

or "Do I have a choice in salvation?"

Ephesians 1:3-14; Romans 8:28-30; (9:14-26)

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Today, in our "Faith Engage" series, we examine the doctrine of ELECTION. Right off the bat, we need a definition of what we are talking about. I suggest the following for our preliminary understanding:

Definition of ELECTION: That sovereign act of God in grace, whereby He chose in Christ Jesus for salvation all those whom He foreknew would accept Him.

From "Lectures in Systematic Theology" by Henry Thiessen, chairman of the faculty of the graduate school of Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois

So election, by definition, is the choosing by God of some for salvation, implying that some are not chosen.

The term "election" is found in our New Testament in only a half dozen or so places.

1 Thessalonians 1:4 speaks of knowing "your election"

Romans 11:5 speaks of "a remnant according to the election of grace"

2 Peter 1:10 challenges to "make your calling and election sure"

More often, we see the usage of the term "elect":

1 Peter 2:9 - "you are an elect race"

Colossians 3:12 - "Put on therefore, as God's elect ... a heart of compassion"

Luke 18:7 - "Shall not God avenge His elect"

Mark 13:22 - "there shall arise false prophets ... that they may lead astray, if possible, the elect"

We seen, then, the term "elect" is used of those who are saved, and "election" as referring to our salvation, specifically having been chosen by God for this salvation

ELECT = PREDESTINED = FOREORDAINED = CHOSEN

(Closely related: PERSEVERANCE of the saints)

These terms are used interchangeably in the New Testament.

✓ ELECTION carries the thought of being "voted in" by God to His kingdom

✓ PREDESTINATION and PREORDINATION carries the thought of God deciding ahead of time the destiny of those He has created

✓ CHOSEN carries the thought of God's choice of who will be in His family

Though all of these might give a sense of security or encouragement to we who are saved, it can also give a sense of confusion as to how "free will" fits into the equation of salvation. Do I have a choice, or is all decided by God ahead of time?

And part of this conversation is usually "Once I am saved am I always saved?"

That is the related doctrinal issue of "Perseverance of the saints" which pastor Tyler will speak on in a few weeks.

Now if I am "elected" to office, I am pleased that there was a majority of those who voted who found me worthy of their service.

If I am "chosen" for a particular privilege or benefit, I am blessed and appreciative.

And whether I am elected or chosen, I understand that there are some who are not elected or chosen, and I can accept this as part of the process.

But if I am "predestined" or "foreordained" to something I tend to balk at my lack of say in the matter. And I don't find it quite so easy to accept some not being predestined to salvation.

Thus, the doctrinal issue of ELECTION can cause a reaction of GRATEFUL ACCEPTANCE or INSENSED REJECTION, depending on how it is received or perceived.

My goal today is two-fold:

1. To "indoctrinate" you as to what the Scripture teaches about ELECTION
2. To "equip" you as to how you can best engage your contemporaries on the issue of God's choosing versus free choice

For this I take you to what I believe are the **3 primary Biblical passages** that teach on this issue: 1.
Ephesians 1:3-14

2. Romans 8:28-30
3. Romans 9:14-26

EPHESIANS 1:3-14

"He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world . . ."(v.4)

CHOSEN . . . (Ephesians 1:3-14)

1. To be holy & blameless (v.4) *He wants us to be without sin*
2. To adoption as sons (v.5) *He wants us to be in His family*
3. For His purpose (v.11) *He wants us to fulfill His purpose*

BLESSINGS OF BEING CHOSEN

1. Adoption (v.5)
2. Redemption (v.7)
3. Forgiveness (v.7)
4. Inheritance (v.11)
5. Holy Spirit (v.13)

ROMANS 8:28-30

"...called according to His purpose" (v.28)

THE 5 STAGES OF SALVATION (Romans 8:29-30)

1. Foreknown
2. Predestined
3. Called
4. Justified
5. Glorified

Note:

1. All things "working together for good" is predicated on being called by God for His purpose. He takes special care of his specially chosen.
2. Predestination (being chosen) is based on God's foreknowledge (not on whim)
3. Predestination is the path to becoming like Jesus in thought, deed & will (not every path predetermined)
4. Being "justified" (saved) means you have been "chosen" (we discover this after the fact, not before the fact)
5. All chosen are called, saved & glorified – none are lost or left behind

ROMANS 9:14-26 (for further study)

"there is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be!" (v.14)

Our minds and hearts long for an explanation that harmonizes the Scriptural teaching of the sovereignty of God with the responsibility of man. It is not satisfying to accept a doctrine that has God whimsically choosing some for glory and yet dooming others to destruction, even though God has the right to do what He pleases. Here are the primary helps to consider:

1. Election is based on foreknowledge

Romans 8:29 "those whom He foreknew, He also predestined ..."

2. Christ died for all

1 Timothy 2:6 "[Christ Jesus] gave Himself as a ransom for all ..."

3. God is just

1 Timothy 2:4 "[God our Savior] desires all men to be saved ..."

4. Missionary activity is commanded

Mark 16:15 "Go into all the world and preach the gospel ..."

Although most of the Biblical teaching on the doctrine of election is found in Paul's writings,

Jesus teaches election and free will in the same verse!

John 6:37 [Jesus:] All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

IT IS NOT ELECTION or FREE WILL, but ELECTION and FREE WILL!

ELECTION IS "God's perspective, and FREE WILL "man's perspective of the same mystery

The apostle John wrote "we love, because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19)

In regards to this doctrine of ELECTION, it might similarly be said:

"We choose Him, because He first chose us" - SELAH!