believe that doctrine any longer. That's where I came from.

Election is a theological term since the days of Augustine, and especially since the days of John Calvin. So, as I was looking at 1 Peter here, and I was saying, Lord, what do I teach out of 1 Peter this week? I'd like to cover some material, since last time I preached, I preached one verse. And I told you then, if I keep this pace, I probably won't get done with a book in my lifetime.

But I'm not going to make much better progress today, because I have heard that there are some youth here that have been listening to Paul Washer. He's the latest, greatest of preachers on Sermon Index. And to those of you who don't know Paul Washer, Paul Washer is a fiery, zealous, bold, and young Baptist preacher who has woke up to the true state of the Baptist church, and is remaining in it by his preaching, seeking to wake up others in the Baptist church.

I think that's an accurate description of Paul Washer. He is awake, he is fiery, he's bold, and he's in the Baptist church, and he's young. I've heard that Paul was preaching at a recent conference where Denny Keniston was also preaching, and some of our people went to that conference.

And as a result, some of you are re-examining the doctrines of John Calvin, of which election is one of the pillars of his doctrine. So I'm glad to be able this morning to address this subject, since it has been one of my special interests for many years. I was a proponent of it, a defender of it, and a very interested Bible scholar of it.

So I'd like to take some time this morning, if you'll let me. Don't shut me off, because don't say, oh, David's going to get theological here, I think I'll take a nap. Because I don't think that'll be wisdom in the day that you're living.

I have a sense of gravity all about me as I make statements on this subject. First of all, because I'm going to deny some things that at one time I believed and defended. And I'm crossing old convictions as I speak this morning.

I feel it. I feel the pressure, I felt it all night, the pressure of preparing to cross statements I have made so boldly. And I'm going to deny them this morning.

Secondly, because I will directly contradict the doctrine of John Calvin, a man who has influenced the Christian world more than I ever hoped to do. Thirdly, because I may disagree with a multitude of men among the Baptist and other evangelical churches, many of whom are earnest and sincere, God-fearing men. And then fourthly, because I'm speaking about things that touch the person and character of God, many of which things are high and mysterious, and I do not wish to speak error in this pulpit this morning.

So that all gives me an air of concern about what I'm about to say about this subject. Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, grace unto you and peace be multiplied. Actually now, the word elect is not in the second verse.

In the original text it reads in the first verse, to the elect strangers. But in the English, it's been brought down to put it in closer proximity to the words that reference it or describe it. And so we find it here.

It's difficult to know where to begin with this subject. As I pondered where to begin, it seemed good to begin at the core of the issue of the heart. So I'd like to state and defend what election is not.

Because I feel like in my heart, that's the core of the issue. Having been deceived for so many years, I find that's the closest thing to my heart. What it's not.

What I used to believe and no longer do. Let me just state that election is not an inescapable, unconditional, sovereign, divine choice, which is predestined upon a man or a woman. That is not what Peter means when he says, elect strangers according to the foreknowledge of God.

In the works of Calvin, most of you would be familiar that Calvin's works are summarized by an acrostic called tulip. How many of you have heard of the tulip? Okay, pretty common. T, total depravity of man.

U, unconditional election. L, limited atonement, only those that are saved. I, irresistible grace, cannot help but be saved.

And P, perseverance of saints. The saints will persevere. So this is the U in Calvin that we're speaking about this morning.

Unconditional election. The book Christianity Through the Ages says this of Calvin. Calvin next taught that salvation is a matter of unconditional election, apart from human merit or divine foreknowledge.

Election is based on the sovereign will of God and is a dual predestination of some unto salvation and others to condemnation. And if you believe the one, you must believe the other. It's not logical otherwise.

I'd like to read a little bit from Calvin's Institute, Book 3, Chapter 21, Section 1. This is Calvin himself speaking or writing. I'll read slowly. If to make it appear that our salvation flows entirely from the good mercy of God, we must be carried back to the origin of election.

Then those who would extinguish it wickedly do as much as in them lies to obscure what they ought most loudly to extol. He's talking about me this morning. And they pluck up humility by the very roots.

If you understand his thinking, what he's saying is that when we give to God all the credit for salvation, that's a humble place to take. We don't exalt ourselves like we had anything to do with it. And that's his very thinking.

Paul clearly declares that it is only when the salvation of a remnant is ascribed to gratuitous election that we arrive at the knowledge that God saves whom he wills of his mere good pleasure and does not pay a debt, a debt which never can be due. Those who preclude access and would not have anyone to obtain a taste of this doctrine are equally unjust to God and men. That's me.

There being no other means of humbling us as we ought. In other words, he says that to believe this doctrine is the only way we can reach the humility that we should live at, is to believe that it had nothing to do with me, it was only God from eons past. Humbling us as we ought or making us feel how much we are bound to him.

Nor indeed have we elsewhere any sure ground of confidence. Note this. See that? Nor indeed have we elsewhere any sure ground of confidence except in the doctrine of unconditional election.

That's what Calvin is saying. You have no confidence anywhere else. This we say on the authority of Christ who, to deliver us from all fear and render us invincible amid our many dangers, snares and mortal conflicts, promises safety to all that the Father has taken under his protection.

John 10.26 From this we infer that all who know not that they are the peculiar people of God must be wretched from perpetual trepidation. That means they are so afraid all the time. And that those therefore, who by overlooking the three advantages which we have noted, would destroy the very foundation of our safety.

Note that. Calvin believes that this doctrine is the foundation of his safety. Thus, the assurance of salvation is based upon eternal election and unconditional at that.

Would destroy the very foundation of our safety, consult ill for themselves and for all the faithful. What do we not find here the very origin of the church, which as Bernard rightly teaches, could not be found or recognized among the creatures because it lies hid within the lap of blessed predestination and the mass of wretched condemnation. That's what Calvin believes about this doctrine.

He would read this verse to mean, elect not by the foreknowledge of God, but by the will of God in the past somewhere, you that I speak to today, have been elected to the position that you're in. Predestinated to fill it and can never, you could not help yourself, but find yourself sitting where you are today. That is Calvinism.

So let us examine the Scriptures to see if these things be so. Take note that Calvin, the thing that I see to be of importance this morning is that Calvin considers this doctrine to be the singular source of Christian assurance of salvation and safety. And without it, he calls them, what does he say, wretched because we must be, he perceives that if you don't believe this, then you must be living in perpetual fear for your soul.

What does the Bible say? Romans 9.20 I love God. I love God the way He can work in our lives and take the most fearful things and bring them to clarity and dissolve our fears. This verse used to be a terror to me.

Before and after. The way I used to believe and the way I do now. It used to be a fear to me.

It says, but nay, O man, who art thou that replies against God? Shall the thing form say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Let me start a verse ahead. In verse 17, For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might show my power in thee and that my name might be declared throughout the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy and whom he will he hardeneth.

Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Now, in order to understand what Paul is about to say, let's understand what is being said. Paul has just quoted the Bible. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.

Those are the words of God. Agreed? Those are the words of God. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.

And you will then say, Then why do you find fault? For who can resist your will? I wonder if you can see that. This is not a theological debate when it's being written. This is not a theological debate.

Calvin is nowhere in sight. Neither is Augustine. Paul is writing this to people who have their finger at the teacher of all teachers saying, I don't understand what you're saying.

How can you say that, God? How can you find fault then if you harden whom you harden? If you'll have mercy on whom you'll have mercy? And hence, verse 20, No, no, but O man, who are you? Who are you? Who do you think you are that you would speak that way to God? And I want to bring out of this verse this point. We are the students. We are the students.

We need to address this Scripture with reverence and humility first. Let God speak. We're the children.

When we don't understand something, we scratch our heads and listen all the more carefully so that God can make it clear. We don't ask God questions like that. And that's what Paul is speaking to here.

You want to get in a theological debate and many times I've sat at tables and I've been at that table and opened my mouth and said these very words. Then how can God find fault? And when you find yourself with those words in your heart or in your mouth, you are in a very dangerous place with God and with the Scripture. Because it was God Himself that said, I will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom I will, I will harden.

And every heart should say, have mercy on me, Lord. Have mercy on me. Romans 11.33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out.

He says this right after He has discussed the fall of Israel, the redemption of the Gentiles, and the subsequent prophesying of the fall of the Gentiles and the restoration of Israel. And when we look into those things which God has given us a little glimpse into the future, we have to just quietly say, these are secret things that God is speaking here. I don't understand them all, but I know in the wisdom of God there is a place where it is unquestionably quiet.

Everyone just sits and thinks and ponders and seeks to understand. And I think that's what Paul says here. He says, can we come to the place in our hearts where we understand that God's mind and His judgments, there is a place where we have to realize that it is past finding out.

It is past finding out. Deuteronomy 29.29 There's a beautiful promise here at the end of the book of Deuteronomy. The secret things belong unto the Lord our God.

But those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever that we may do all the words of this law. And this verse applies here this morning. There are secret things that if the mind seeks to delve into, you will lose your way because they belong to God and He has sealed them up and you will not find them out.

They are there just so that you can say, wow, God is deeper than I am and worship. But there are things that God has given unto us. They are the known things.

The knowable things. And those are the things that God has given to us and for our children for the express purpose that we, understanding them, should put them into practice and obey the law of God. So I believe it's safe to say that according to the Word of God, we should stick first with the knowable things.

If you're going to look into secret things, for sure, get the knowable things first in place because those are the things that are for us rather than looking into things that are only for God. I think I'll say this at this time. There is, without a doubt, a spiritual exhilaration in pondering the mystery of the wisdom of God and His infinite power and His sovereignty in the ways that He brings men to salvation.

You follow me? There's a lot of words there, but there is an exhilaration in pondering those things. How God moves and the mysterious ways and His power and His interference in men's lives to bring them to salvation. It is a spiritual exhilaration.

There is a pure and humble delight in realizing that the mind of the Lord and the intricate workings of His will and power in the lives of men are past finding out. How many times have we had to say, I don't understand God. When you hear a testimony, you just say, I don't understand.

It's past finding out. I cannot define it. And there is a pure and humble delight in that realization.

Yet there is an aspect of this whole matter of election that is God's secret. And in a very real way, His way is fathomless. And those who make election their theological foundation and seek to remove it from its realm of mystery, they repeatedly, if not universally, fail in the practical applications of holiness in their lives and seem to fall short of the righteousness based in a holy fear of God.

I've read the Bible through many times. Having an acute interest in this very subject and never once in Scripture that I know of is the assurance of salvation based upon election. It is not in the Bible.

But rather, election is the foundation of gratitude and thanksgiving to God. That's what election is for. That little glimpse into the secret, mysterious place of God's will and power is not given to us that we might sit on our laurels and live in sin.

It is given to us that we might fear the holy place God has given unto us and we might live in that gratitude and that gratefulness and thankfulness and fear lest we fall from our exalted position. In fact, the whole book of 1 John is devoted to this very purpose that you may know that you have eternal life. Yet, election is not found in 1 John as a foundation of this assurance.

And 1 John is the only book I know of whose major theme is the purpose to assure you that you are of God and that you have eternal life. And yet, you will not find this doctrine according to Calvin found in that

book. 2 Timothy 2 Please turn there.

Just want to look at some things here and add things up and reason with the Scripture a little bit. 2 Timothy 2.20 says, But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honor and some to dishonor. A sister pointed this out to me actually and it fell right in line with what I had to say here this morning.

Now, according to John Calvin and the theory that I just described to you this morning, what this would be saying is that in a great house, whether it be the world or the church, there are not only people of good quality, but of lower quality. And some people have been predestined by the will of God to a position of honor and election. And others are predestined by the election of God to dishonor and damnation.

That is the doctrine of unconditional election according to John Calvin. But now let's read the next verse. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use.

Need I say more? Notice also in verse 25, it says, The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, able to teach, patient in meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves. If peradventure, God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil who are taken captive by him at his will. Well now, is there anywhere in there to believe that God under the scenes and from times past has predestined that man to be in the position that he is while all the Word of God counsels us to get him out of it? I say that's unsound thinking.

Israel is known as God's elect. Isaiah 45.4 For Jacob my servant's sake and Israel's mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name. In Isaiah 65.9 I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob and out of Judah, an inheritance of my mountains, and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.

Isaiah 65.22 They shall not build and another inhabit. They shall not plant and another eat. For as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the plural of their hands.

Notice that in each one of those, it speaks in a nominative sense, plural. It's speaking of mine elect being the name that God chooses to use for His people, but He's talking about the whole of the group in a nominative sense. They are my elect.

End of quotes. In Deuteronomy 7, turn there if you would, 7 verse 6 through 8, notice that when God chose Israel, it was with reasons, not according to His eternal will somewhere in eternity past. He gave reasons why He chose Israel.

The Lord did not set His love upon you nor choose you because you were more in number than any people. For ye were the fewest of all people, but because the Lord loved you and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Also in Deuteronomy 10.15, only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them and He chose their seed after them, even you above all people as it is this day.

1 Peter 2.9 says, you are a chosen... turn to 1 Peter. I want to say race, but I don't think that's it. You are chosen generation.

Generation meaning a type of people or a family of people with similar qualities. You are a chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar people. Notice that those chosen refers to a whole group of people.

It is the universal church of Christ that He's talking to. You are a chosen generation. You are a holy nation.

You are a royal priesthood and a peculiar people. Turn also to 1 Timothy 5.21. Paul says, I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. Why does Paul refer to the angels of heaven as the elect angels? Anybody have an answer? Okay.

Two-thirds, right? One-third I mean. One-third was swept out of heaven by... what does the Bible say? By the dragon. Revelation 12.

He swept a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. That was the work of the devil. And two-thirds remained faithful unto God and they are called here elect angels.

Now, do we dare to infer then that in time past in the will of God, He elected two-thirds of His angels and the other third, He elected to be damned and bring the devastation to the earth that they do. And bring the judgment on them that He's going to. See where it throws you into a totally fantastic world of theology.

It's not true. The angels are elect because of their character that refused to believe evil against God in the face of the slanderer which is the name of the devil. Diabolos, which means slanderer.

And with his slander, the Bible says with his tale, he drew a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And two-thirds did not and God calls them elect. Elect angels of the highest quality.

Choice angels. Matthew 20, verse 16. Let's just take a look at Jesus' teachings here and see if Jesus agrees with my... well, I wouldn't call Him my friend anymore.

With John Calvin. Matthew 20, verse 16. So the last shall be first and the first last, for many be called, but few chosen.

I don't know if any of you have ever pondered what that means. How many have questioned what does that mean? Alright, well let me give you a little bit of insight into the words in this passage here. If you remember this story, this landowner had a vineyard and he went out, as you remember, into the market and hired men at the beginning of the day and said, I'll give you a penny for your day.

And they went into his field. And then throughout the day, he would go back into the marketplace and hire others for the same amount. No, he didn't even tell them how much it would be for.

He just said, go into my harvest field and when it's right, I'll pay you. And the only difference between the first group and all the other groups is the other groups just took him at his word that he would be kind to them. And the first group was working for hire.

They had in mind, I'm going to get this much for what I do. And they were working for the reward. And it shows in the day that they come to the judgment, when they all line up and he gives them their penny and penny and penny and it says the last thought that they would receive more.

And when they were given their penny, having worked their whole day assuming a penny, they complained against the owner of the land and accused him of being unfair because they didn't get more

than the other ones and he had made them equal. And then Jesus says these words, take that is thine and go thy way. Take your penny that you worked for and go your way.

Think of that. This is talking about the day of judgment. Take your penny and go your way.

And then the others, he says, if I want to be kind to them. And then Jesus ends that whole scene by saying, so the last shall be first and the first last. For many are called, but few are chosen.

Is he talking about election here? Is he talking about unconditional election in this verse? Or is he talking about the character quality of the first group of workers? He has to be talking about something in this parable, right? What is in this parable that he's talking about when he says, there are many called, but few are chosen. It's clear in Matthew 22. Matthew 22.

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king which made a marriage for his son and sent forth his servants into the harvest. Sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden the wedding. And as you remember, they go and one man says, well they go and tell the people, hey, my ox is killed, my fatlings are killed, I'm ready.

Come to the supper. And they make excuse and go their way. One to his, what does it say, one to his farm, another to his merchandise.

And the end result is that he sends his servants to fill the wedding another way by going into the highways and byways. And then the king finds this man in his feast that doesn't have the wedding dress. He gets cast into the outer darkness where there's weeping and gnashing of teeth.

And then he says in verse 14, for many are called, but few are chosen. Now you tell me, in the story of the wedding feast, who is called to the wedding feast? Who is called? Everyone is called, right? Those that went their way and those that came. We're all called, correct? But how many are chosen? Right.

It's the ones that came to the wedding, right? Now look at this verse right here. And he said to his servants, verse 8, the wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Why were those that were bidden not worthy? Upon what criteria does he judge them? Unworthy of the wedding.

Because they refused. They made light of the invitation of God and went their way, one to his merchandise, one to his farm, and God said, you are not worthy of my wedding. Now you tell me, can you imagine saying, but the king predestined them from eternity past that they should act that way to the invitation.

That is the doctrine of John Calvin. Unconditional. Election of the saints.

I cannot see it and stay sane with the Word of God. You cannot do it. You will end up in so many twisted places in your theology.

It will pervert you. Luke 14, 16. It's the same situation.

A man who made a great supper and called and they said, I've just bought a cow. I've got to go try it out. I've just bought land.

I want to go look at it. I just married a wife. I can't come to the wedding.

I have all these other things going in my life. And it says, the man was angry and said unto his servants, go into the highways and byways and fill my house because not one of those who were bidden are going to taste my feast. He was angry.

Who was he angry with? The ones that refused it. Why did they refuse it? It was their decision, right? They chose to love their farm or the invitation to the wedding feast of the Lamb. And Calvin says, they refused the invitation because the very king that invited them and the very king that's angry at them because they refused it, that king predetermined that they should refuse it.

Some of you are smiling like you can hardly believe that someone would believe that. But I'm telling you, I believed it. I was taught it every week.

I went to school and studied it. John Calvin was a hero. It's not true.

It's not true. Unconditional election is not true. But election is true.

Election is true. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God through the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Election is a sovereign, benevolent plan of God to have a chosen, redeemed nation called by His name.

And He has predestined that it shall be so. Each member of this nation is a recipient of His grace by the hearing of the Gospel, the call of God to repentance and remission of sins, and then the personal submission of faith in Jesus Christ. The personal submission.

You know what Paul says of the Jews? Knowing not the righteousness of God, they went about to make up their own righteousness and have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. They have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. That's why they're lost.

That's why they're a synagogue of Satan. That's why they've been cut off. Because they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.

And they are no longer the elect. They end up cut off from the branch. Cut off from the tree.

Now there is an election that there is a plan of God to restore them again. And that all comes into play later on. But it was their own choice.

The Bible lays the fault at their own choice. Then the personal submission of faith in Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, by which they become a member of a chosen nation. Elect.

Elect. And when in the end of time, persecution and tribulation on this globe becomes so fierce that it would destroy all mankind, yet for the sake of His elect, that group of people that are His nation on this world, those days will be shortened. All of this is full of the working of God in that man's life to bring him to the light of the truth.

This nation and every member of it are known to God before the world was created in the foreknowledge of God. Elect strangers should be a title that we take to ourselves with joy and thankfulness. I believe that is why Peter writes that word here at the beginning of his book.

The very first address to these people, he addresses them as elect. A chosen people. A people that God has laid His name upon and elevated to a place of nobility and royalty.

Elect. Chosen. That I should find myself in the congregation of the righteous is a thing that amazes me.

Have you ever experienced that? Just to ponder, how did I get here? What am I doing in this congregation? What am I doing a recipient to all the things God has promised to our fathers? That should be something that awakens us to lay hold of election with trembling joy as the song says and be grateful for it. God, thank you that you have placed me in a place like this. I want to stay here.

Brothers and sisters, I want to stay there. Alright? That's my take on election. Now briefly, I just want to cover the last couple words here.

According to the foreknowledge of God. When we speak of the foreknowledge of God, we are speaking of unfathomable wisdom. Knowledge that is beyond our even understanding to state it.

David says, such knowledge is too high for me. I cannot attain it. It's too high.

Before there is a word on my tongue, behold, thou knowest it altogether. That's the wisdom of God. What I was, what I will be, God has known from the beginning of the world to the extent that it says of Jesus Christ that He was slain from the foundations of the world.

That when God in His intimate wisdom and unsearchable knowledge, He knew the plan, He knew the outworkings of it, and He foresaw by His prophetic understanding everything that would take place down to your name. He said to Cyrus, I have surnamed you. There is going to be a young man born.

His name will be Josiah. You know, that's the knowledge and the understanding of God. It is foreknowledge.

God knows it ahead of time. According to the foreknowledge of God. You know, you said this morning, Brother Mose, that we should always be mindful that we are under the eye of God.

But, it's beyond the eye of God. You know, turn the lights out. Pull down the shades.

Hide in the closet. The knowledge of God sees you there. The foreknowledge of God will not be a difficulty.

He will have no difficulty in the day of judgment remembering what you did. He knew it before He created the world. There won't be any arguments as to whether my motives were this or that, or whether I did this or that, or exactly what detail took place, because God already knew it before the beginning of the world.

He can for sure remember it after it happens. The foreknowledge of God. Let us just bow our hearts in awe that God knows all things.

And therein, there is a secret place that belongeth only to God. And while He gives us little cracks and peeps into it and makes statements about it, it is to help us with our awe and our worship. But there are certain things He has given to us that belong to us.

And those things are very plain in the Scriptures. Let's not be derailed into a theology that's based on delving into secret mysteries and things that are hard to understand. When Jesus has plainly spoken to us the things that are for us, for our children, that we might keep them and do the law that He has laid upon us, by or through the sanctification of the Spirit, we are elect according to the foreknowledge of God through the sanctification of the Spirit.

The word sanctification simply means setting apart. You have been set apart out of the masses of the world and brought into a special place of the elect of God. You have been put there by that work of the Holy Ghost that put you there.

It is the work of the Spirit of God. It is the process by which we have left the world and took on a new person and a new life and a new birth by the Spirit of God. And notice, unto obedience.

You are elect according to the foreknowledge of God. You are elect by or through the sanctification of the Spirit. And you are elect unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood.

Notice that obedience is first there. Did you notice that? Not the sprinkling. First there must be an obedience to the Gospel and a submitting of myself unto the righteousness of God, which means I let go of my own righteousness.

See? And then we submit ourselves in obedience to the Gospel. And when that takes place, it says here that we are elect unto the sprinkling of the blood of Christ. You know, I think there are two different pictures in that word, sprinkling.

One is when Moses took the blood of the sacrifice and he took a hyssop and he dipped it in the blood and then he sprinkled the law of the testimony and he sprinkled the priests and he sprinkled the people with the blood. And in symbol, as that blood spattered on them, the blood of atonement for sin, they became a clean people. And that's what God is saying here.

That's what you were elected unto. You were elect. You were chosen to make up this kind of people according to the foreknowledge of God, by the working of the Holy Ghost, and unto this end that you might obey and be sprinkled and be a clean people before God.

Clean of sin. Do you see the natural progression of thoughts? Election. Then, foreknowledge.

The cause. Process. The sanctification, which is the process by which it takes place.

Obedience and the sprinkling of blood being the goal of election. And the result is found at the end of the verse. Grace unto you and peace be multiplied.

That's where grace and peace is found. Grace and peace is found in the assembly of the elect. God's elect.

In the assembly of a holy nation. A peculiar people set apart for God unto obedience and sprinkling and cleanness and purity from sin. So this morning, I commend you.

I commend you, the elect, unto your God. The God who wrote those words. The elect.

The chosen of God. Let's stand at our feet and have a word of prayer. Our Heavenly Father, how we thank You for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Name above names. Teacher above teachers. Exalted One.

Full of wisdom. Righteousness. Full of power.

We exalt You. We do thank You for Your Son this morning. Lord, my heart trembles to speak about these things.

Many of these things are mysterious. Many of these things You have hidden in the secret place of Your own wisdom. I pray this morning that You would take these words and guide simple feet away from the path and the snare of death into light and truth and victory and power.

May we all stand to give our testimony that I have come into the land which You have sworn to give to My fathers. Thank You, Jesus. I thank You for Your Word.

I thank You for Your wisdom, for Your Spirit, for the truth and all those joys that You've given to the elect of God. In Jesus' name, Amen. Yes, that's right.

Verse 26, "...hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation that they..." You see that? "...of one blood all nations of men that they should seek the Lord. If happily they might feel after Him and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us." It totally negates the fact of total depravity that man is so depraved that he cannot seek after God. Here He says, "...he hath made of one blood all nations, if happily they might feel after Him and find Him." Meaning that all mankind should in one way or another come to seek the Lord.

And He's not far from every one of them. And the thought that is really good with that is that it is known that even among the heathen that that has been true. That if a man realizes there's a Creator God in the creation, and he begins to see that and seeks after Him, even by divine revelation, he finds the reality of that.

There are many testimonies throughout history unto that, which has just been a thrill to my heart. I remember the one in China where I think that the plan of salvation was written in the heavens. All right, I think we'll open it up for further testimony.

Get the microphones there. Raise your hand if you have a word of testimony to give on this subject or a confession anyone has. Over here, Mark Bankson.

Oh, you have one over there first. Dave Esch. All right, Dave.

Yeah, I want to thank God for the blessing and privilege of being here today. I just, it reminded me of with David bringing that message, it reminded me of Dean coming to the knowledge, being in the army and coming to the knowledge that when Jesus said to love our enemies, it probably meant that we shouldn't kill them. David has made a full circle even since he's been here from Calvinism to this, and I just appreciate it tremendously.

One thing he didn't talk about real much is the controversy, the conflict between sovereignty and free will. And I believe that God can give us all free will and still remain totally sovereign and that it actually increases, it should actually increase our belief in the sovereignty of God that he's actually able to give us free will and still remain totally sovereign. How he does that, we don't know.

It's one of the mysteries of God. But I also think the teachings of election are to show us our unworthiness and the fact that God does it all and there's nothing that we can do except we still have to, we can't add to the cross. It's God that did it, but we still have to be obedient.

It's like the virgins that were invited to the wedding. They were invited and it was their calling to come, but five of them weren't ready. And I just appreciate tremendously the message and the teaching from Brother

David this morning.

So God bless you, Brother David. Amen. Yes, Brother Mark.

Yeah, just with, you know, over the years, having come from Calvinism, I remember debates. I don't know if I was a part of or just witnessed or whatever, but you know, the Calvinist has such an airtight defense for his doctrine. And so it can be pretty intimidating listening to a Calvinist explain how he is sure that he is right.

And Calvin was the same way. There's a verse that really, looking back, seems to shed a lot of light on that thought. It's in Psalm 25, verse 9. It says, The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way.

And the last couple of weeks, I listened to some CDs that David Purcell put out about Calvin, about the life that he lived and the Geneva, the city that he tried to create. And he shared some personal testimonies about letters that Calvin wrote to, I think it's Servetus, the man he had executed. And it just seemed pretty obvious.

Calvin was not a humble man. That's right. And it just seems ironic that what David said about Calvin, that embracing Calvinism is the only way to truly be humble because you're giving God total glory.

But yet I've seen through Calvin's life and through the lives of people that lived in the anti-Nicene era the first 300 years, and the Anabaptists, it just seems like the people that believed in predestination, the character of them and the humility don't hold a candle to the character of the people that rejected it. That's right. And I know there's some exceptions there, but to me that just shed a lot of light.

Thank you, Brother David. I also wanted to, with what Brother Amos shared, just to thank all the elders and I don't know if Rick's listening, but definitely him too, for just putting up with the things that you have to put up with, working for Dean, just seeing the endless labor that you have to put, just kind of putting out fires, taking care of difficult things. And so we want to bless you and say thank you for what you've done for the effort of Christian fellowship.

And may God give you grace to continue on. Amen. Yes, that's very true.

Yes. Praise the Lord. Thank you, Brother David, for sharing that message.

But as you read in 1 Samuel, it says that the first king of Israel was what? Chosen, picked, elected. And the king, and you know why he was rejected? Because thou hast rejected the Word of God and he has also rejected thee. Right.

And when I get to talk to Calvin, that's the verse. And then later on it says, but the Spirit of God left him. Yes.

So you can be chosen, but if you're going to neglect the Word of God, you can also be rejected. That's right. And I thank you, Brother, for the boldness of giving up and speaking of the truth.

And I also want to thank you, Brethren, for laboring in the Word. We've had so many, we've had so many, how would I say, so many fresh foods from the fountain of life in the 12 years that I've been here, I feel unworthy of it all. God bless you.

Yes, thank you. And someone else? CJ? Yes. I appreciate this message in the sense that we can all meditate and take the Word of God and make our convictions strong based on the Word of God.

I used to be influenced a lot by Calvinist doctrine, and yet, as I would read my Bible, I would run into many verses that just could not fit, that just basically cannot fit in a doctrine. And then I would come on the other side that was presented today, and still many verses would not fit. But the way God delivered me from that was in verse, in 1 John chapter 5, verse 12, where it says, He that hath a son hath life, and he that hath not a son of God hath not life.

And so, whatever a doctrine person believes, if it doesn't lead them into the life of Christ, if it doesn't make them more Christ-like, more humble, more patient, more gentle, more God-fearing, it's not truth. Because truth sets free from sin. And so, there are people that are free from sin, believing one doctrine, others are free from sin, believing the other.

But God looks at the heart. I believe that the heart is the main issue. And doctrine is more like problem of head, and God can correct it.

But if life is wrong, we can have right doctrine and still go straight to hell. If it's all being able to present and prove and all those things. So, I believe that having a son is the solution.

That is, the Holy Spirit comes and we humble ourselves, yield to the voice of the Spirit, and stop resisting and pushing our own way. This is the way to salvation. So, thank you, Brother David, for laboring in the Word.

Yeah, concerning Brother Tom, or Mark's comments there, I would just like to include Michael Pearl also in that. A very extremely arrogant preacher who also is an eternal securitist, a Calvinist, and making a lot of inroads among our people with his arrogant position that he's taking also very, very dangerous in many ways and bringing about teachings that are not according to the Word of God. Yes, Lawrence? Yeah, I'd just like to lift up the verse of rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

A workman that need not to be ashamed. I feel like that's what was done this morning. The Word of God was rightly divided.

If we don't learn to do that, we're going to go off on err like that there. There was a message preached in 1992 on that very thing of rightly dividing the Word of Truth. And I just listened to that last night again, and I felt that's so necessary for us as a church to continue to do that.

And I'm thankful for that this morning. I want to bless Brother David for doing that.

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