

Salvation—Election (3rd)

(The study for today continues studying the doctrine of election unto salvation. In this podcast we find that it is the elect of God that are preserved and kept by faith not only in this life but they shall be ushered into the presence of the Lord in the world to come.)

We have scripturally shown in previous podcasts that the election of some people unto salvation was not something that God decided to do after the fall of man. It was further proven that election was not based on anything that man would do but that it was purely by the sovereign mercy and grace of God. It was purposed by God in eternity before the creation of the universe and it was by His good pleasure. The basic objections to the doctrine of election were equally addressed in previous studies and it was discovered that those objections revealed essentially that natural man refuses to bow to his Creator and the plain teaching of the Holy Scriptures. In our study today we will look at other passages that substantiate this blessed truth.

When our blessed Lord was answering the disciples questions regarding the destruction of Jerusalem, the signs of His return, and the signs of the end of the world (Matthew 24:3), He said that those historical events would be customized for the elect. In verse twenty-two He stated, “And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.” While many things are taught in the context of this verse, one thing that stands out is that in the times of trials and afflictions the Lord providentially overrules so that the elect will never have to endure more than he can bear. God equally teaches this truth when Paul instructed the congregation at Corinth the following: “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*,” I Corinthians 10:13. Back in Matthew chapter twenty-four, our Lord followed in verse twenty-four with this blessed consolation: “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great sign and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” These verses give comfort and consolation that the doctrine of election is not a subject for theologians to debate but that it encourages and strengthens the elect as he lives out his life in this sinful world. The believer is taught to seek the Lord and His kingdom first and foremost (Matthew 6:33) and to strive to enter into the strait gate (Matthew 7:13-14) and to “live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:12), but he is not left to himself. God overrules the events in history and works in the elect so that he will not be deceived by false teachers, cf. Philippians 2:12-13. Then in Matthew 24:31, we find that at the return of the Lord the Son of Man will “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.” By this we find that those elected before the world began and kept in the midst of trials and affliction, will not be deceived by false prophets, and will be gathered unto the Lord by His angels at the end of this world. Therefore, election unto salvation is a comforting doctrine and one for which we ought to thank the Lord continually for His great love bestowed on us before the foundation of the world. No wonder the apostle Paul wrote “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world . . . , Ephesians 1:3ff. The doctrine of election is no dry doctrine when properly understood; it is a glorious truth that honors and glorifies the Lord that none of His will be lost and they shall be with Him in glory to worship Him forever.

These passages in Matthew twenty-four clearly reveal that the Lord Jesus Christ believed that there are a group of people that are designated as the elect and that ultimately it is this group that will be gathered together in the last days by the holy angels. Therefore, the doctrine of election was not

some new belief that originated by man; it is the truth of God which was affirmed by our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is another classic passage which shows that our Lord believed there is an elect of God. It is Luke 18:7: “And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?” Christ did not simply speak of them as the elect but as “his own elect”; that is, God’s own elect. Even in Matthew 24:31, the angels are to gather together “his elect”; that is, the elect of God, the very ones chosen by Him before the world was created. However, our passage in Luke is set in the context of Jesus teaching us about prayer. Luke tells us that the parable was for the purpose “that men ought always to pray, and not to faint,” Luke 18:1. The Lord gave the story about a widow going before a judge that did not fear God nor did he care what man thought about his judgments. The woman desired to be avenged of her adversary, but the judge refused to consider her case. However, because the widow refused to give up, finally the judge granted her request so that she would quit bothering him. With this, our Lord encourages us to continue in pray and that though the people of God have many enemies and adversaries, they often pray to see justice done that eventually God will avenge them. Here our Lord designates His people as “his own elect”—God’s own elect. By this we see that the doctrine of election is a comforting doctrine associated with our prayer life.

The doctrine of election is not something that is disconnected from other truths of the Scriptures. In fact, the doctrine of justification (of which we plan to study at a later podcast) is directed related to the truth of election. Romans 8:33 states, “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? *It is* God that justifieth.” This verse is in the context of a glorious passage of Scripture that sums up the overall doctrine of salvation. It begins with God loving or knowing His people before the world and followed by those people being predestinated unto the image of Christ. Then it moves to the predestinated being called and justified and, finally, glorified. God identified this group of people in our verse as the elect of God. In other words, the rhetorical question in the verse is answered by the fact that no one can lay any charge against the elect of God because it is God that justifies them. If a person is justified, he is considered as being not guilty before the law, and since Christ died and rose again for the justification (Romans 4:25) of those chosen by the Father and given to the Son (John 6:37-40), we find that no charge can be brought against the elect of God.

Another verse that shows that the doctrine of election is not detached from other doctrines of faith and truth is Titus 1:1: “Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness.” Note three things listed in this verse: “faith of God’s elect”; “truth”; and “godliness.” (Our plans are to show the connection of election and godliness in our next podcast and, therefore, we will not consider that at this time.) Now we will consider the subjects of faith and truth in their connection with the doctrine of election.

The phrase “the faith of God’s elect” may be considered with reference to the doctrine of the Christian faith or to the faith which the believer possesses as given to him by God in regeneration. Either way, it is qualified as that which only the elect have. Allow me to share a quote from A. W. Pink: “Therefore do we read of ‘the faith of God’s elect’ (Titus 1:1), which differs radically from the ‘faith’ of formal religionists and wild enthusiasts. First, because it is a divine gift and not the working of a natural principle. Second. Because it receives with childlike simplicity whatever is states” [sic. Possibly stated--JKB] “in the Word, quibbling not at ‘difficulties’ therein. Third, because its possessor realized that only God can sustain and maintain that faith in his soul, for it lies not in the power of the creature to either exercise or increase it.” *The Doctrines of Election and Justification*, page 103.

The faith of God’s elect is equally connected to the “acknowledging of the truth.” Again, we see that the doctrine of election is not an independent doctrine separated from the truth of the Holy Scriptures. This is a vital connection to the gospel because without the truth of the Scriptures there is no gospel and the Word of God clearly tells us that there is only one gospel. Listen to Galatians 1:6-9:

“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” Therefore, it is obvious that the doctrine of election unto salvation is a central element of the gospel and the Christian faith and is to be believed by all of the sheep for which Christ died (John 10:11). May the Lord bless us to honor and glorify the Lord for the election of grace for our salvation.

The Lord willing we will consider the doctrine of election and the connection of godliness in our next podcast. Nevertheless, our time is up for today. Farewell.