

Series: Ephesians
Title: Love of Election
Text: Ephesians 1: 20-21
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Ephesians 1: 3: Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly [places] in Christ: 4: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Title: Love of Election

No one knows his election until he has been effectually called by the Holy Spirit to life and faith in Christ. For those who have, this the most precious truth because of a hidden mystery which God reveals to his child therein.

Some who claim to believe the gospel become very offended at the doctrine of election. Sadly, most think they are an authority on the word of God. The problem is they think they are the authority rather than God. Even those who insist the word of God is their only rule of faith, will say, "Well, this is what I think. This is what I believe." By that, they are saying their rule of faith and practice is not the word of God, it's them, their thoughts.

So if some are offended, I understand why. God's ways and God's thoughts contradict man's ways and man's thoughts and that offends man. That will continue to be the case, unless God reconciles a man's thoughts to God's thoughts. So God says,

Isaiah 55: 7: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8: For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9: For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Usually, the final argument man is, it is not God he disagrees with, it is the preacher. An entire congregation did that once. In their minds, it was not God they were rejecting, only the man preaching. The problem was that man was the GodMan, Christ Jesus. If Christ sends one of his witnesses with his word, speaking from the scriptures, it may just be Christ speaking to. He does that in our day, just as the Father did through him. That is why we preach the scriptures, comparing scripture with scripture. The words that I speak to you are not my words; they are the words of him that sent me. Here is the word of God:

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I. ELECTION ORIGINATES WITH GOD THE FATHER—V4: According as he hath chosen us.

Election means a choice has been made—"he hath chosen". God the Father has elected whom he will and those God has chosen shall be saved. No maybe about it. They shall.

There are two primary reasons why God hath chosen us in Christ. First, "that in all, Christ might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;" (Col 1: 18-19) Second is vitally

connected with the first—Ephesians 1: 9: “to make known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.”

Proposition: This mystery is what I want to show you at the end of the message.

Election is the Chief Grace

Notice here, God’s choosing his people is the first blessing, the chief blessing, by which he gave all other spiritual blessings—V3: God...hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings...v4: According as he hath chosen us in him.

The chapter lists these spiritual blessings: Sanctification, Adoption, Acceptance, Redemption, Forgiveness, Regeneration, Revelation, Faith, Preservation, Resurrection, Eternal Inheritance. But God the Father blessed us with all those spiritual blessings--“according as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world.”

What a blessing divine election is! Apart from God the Father choosing us, no other spiritual blessings would be given.

II. GOD THE FATHER CHOSE US IN CHRIST

Christ is the Preeminent Elect

First, God the Father chose Christ, Christ is the Father’s preeminent elect (Isaiah 42:1).

Isaiah 42: 1: Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth;

God the Father chose Christ because he loved him. God’s whole purpose in salvation is to glorify the Son of his love! And God the Father revealed to his Son the mystery of his will, the purpose which God the Father purposed in himself. It was not good in the Father’s sight that the God-man should be alone (Gen. 2:18) so he chose us to be his bride, to be a help-meet to him by his grace working in us.

Sent to Fulfill God’s Will

Christ entered into an everlasting covenant to fulfill all the Father’s will, to bring to pass this hidden mystery of God’s will to this chosen people. When God the Father choose him and the Son of God agreed. Right then from everlasting, he became Mediator and Surety, the Head and Husband of his Church.

Psalm 89:19: Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. 20: I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: 21 With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him.

Hebrews 5: 5...Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. 6...Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

So God the Father sent him. Christ filled a human body with the glory of the divine perfections, the express image of the invisible God, so these children could have a conception of God the Father. He fulfilled all that was written in the scriptures concerning him. The Representative and Substitute of his people fulfilled the righteousness of the law throughout his life and fulfilled the justice of law by his death. Then being satisfied and delighted with his Son, God the Father raised him giving him all power in heaven and earth and now

Christ our Head fills each of these elect children full of grace by the Spirit, by the gospel. He fills his church, his body, his fullness. And at last Christ shall fulfill God's purpose by gather all in one, in Christ, presenting them all to Father.

And because God the Father chose us in him, he became the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. As our Surety—right then God “saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,” (2 Tim 1: 9)

Brethren, all spiritual blessings are wrapped up in this blessing of divine election? When God chose us in our Surety, all would certainly be fulfilled in time, that is why it says God the Father “blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heaven in Christ according as he chose us in him.” Election is the blessing by which it's said “of God are ye in Christ Jesus.” Because God's first elect shall not fail, it is certain he shall save his people from our sins; because it is certain that “Christ filleth all in all”, “Christ is all in all!” All spiritual blessings are wonderful but our Head and Husband is THE BLESSING! “He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 1:30-31)

Colossians 2:9: For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (10) And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:”

III. ALL WAS DONE—V4: BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD

This is great assurance for every believer. God choice of his people was an eternal act of God the Father before as yet time existed therefore nothing in time can change or alter it.

The Will of God

God the Father choosing his elect people in Christ was the will of God. He does not change. Our God has no new will. There is nothing new that has not always been from eternity or that shall not always be with God. Therefore the choice God made of his people before the foundation of the world shall remain unchanged forever.

The Purpose of God

It is “the purpose which God purposed in himself” before the foundation of the world. God's purpose is as eternal and immovable as himself. Since God purposed it “in himself” then nothing outside of himself can change his purpose.

Our text says, God chose us in Christ from the “foundation of the world.” In Christ our Surety—Hebrews 4 says, “the works were finished from the foundation of the world.” And in Matthew 25: 34, Christ said in the end the King shall say to those on his right hand, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD.

Have you entrusted you, and all the work of making you the righteousness of God, into the hand of Christ Jesus—that is what God did for those he chose in Christ. Are you resting in Christ from all your works as God did from his? Do you trust God that he wrote your name in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world? Christ has blotted out all the sin of his people, so our names shall never be blotted out of his book (Rev. 17:8). As sure as God's choice of Christ is from everlasting to everlasting so shall his choice of those he chose in Christ.

Romans 11: 29: For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

IV. NOW HERE IS ANOTHER REASON THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION IS SUCH A COMFORT—V4: GOD HATH CHOSEN US IN CHRIST THAT WE SHOULD BE HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME BEFORE HIM”

Some corrupt this doctrine by saying that God chose a people because God foresaw that in time they would believe on him. That is not true. That would make election to be based on works, on our merit, rather than on the free and sovereign grace of God.

All by Grace

God chose his people and gave them these other blessings as well all by grace.

2 Thessalonians 2: 13: But we are bound to give thanks alway 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: 14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Because God chose us, these other blessings followed all by grace. Christ redeemed us perfecting us forever by his one offering. He sent the gospel in truth to us. The Holy Spirit sanctified us in the new birth. He gave us faith in Christ. And thereby we believed, all of his grace by his blessings freely given to us. So our holiness is the effect of God’s election not the cause. And it is all of grace! _Eternal glorification will also be the effect of the election of grace. It would be absurd to say that God chose us because he foresaw that we would eternally glorify ourselves. God having eternally elected his people declares the good news to us that no part of our salvation is by our works, all is by his grace.

2 Timothy 1:9: Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 10: But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Romans 11: 5:...the election of grace. 6: And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.

Eternally Holy in Christ

But here is even more assurance: The Lord God chose us in Christ “that we should be holy and without blame before him.” Even when we fell in Adam, were born dead in sins, God the Father has always seen us in Christ holy and without blame before him.

V. ALL OF THESE BLESSING GIVEN TO US IN GOD’S ELECTING GRACE IS—V4: IN LOVE—THIS IS THE MYSTERY OF GOD’S WILL.

The Father loved Christ, therefore he chose Christ from the foundation of the world and he gave Christ his glory—that is, he revealed to Christ “the mystery of his will, the purpose which he purposed in himself.”

The Mystery of His Will

So Christ came forth and redeemed his people by his blood by laying down his life for us. Then Christ sent the gospel to us. Here is the will which was hidden of God.

Ephesians 1: 8: Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: [which is this:] 10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

The Love of Election

Now turn to John 17, as Christ prayed to the Father, Christ spoke concerning those to whom Christ had revealed the mystery.

John 17: 22: The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; [The glory is the mystery—the gospel—Christ abounded toward those saints in wisdom and prudence, revealed the gospel, the hidden mystery of God to them. which is this. This is what we just read in Ephesians but he adds something.] that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, AS THOU HAST LOVED ME.

Here is the “Love of Election.” From the foundation of the world, God loved his Son so much that it was his will to give his Son all preeminence, with an inheritance and all fullness. And God loved his elect as he loves Christ. So it was the Fathers’ will to exalt us, and give us an inheritance and all fullness with Christ. So the purpose God purposed in himself was that he would do both by giving his people to his Son and his Son to redeem his people from our sins. Therefore, Christ said, “I will do it!” He came, redeemed us by his blood, and God exalted Christ, and us in Christ, to that inheritance in glory.

And as part of the Father’s promise to Christ for his sufferings, the Father gave Christ the glory as our Head to reveal the mystery of the Father to us through the gospel, by the Holy Spirit of promise and thus divide his eternal inheritance with us. So Christ sent the gospel and revealed the mystery of God’s exceeding great love toward us, uniting us together in him through faith. For now, he has given us the earnest of the inheritance, but soon Christ will return for his purchased possession.

So to strengthen us and unite us as we wait, Christ says to us, God our Father did it all—because the Father loved you, AS the Father loves me.”

1 John 4: 9: In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. 10: Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11: Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

That is the “Love of Election”. It is the love for which God the Father elected Christ and elected us in Christ, it is the love for which Christ loved the Father, loved us and laid down his life to unite us both in one, even in him and it is the love by which we declare this glorious doctrine of election and proclaim with all the praise we can toward our God and our Father for his glory and his grace!

1 John 3:1: Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

Amen!