

Chosen to Salvation

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: 2 Thessalonians 2:13

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Paul said in 2 Thessalonians 2:13, “We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.”

What is election? Old Dr. J.R. Graves was out working in his rose garden one day. A dear lady who lived next door to him walked over in the rose garden and she said, “Dr. Graves,”

He said, “Yes, ma’am?”

She said, “You are a Baptist, aren’t you?”

He said, “Yes, ma’am.”

She said, “You Baptists believe in election, don’t you?”

He said, “Yes, we do.”

She said, “I wish you would explain it to me.”

He said, “Well, are you saved?”

She said, “Yes, sir.”

He said, “Who saved you?”

She said, “God did.”

He said, “Did God save you on purpose or was it an accident?”

She said, “Well, God saved me on purpose.”

He said, “That, my dear lady, is election. Everything God does he does on purpose. There are no accidents with God.”

Spurgeon used to say, "Election is this: the whole of the work whereby a lost, ruined sinner is brought from death to life, from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of God's dear Son is of God and of him only."

As Jonah said, "Salvation is of the Lord."

As David wrote, "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord."

The whole of the work, all of it, whereby a lost, ruined sinner is brought from death to life, from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of God's dear Son, alpha and omega is of God and of him only. God saved me and God saved me on purpose. For we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, who are the called according to his purpose.

Now, the second question: Is Election taught in the Bible? Well, turn to Matthew chapter 24. Let's just read a few verses. I want you to follow with me while I read the Word of God. And as I said, write down these Scriptures.

People are always coming to me and they say, "Well, what are you going to do with this?"

Well, I am not going to do anything with that until I do something with this. Let's read the Word of God and let's be honest in our praise over the Word of God. Let's let God's Word sit in judgment on our doctrine instead of making our doctrine sit in judgment on God's Word.

Most people know already what they believe and try to find the Scripture to prove it.

Now, let's look at God's Word. Matthew 24, verse 24, "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and shall show great signs and wonders insomuch that if it were possible the shall deceive the very elect."

Now turn to verse 31 of that same chapter, Matthew 24:31. "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." The elect. This is a Bible term. And in reading these verses tonight turn to Mark 13, Mark 13. In reading these verses tonight I am only giving you a few of the Scriptures that refer to the elect, the elect of God.

Now, in Mark chapter 13, verse 20, "And except that the Lord had shortened those days no flesh should be saved, but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days." The elect whom he hath chosen.

Now John chapter six. In the sixth chapter of John we are going to read verse 37. What I am saying is this. Election is taught in the Bible.

I was up in Cerrito, West Virginia one time playing golf. There used to be a golf course up there where the drive in theater and the bank is now and we were playing golf and Sand Greens. And it was a filling station there. It is where Weather Tight is located. That is free advertisement, Charlie. It cost...put a little bit in the offering tonight. It is where Weather Tight Aluminum Products is located. That used to be a golf course, served a better purpose then than it does now.

But anyway, we were playing golf there and I went in the filling station to get a Coca Cola. And there was a Bible open on the desk in the filling station. I didn't know the man. I didn't know who he was or anything standing there drinking a Coca Cola and saw the Bible open. And that pleased me a great deal. It made my heart kind of jump. There was a man running a business with his...reading his Bible in between tending the pumps. And I took his Bible and I looked at it and I said, "That's a nice Bible."

He said, "Well, thank you." He said, "Do you believe in predestination?"

Well, now, I didn't know why he asked me that? I said, "Well, I don't know. Do you believe in it?"

He said, "No."

I said, "Well, why don't we see what the Bible says about it and then decide whether we believe it or not." He didn't know I was a preacher. I don't know whether he was or not. But I said, "Let's see what the Bible says about predestination."

So I looked it up in the concordance and I found that it is used four times, possibly five in the New Testament. And I turned to where it was used the first time and I read it and I said, "It says here that God hath predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son." I said, "Don't you want to be conformed to the image of God's Son?"

He said, "Well, yeah, I do."

I said, "Well, that's what predestination is." God hath predetermined all of the means and all of the causes and all of the events that will bring us, some day, to perfectly be conformed to the image of God's Son. He predestinated all of those things. And I read all of those Scriptures.

He said, "Well, I never seen that like that before."

Well, now, my friends, what you and I ought to do is get us a Bible. You can buy one pretty cheap now, you know. And let's quit accepting what we have always been taught. You know, to admit you were wrong yesterday is to admit you are a little smarter today. Isn't that right? If I admit I didn't know something yesterday, but I found it out today, that is to admit that I am smarter now than I was yesterday. I hope I am smarter today than I was yesterday. I hope I don't have a closed Bible and a closed mind. I hope, before God, I have got an open Bible and an open mind.

But let's look here at John chapter six, verse 37. Christ said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

Now, we live in a dishonest generation. We live in a generation where men quote half a verse. They quote a verse like this: "Whosoever will may come." The Bible doesn't say that anywhere from Genesis to Revelation. That is just a few words taken and wrongly taken out of a verse. What the Bible does say is, "The Spirit and the bride say come and let him that heareth say come and him that is athirst come and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely." That is what the Bible says. And that is a whole lot different meaning from, "Whosoever will may come." It is whosoever will let him take the water of life.

Are you thirsty?

"Well, no I am not."

Well, don't you come, then. You have got no invitation. You have got no...there is always a condition on every invitation.

"Thou your sins be as scarlet I will make them white as snow."

Are your sins as scarlet?

"Well, no, I'm not such a bad fellow."

Then don't come.

"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden. I will give you rest."

Are you laboring and heavy laden under sin?

"Well, no, I'm not."

Then Christ didn't invite you.

"Whosoever is a thirst let him come, take the water of life."

Are you thirsty?

"Well, no, I am not."

Then you are not invited.

And it says here—and people quote this verse—"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." The Bible doesn't say that. It says, "All that my Father giveth me shall come

to me and him that cometh under those conditions I won't cast out." Isn't that what it says? That is what that verse says I am reading.

Look at verse 44. "No man can come to me. No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him." And I will raise him up at the last day.

John 13. Turn to John 13, verse 18. In the 13th chapter of John verse 18 Christ is speaking to the disciples and he says, "I speak not of you all," John 13:18, "I know whom I have chosen. But that the Scripture might be fulfilled he that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. I speak not of all of you. I know whom I have chosen."

In John 15, turn over there, John 15, verse 16. Christ, again, speaking to the disciples, "You have not chosen me. I have chosen you and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit and your fruit should remain that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in my name he may give it you."

John 17:9. Turn over here. John 17:9, "I pray for them. I pray for them." Christ six times in the 17th chapter of John uses this phrase: "Those whom thou hast given me. Those whom thou hast given me." Now what he says in John 17:9. "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me for they are thine."

The strangest thing in the world to me is that if men should contend that Christ's will and desire is to save the whole world when he refused to pray for the world. The strangest thing in the world to me is that men should contend that Christ made an effort to save the whole world and then turned around and said, "I pray not for the world." And that is what he said. "I don't pray for the world. I don't pray for every human being." If he prayed for every human being they would be saved because they Father answers every prayer the Son prays. He said, "Father, I know you hear me always." He couldn't pray for the world. If he had prayed for the world the whole world would be saved. If he died for the world the whole world would be saved.

Christ said, "It is finished." What he came to do was finished. It was completed. He can't fail.

Now, your little Jesus may be a failure, but the Christ of the Bible is not. He shall not fail. "I pray not for the world. I pray for them which thou hast given me out of the world. All mine are thine and thine are mine. And I am glorified in them."

Now turn to Acts 13:48. In Acts 13:48 what I want you to do is write these Scriptures down and approach them with an open heart and a prayerful heart. And pray, "Oh, God, I am a child. Teach me." A proud sinner is going to learn nothing. God resisteth the proud. God is not going to teach a haughty man, an arrogant man anything. "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before the fall."

In Acts 13:48, "And when the Gentiles heard this they were glad and they glorified the Word of the Lord. And as many as were ordained to life, to eternal life, they believed."

Now, people have tried for generations to turn that around and make that say, “As many as believed were ordained to life.” But that is not what the Scripture says. It says, “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”

Now, turn to Romans nine. I had an unusual experience when I read this Scripture one time. Every time I look at it I think about it. In fact, some of the men were present when this took place. But I was trying to teach the whole counsel of God, the Word of God. I was trying to be honest with a congregation of which I was the pastor. And I was getting quite a bit of static and quite a bit of rebellion. And one Sunday I decided, “Well, I’ll just take the Bible and read the Bible.” I was teaching a men’s Bible class. There were a lot of men there. And I started reading at verse 10 of Romans nine. And this is what I did. I stood before that class and I started reading. I didn’t make a comment, just read. “And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.”

And when I got there a fellow stopped me.

And I said, “Yes, sir?”

He said, “You are teaching that God chose certain men out of the race to save them before they were ever born.”

I said, “No, sir. I am not either.”

He said, “Yes, you are. That is exactly what you are teaching.”

I said, “I beg your pardon. I am not teaching anything. I am just reading God’s Word. That is the conclusion you drew from me reading the Word of God.”

And he got up and walked out and never came back in church again. So rebellious and so hateful that even the Word of God wouldn’t break his heart.

Now, my friend, if you are in that shape there is no hope for you. There is no help for you. What conclusion did you draw when I just read that? You know what you...the conclusion you came up with; that salvation is of the Lord.

“Jacob have I loved.”

Brother MacGruder told me one time his dad was a preacher over in Missouri, an old time Baptist preacher. And MacGruder said that his dad preached the doctrines of grace and one day he went in the study and was talking to his dad and he said, “Dad,” he said, “I don’t understand that verse in Romans 9:13, ‘Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated.’” He said, “I don’t understand how God could hate Esau.”

And his dad tried to explain it to him and then Mac told me, he said, “After I grew up and came to know something about the depravity of the human heart, the rebellion of mankind against God, the evil and sin in this world, the satanic principles on which this world turns,” he said, “My question, if I could see my dad today, would not be, ‘How can God hate Esau?’ My question would be, ‘Dad, who in the world could God love Jacob?’”

If you ever see yourself as a sinner condemned before the law of God, the question won’t be, “How can God hate Esau?” I know how God could hate Esau. Esau was a hateful person and so are we. The question is: How could a holy God love Jacob? And how could God love you? Huh? Do you know? Do you have any reason why God should love you?

Turn to Romans 11. In Romans 11, verse five listen to this. “Even so, at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works otherwise grace is no more grace.” Right now there is a remnant. There is a handful according to the election of grace.

Look at verse seven. “What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for.” Israel sought it in their ceremonies. Israel sought it in their works. Israel sought it in their own righteousness. And they didn’t find it there. But the—listen to this—“But the election hath obtained it” because God opened their eyes and let them see that Christ was their righteousness. God opened their ears and let them hear the sweet sounds of forgiveness through Christ’s blood. And the rest of them were blinded.

That is God’s Word.

Then, if you will look at Ephesians chapter one. In Ephesians the first chapter... And, as I say, I am just hitting some high points, giving you some of the Scriptures in the Word of God that teach election. In Ephesians one, listen to verse three. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ according as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will.”

God chose us. When? Before the foundation of the world. Why? Because he willed it. Now, that is what that verse teaches.

You say, "It doesn't mean that."

Well, what does it mean? Does "ye must be born again," mean ye must be born again?

"Well, yeah. That's what that..."

Well, why doesn't this mean this?

When we talk about everlasting life in heaven does it mean that?

"Well, sure, it means that."

Well, why doesn't this mean what it says?

When it talks about eternal condemnation in hell does it mean that? When it talks about Christ died on a cross. Did he really die on a cross? Well, why doesn't this mean this?

"Because we don't want it to. It takes away human glory. It destroys human works. It leaves us as beggars dependant on God and not on our own flesh. That is the reason we don't want it to mean that."

We are not...people travel under the smoke screen of concern for others. No, it isn't. It is concerned for this old proud flesh. We are not willing to be humbled. We are not willing to admit that everything we have spiritually is by God's grace and grace alone. We are not willing. We want some praise and credit.

Turn to 1 Thessalonians one, 1 Thessalonians one, verse four and five. "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance as you know what manner of men we were among you for your sakes. And you became followers of us and of the Lord."

Now, turn to 2 Timothy 2:10, 2 Timothy 2:10. Here is a wealth of Scripture that nobody will touch. And you hear preaching on the radio and you hear preaching on the television. You hear preaching in the pulpit and here are hundreds of verses that nobody will touch. They won't deal with them. They won't preach them. Because when you read them, they preach themselves. They give God the glory and make man a recipient of a gift.

2 Timothy two, verse 10. Listen. "Therefore," Paul said, "I endure all things for the elect's sake that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." Paul said, "That is why I am here." He said, "I suffer trouble," verse nine, "I even have been put in jail. But I endure it for the elect's sake.

God has got some people here and I am here looking them out. I am here to preach to them. I am here to declare the gospel to them until they obtain salvation which is in

Christ Jesus with eternal glory. That is why any preacher is where he is. It is because God has got an elect people. He is not there scavenging like a scavenger out in the dump heap of the world trying to find some old piece of tin that will let God use it. He is looking for Gods' sheep. And he will find them, too.

Election is taught in the Bible.

Now, here is another question that I want to pose. Why do I believe in election other than the fact it is taught in the Scriptures? That is sufficient. It is taught in God's Word. But I believe in election for another reason. I believe in election because—and this is very simple—man is man and God is God. That's why I believe in election. Man is fallen and depraved and corrupt and he will not come to God. God is sovereign. God is almighty and he will not let everybody perish. It has pleased him to have a people for his name.

If man is fallen, if man is dead, if man is depraved, if man loves darkness rather than light, if man will not come to Christ, if the law cannot save you, if men do not know God, if the natural mind is enmity against God, then God must initiate salvation. God must make men willing. God must quicken and give life because man cannot and will not do it for himself.

They came to Christ and they said, "Who, then, can be saved?"

He said, "With men it is impossible." That is why I believe election. Because salvation with men is impossible, impossible. But with God all things are possible. And I believe in election because man is man, fallen, depraved and will not come, cannot come. And I believe it because God is almighty. And if God cannot fail and if God can do everything, if God works everything according to the good pleasure of his will which the Bible says, if God knows the end from the beginning, if God gave a people to Christ, if God is going to have inhabitants in glory, then all whom he sets out to save are going to be saved because God is God. God is God.

A lady came up to me a few days ago who was objecting to sovereign grace and she read a verse of Scripture and she said, "What does that mean?"

I tried to tell her.

She said, "I don't believe that." She said, "I believe it is the will of God that everybody be saved."

I said, "Do you really?"

She said, "Yes, I do."

I said, "Is everybody going to be saved?"

She said, "No. People are already in hell."

Then I said, “God’s will is not going to be done. You worship a God whose will is not going to be done.” And yet the Lord Jesus prayed himself, “They will be done.” And every time you pray the Lord’s Prayer you pray the same thing, “They will be done.” And you are telling me it is not going to be done?

Christ said, “If you ask anything according to my will it shall be done.”

We are so confused. People are so confused about this matter of who God is. They have got God in a box. This generation has got a Mickey Mouse God. That’s right. They have got a peanut God Barnard used to call it. They have got a God who wants to and can’t, who wills to and is not able, who is disappointed, defeated and frustrated, who is hamstrung by men who have more power than he does. And that is not the God of the Bible.

“Can I not do with my own what I will?” God said. He said, “You run down to the potter’s house and I will teach you something.” That pottery, that clay is in the hands of the potter. And he will fashion and mold it according to his will. That clay has no power over the potter. The potter hath power over the clay.

Let’s go back to our text, 2 Thessalonians 2:13. If there were no other text in the Bible but this one I would have to believe in divine election. Paul says, “We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation.”

And I am glad I can preach this without apologizing for it. I am glad I can preach this without trying to have to try to explain it away. Wouldn’t that be awful to have to stand up here before a group of intelligent men and women and say, “Now, that doesn’t mean that.” There are a lot of preachers who hide behind this. “In the Greek it means this.”

“We are bound to give thanks for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation.”

There are six things that I want to present which will help, I think, us grow in our knowledge of this blessed truth. First of all, election is a doctrine of praise. Paul, the doctrine of election is a doctrine of praise, a doctrine of praise. Paul always praised God for his grace. He praised God for his covenant mercies. He praised God for his grace in Christ Jesus. Look at Ephesians one. Listen to him. He says there in our text, he said, “We are bound to give thanks because God hath chosen you. Thank God he chose you.” And then in Ephesians chapter one, verse three he says, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath chosen us in Christ. Blessed be God.” It is a doctrine of praise.

The amazing thing, it is a great mystery to me. Keep Ephesians one open there a minute. It is amazing to me that men today murmur against and complain about that which Paul...for which Paul praised God. People today take the doctrine of election and murmur against it and Paul thanked God for it. They complain about it and Paul thanked God

for it. He said, "Bless God he chose us. I thank God he chose you," he said. It is a doctrine of praise.

In Ephesians chapter one, here, it tells us the work of the Father. He chose us, he predestinated us to the adoption of sons according to the good pleasure of his will. Verse six, look at it. "To the praise of the glory of his grace."

Boy, if you ever see where you were and your inability and your helplessness and God could have left you alone. He could have passed you by. And yet he was pleased to choose you. You will praise his grace.

And then it tells us in the next few verses how that Christ, verse seven, bought redemption through his blood. Verse nine, made known to us the mystery of his will. Verse 11, gave us an inheritance in the heaven. Verse 12, that we should be to the praise of his glory.

When you look at the cross and see how Christ suffered for us and died for us. He didn't have to. He said, "No man takes my life from me. I lay it down." And how he willingly loved you and came down here to save you. He said, "One of my sheep is lost." And he left the 90 and nine and went out in the wilderness and found it. And somebody sits around and murmurs about it. No, if he knows God he praises God.

And the next few verses tell how the Holy Spirit revealed the truth to us. Verse 13, we heard the truth. And verse 13, we were sealed with the Holy Spirit. And then, verse 14, God gave us the Spirit as a token of our inheritance until it becomes ours. The last line in verse 14, "unto the praise of his glory."

I don't want to hear anybody else call the doctrine of election a hated doctrine. Praise God for it. It is only ignorant people who say things like that. It is only people who have never known what they were and where they were and how hopeless they were who know nothing of the mercies of God and the grace of God. God didn't please to save the angels that fell. He reserved them unto condemnation. It says in Hebrews, "He took not on himself the nature of angels, but the nature of the seed of Abraham." Thank God for that.

And then, secondly, the doctrine of election, let's look at our text again. Paul says, "I am bound to give thanks for you, brethren." It is a doctrine of love. "Beloved of the Lord. Beloved of the Lord."

God's election of a people to redeem is because God loved them. Could I show you that? Turn to Deuteronomy seven. It wasn't because you were lovely. It wasn't because you were gracious. It wasn't because you were talented. It wasn't because you were holy. It wasn't because you God needed you. He said to Israel, in Deuteronomy seven, verse seven, "The Lord did not set his love upon you nor choose you because you were more in number than any people. You were the fewest of all, but because the Lord loved you and because he would keep the oath which he swore to 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.” Why did he do that? He loved you. You didn’t love him. What does the Scripture say in 1 John? “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us.” 1 John three, verse one, says, “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God.” In Jeremiah 31:3 it says, “I have drawn you,” he said, “With an everlasting love.”

We didn’t love him. He loved us when we were unlovely.

Turn to Ephesians two. I’ll show you something about it here in Ephesians chapter two. The doctrine of election is a doctrine of love. It says in verse one of Ephesians two, “We were dead in trespasses and sins.” In verse two it says, “We walked according to the course of this world.” In verse three he says, “We had our conversation in the lust of the flesh and we were by nature the children of wrath.” And verse four says, “But God...”

It is not, “But I made a decision, but I changed my mind, but I saw where I was headed, but I saw the grass is greener on the other side, but I heard a good sermon.” It says that is the way we were, “But God who is rich and mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead he quickened us with Christ.” The difference is God not you.

It is not “But I anything.” It is “But God.” I was on the slippery slide to hell. I was on the toboggan road to eternal damnation. I was on the Damascus road to burning, but God stopped me because he loved me. And he wouldn’t let me go. Oh love that will not let me go.

Look back at the text. The doctrine of election is a doctrine of praise. Secondly, it is a doctrine of love. Thirdly, it is a doctrine of eternal grace. God hath from the beginning chosen you.

Now, my friends, I want you to look at Acts 15:18, at Acts 15, verse 18. “God hath from the beginning...” Can you tell me when the beginning was? Huh? Well, the Scripture say, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. All things were made by him.” That is pretty far back, isn’t it? Pretty far a piece. Way back yonder. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation.”

And here it says in Acts 15:18, “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” That is when it took place. That is when God loved you. That is when God chose you. When no sun, moon or stars were in the sky, when no angel walked across the heavens, when no earth was hurled into space, when there was no being, no motion, no time. God loved us and chose us. And he said, “I am the Lord I change not. The same yesterday, today and forever.”

In John chapter six, verse 64, it says, “Jesus knew from the beginning who would betray him and who would believe him, from the beginning.”

This grace of God is eternal. God hath from the beginning.

Now, look at the text again. Let's move on. It is a doctrine of praise. It is a doctrine of love. It is a doctrine of eternal grace. It is a doctrine of redemption. "God hath from the beginning chosen you," one two letter word here that is vitally important, "to salvation, to salvation."

Now, my friends, and I want this clearly understood, election is not salvation. It is unto salvation. A man is not saved, he is not made a new creature, he is not presented faultless as a child of God before the throne of God because of election, but because Christ died for him, because Christ is his substitute, because Christ is his Savior. Election didn't save me, Christ did. I was elected to salvation. Christ lived for me. He died for me. I am saved. I am forgive because Christ satisfied the justice of God. Election didn't satisfy the justice of God. Christ did. I am righteous because Christ obeyed the law. I am healed by his stripes. God chose us in Christ. He called Christ his elect. Christ is the first born of every creature. We were chosen in Christ. We were elected to be saved.

Now, stay with me a minute. Listen real careful. Old brother Muse used to say, "Don't move a hand nor a hair." Just a minute. Now then, somebody says, "Well, what about all the other people in the world. What about all the other people?"

Well, let me ask you something. Is there anybody here who wishes to be holy? Is there anybody here who wishes to be regenerated? Is there anybody here who wishes to be sanctified, who wants, above all things, to be like Christ? Is there anybody here who wants to be delivered from sin, who wants to walk with God? Is there anybody here who wants to live in and love God and be filled with the Spirit of God? Is there anybody here who wants to be just like Christ?

Somebody says, "Preacher, I do."

Oh, believe me, then you are elected. You are elected. You are chosen. Anybody who wants what I just talked about can have it.

"I thought you preached God elected people to heaven or to hell."

That's not what I preached. Now somebody may preach that, but I don't. The Scripture says we are elected to be holy and without blame. He hath chosen us in Christ that we might be holy, that we might be a peculiar people. Men are elected to salvation. Men are elected to holiness and through that to heaven. But when God elects his people to make them like Christ they enjoy a little bit of heaven right here. It is not just a future thing. I am going to go on. Now, listen. But somebody else out there says, "Well, I don't want to be holy. I don't want to give up the world. I don't want to give up evil. I don't love worship. I don't enjoy the presence of God. I don't love the Word of God. I don't love the gospel."

Then, my friend, why do you grumble that God hasn't elected you to a life that, by your own admission, you don't like? You don't want. Huh?

"I don't think it is fair for God to elect you and pass me by."

Do you want it?

"Well, now, I don't."

Well, don't grumble if God doesn't make you take it. You wouldn't be happy. You would be miserable. If God chose you to holiness you wouldn't like it. If God forced you into the kingdom of God you would rebel against it.

One preacher said, "If God took you to heaven you would get a wheel barrow and shovel and dig up the gold and try to sell the streets. You would have angels fighting before dark." You wouldn't like it up there. You prefer drunkenness to sobriety. You prefer dishonesty to honesty. You prefer evil to good. And the most ridiculous thing I ever heard is for a man to complain that he hasn't been elected to something that he doesn't want.

Suppose the church here has individual opera seats and every seat is full, absolutely full, not a seat left. And a fellow standing outside the church. There is not a seat left, now. And he is standing outside the church and he says, "It is a shame. It is a dirty shame that they don't make that place bigger. It is a shame. I don't have a place in there. I don't like the preacher and I don't like his gospel and I don't like the folks who are there, but I think it...I would be miserable if I was in there, but it is not right for them not to provide me a seat."

This is ridiculous and you see the folly of it. Almighty God is going to save all whom he can wisely save. And God almighty is going to redeem all who want redemption. And God almighty is going to make holy everybody who is willing to be made holy. And God almighty is going to bring to Christ every person who wants to come to Christ. That's right. I don't care who it is. I don't care where he is, what color his skin is. I care not what denomination he is. I say every man...now I didn't say he is going to take everybody to heaven that wants to go to heaven. I said he is going to make holy everybody who wants to be holy. And he is going to make a part of Christ everybody who wants to be a part of Christ. He chose you to salvation.

Now, look at the next line. Election is a doctrine of holiness. Now, listen to me. There have been thousands of people who have been ruined by misunderstanding election and misunderstanding a decision for Christ.

Let me quote some Scripture. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, he is accursed." "If any man love not his brother he is a liar and the truth is not in him." "If any man love the world, the love of God is not in him."

Now, I know the elect are not perfect and they are not spotless, but you can take their lives as a whole and you can take the direction and tenor and bend of their will. They love God. And they love his commandments and they love his law and they love his people and they walk in communion with him because God chose them to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit. And they have a victorious life because they have a victorious Lord.

And then last of all, and I close. Election is a doctrine of means.

You say, "Well, you say God chose people to salvation. He is going to save them whether we preach or not."

No, he is not. No, he is not either. You turn to Romans 10. In Romans chapter 10 it says, in Romans the 10th chapter, "Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, but how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how are they going to hear without a preacher?" God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and what? Belief of the truth. And those two things are essential. The setting apart of the Holy Spirit, the work of the Holy Spirit and the hearing of the Word of God.

God hath chosen by the foolishness of preaching to save them that what? Believe. And as man as were ordained to eternal life did what? They believed. No unbeliever will ever get in heaven whether he is elect or not elect. There is no man who will ever be saved without hearing the gospel.

"Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God for our gospel, our gospel came to you in power." Have you felt your sins? Have you heard the gospel? Do you want God's grace? Will you receive him? Will you believe him?

"Yes, I will, preacher."

Then God made you willing and you are one of the elect. And I say this in closing. Christ is the doctrine and Christ is the doctor. Christ is the revelation and Christ is revealer. And Christ is the light of men and Christ is the illuminator. And Christ is the message and Christ is the messenger. And he is exalted in every word of the gospel because Jesus Christ is the sum and substance of the gospel. And we have been, back in eternity, chosen of God and predestinated to be like his Son. And men will praise him in heaven who have learned to praise him on this earth.

Our Father, bless this message. We confess that we know nothing. We are but children. But we...