

THE MOST NEGLECTED DOCTRINE IN THE BIBLE

2 PETER 1:10 • TV-368B

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2 Peter 1:10

“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.”

Here is the title of my message; I want you to remember this title: **“THE MOST NEGLECTED DOCTRINE IN THE BIBLE.”**

What is the most neglected doctrine in preaching today? It is in the Word of God but it is neglected by most preachers; they just don’t preach it.

Well, my text is found in **2 Peter 1:10**; here’s the text: *“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, (that is, make your calling and election sure) you shall never fail.”*

How long has it been since you’ve heard a sermon on divine election? How long has it been? Or the question may be asked, have you ever heard a message from the pulpit on divine election? Have you ever heard a message on divine election, God’s elective grace from the pulpit, have you ever?

Well, if you haven’t, doesn’t that seem strange to you? Does it seem strange to you that you’ve never heard a sermon on divine election when the words elect, elected, election occur in the Word of God 27 times, just those words, not counting chosen and choose but just the words elect, election, elected occurs in the Word of God 27 times?

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The Bible has a whole lot more to say about election than it does the new birth, a whole lot more. And this, my friends, is the most neglected today, is the most neglected doctrine found in the Word of God.

And I'm going to preach on this doctrine, divine election. Now I anticipate objections, especially from preachers and other religious leaders. But I announce my subject, election, divine election, and God's elective grace. I'm quite familiar with the objections that'll come forth. Here's one:

First of all: They say this; "Why preach on election, why preach on such a profound, mysterious, and controversial subject?"

"Why preach on it?" Why indeed; because it's in the Word of God. Listen; let me read you some Scriptures, **Matthew 24:31**. Most of these you've heard or you've read before; "*God shall send forth His angels and gather together His elect.*"

Luke 18:7; "*Shall not God avenge His own elect?*" **Romans 8:33**; "*Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?*" **Romans 11:5**; "*At this present time there's a remnant according to the election of grace.*"

Colossians 3:12; "*Put on therefore as the elect of God, bowels of mercy.*" **Romans 11:7**; "*The election hath obtained it; the rest were blinded.*" **2 Timothy 2:10**; Paul said, talking about prison and beatings and persecutions; he said, "*I endure all these things for the elect's sake.*"

Our Lord said; "*Anti-Christ shall come and if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. For the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*" **1 Thessalonians 1:4**; "*Knowing, brethren, beloved, your election of God.*" **2 Peter 1:10**; "*Make your calling and election sure.*"

There's a whole lot more of these verses about divine election. Like I said, there's a lot more on election than there is on the new birth. We hear constantly sermons on the new birth, but nobody is preaching on election. You ask why do I preach it; it's in the Word of God? God sent me to preach His Word.

Secondly; here's another objection. People will say; "Well, all right, granted, election is in the Bible; you'll have to grant that. I know election is in the Bible but shouldn't we keep these deep doctrines from the people? Shouldn't we keep these things from the people? Shouldn't we leave these doctrines and theological matters to the theologians and the professors?" That's not what Paul said. Paul addressing the elders at Ephesus and the people said; "*I kept back nothing profitable unto you. I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*"

Keep back something from the people? "*All Scripture by inspiration of God (it is God breathed) and it is profitable, for doctrine, for correction, for rebuke, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God might be perfect (mature).*" Keep back nothing from God's people. Share His Word with them.

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And then another objection goes something like this; “But preacher, aren’t some doctrines dangerous?” No, truth is never dangerous. Error is dangerous but truth is not dangerous. “But wait a minute preacher; haven’t some men abused and misused the doctrine of election and predestination?”

Of course they have, but natural men abuse and misuse all good things. Natural men abuse and misuse all good things. That’s so! But if you destroy the things that men abuse, well, you’ll have to destroy knives; because people cut their throats too.

You’ll have to destroy ropes; people hang themselves but ropes are good things. You’d have to destroy useful drugs. I’m glad there are drugs that people in severe pain can take but don’t people misuse them? Of course they do. But there’s a useful thing for them too.

You’d have to destroy cars; people get killed in cars. You’d have to destroy marriage; people abuse marriage. You just name it. If you consider something dangerous because some fool misuses it you’d have to destroy everything we have.

Somebody else says; “Well, I’ve heard that election and predestination will kill missionary zeal and kill evangelism.” That’s not so! The Lord Jesus taught election and He came to the earth to die for sinners. He said; “*All that my Father giveth me will come to me. And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*”

He said; “*Thou hast given me authority over all flesh that I should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given me.*” He said; “*Other sheep I have which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring. They shall hear my voice and they shall be one fold and one shepherd.*”

But He told us to, “*Go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature.*” I don’t know who the elect are. I’m going to preach the Gospel to everybody that will listen to me.

But I’ll tell you who the elect are; they are those that’ll hear that Gospel. Christ said; “*My sheep hear my voice and I know them and I give them eternal life and they’ll never perish.*”

Paul taught election, he said; “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies, according as He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him. In love He predestinated us to the adoption of children according to the good pleasure of himself.*”

You know, nobody wrote more strongly on election than Paul. And nobody suffered more to preach the Gospel around the world than Paul. Name the other men: Calvin, Luther, Zwingli, Huss, Spurgeon, Knox, Carey, and Judson. All the great preachers of the past believed the doctrine of election and they preached it and they taught it.

You know; one time in **Acts 18:9** the Lord said to Paul; when Paul was about to leave Corinth and the Lord said to him; “*Stay there, for I have much people in this city. You stay there and*

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preach; I have much people in this city.” And Paul stayed there 18 months and God saved many people.

“How shall they call on Him in whom they’ve not believed and how shall they believe in Him of whom they’ve not heard and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?”

Well, what is the doctrine of election? Let’s preach it. It’s up to almighty God to make His Word effectual and to reveal it to the heart. I’m not an interpreter of God’s will; I’m a proclaimer of God’s will.

What is the doctrine of election? I can take one verse of Scripture and define the doctrine of election, just one verse. If I only had one verse to teach the doctrine of election; this is all that I would need, all that I’d need.

It’s found in **2 Thessalonians chapter 2:13** and I’ll take this one verse and define for you the doctrine of election; here it is; *“But we abound to give thanks 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.”*

There’s the doctrine of election. Now; let’s break it down!

First of all: The doctrine of election or divine election or God’s elective grace is a cause always for praise! Every time in the Scripture you come upon the doctrine of God’s elective grace, God showing mercy to an undeserving sinner, its cause for praise, not anger, praise. And that’s the reason Paul says; *“We’re bound to give thanks to God for you beloved of the Lord because He hath chosen you.”*

If He’d not chosen you, you would have never chosen Him. **Romans 8:28** says this; *“And we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. In whom He predestinated He called.”* Who called? He did. He justified and He glorified. Where do you come in?

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus who hath blessed us according as He chose us.” Our Lord looked at His disciples in **John 15:16** and He said; *“You didn’t choose me; I chose you.”*

So my friends; election is a doctrine of praise. I thank God, bless God. *“Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth and causeth to approach unto thee.”* The word blessed means happy, twice happy.

Secondly: Election is not only a doctrine of praise it is a doctrine of love!

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“Blessed be the God and Father. Bless God; I give thanks to God, for you brethren, beloved of the Lord.”

Do you know when Lazarus was sick and Mary and Martha sent word to Christ that Lazarus was sick; what did they say, what was the message they sent? They didn't say; “He, who loves you, is sick; they said; *Lord, he whom you love, he whom thou lovest is sick.*”

And that's what Paul is saying here; *“I bless God, brethren, for you, beloved of the Lord. Herein is love, not that we love God; He loved us and gave His Son. We love Him; (what's the word) because He first loved us?”*

Come on now! Who loved whom? *“For God so loved the world.”* The world didn't love God. The world didn't even know God. *“He was in the world and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own and His own received Him not.”*

But He loved us. Election is a doctrine of love, God's love for us. We didn't love Him. You don't love God now like you ought to. You better hope God doesn't judge you on the basis of your commitment to Him. He'll judge you on the basis of Christ's commitment to you and on the basis of Christ's love for you.

If God almighty judges your eternal welfare and well-being and soul-salvation on the basis of how much you love Him; you're a “goner” as the old West Virginia mountaineer said. *“Salvation's of the Lord.”*

You better hope you're not brought into judgment with God on the basis of what you've done and how much you love Him and how much you've served Him. I don't want any part of that.

Thirdly; Election, then, is eternal. Paul said; *“We're bound to give thanks to God brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, from when, from the beginning.”*

When's the beginning? *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. In the beginning was the Word. Glorify me with the glory which I had with thee in the beginning before the world was.”*

Let me ask you three questions, three questions. Will you be honest and answer them from the Word of God?

First of all: Did you choose God or did He choose you? Which was it? Which is it? Well Christ said, *“You didn't choose me; I chose you.”* It says, *“God chose us.”* That's what the Scripture says.

Secondly: When did God choose you? When did He choose to save you?

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Well somebody said, “When I believed.” That’s not what the Bible says. It says, “*God hath from the beginning chosen you.*” It says, “*Known unto God are all His works from the beginning.*”

It says, “*God declares the end from the beginning.*” It says, “*God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world.*” That’s what the Word of God says.

Thirdly: Why did He choose you?

He passed by an awful lot of people. Why did He choose you? Was there something in you that wasn’t in them? Are you better than they are? Oh no, “*He chose you according to the good pleasure of His own will.*”

“*God hath chosen the foolish things to confound the wise. God hath chosen the base things to bring to naught the things that are. God hath chosen the despised things. God hath chosen the weak things that no flesh should glory in His presence.*”

Election is eternal. God does nothing in time He didn’t decree to do in eternity because God can’t change. He said, “*I am the Lord I change not. He’s the same yesterday, today, and forever.*” We’re talking about the God of the Bible, not the God of men’s imagination, now; we’re talking about what He says about himself in His Word.

Fourth: Another thing from this verse, election is not salvation; it’s unto salvation.

Election is not salvation; it is unto salvation. Listen, “*We’re bound to give thanks for you, brethren; beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation.*” God hath chosen you unto salvation.

Election prepares the way for salvation: “*He that believeth on the Son hath life. He that believeth not the Son shall not see life. Without faith it’s impossible to please God. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. For by grace are you saved through faith. Without faith it’s impossible to please God.*”

Some people came to our Lord Jesus Christ and they said; “*Now if you be the Christ; tell us plainly.*” And He said: “*I’ve told you and you believe not (you’ve heard everything that these other people have heard but you didn’t believe me) because you’re not of my sheep:*

“*My sheep hear my voice and they follow me and I give them eternal life. As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.*”

You see, election is God choosing us. And preaching the Gospel to us is the means that God uses to bring us to choose Him, to look to Him. He calls and we call. He loves and we love. He elects and we choose Him.

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That's right; election is not salvation; it's unto salvation. *"He hath chosen us before the foundation of the world that we should be holy, (not because we're holy, that we should be)."*

Fifthly: Election always looks to the means of grace!

Listen: *"We're bound to give thanks to God for you brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, (unto salvation) through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."*

Those are the means, two-fold means, through these things. God's purpose will be accomplished through these means. First there's the sanctification of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit regenerates and calls God's people and sets them apart.

"You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin. As many as received Him to them gave He the power to become the sons of God which were born, not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man; they are born of God."

And being born of God is being sanctified by the Spirit, set apart, through sanctification of the spirit, and what, *"Belief of the truth."* **Ephesians 1:14** says; *"In whom you trusted after you heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation."*

The new birth gives you ears to hear and the Gospel gives you a message to believe. The new birth gives you eyes to see and the Gospel shows you Christ to whom you must look. Those who are elected believe and those who believe are elected.

Can you hear me? Those who are elected will believe and those who believe were elected; *"As many as were ordained to eternal life believe."*

Now watch this, "How can I know then, preacher, if I'm one of God's elect?" Now listen to my text again; *"Wherefore, rather, brethren; give diligence to make your calling and election sure."* Which comes first? Your calling, your election is determined by your calling.

Are you a sinner? Is Christ your Redeemer? Have you believed on Him? Have you heard the Gospel? Have you committed yourself to Him? Then you're one of God's elect. That's what Christ said; *"Other sheep I have; them also I must bring and they will hear my voice. And they shall be one fold and one shepherd."*

Now here's the clearest Scripture in the Bible on that question I just asked, how can one know that he's God's elect? Here's the clearest Scripture in the Bible on that subject, **1 Thessalonians 1:4**; Paul said; *"Knowing brethren, beloved, your election of God."* "I know that you're God's elect."

How do you know that Paul? Now, look at **verse 5**, *"For our Gospel came not unto you in Word only; but it came to you in power, in the Holy Ghost, in much assurance."*

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All right; look at the next verse; *“And you became followers of us and the Lord.”* You’re identified with that Gospel. You heard it in power and you believed it. You’re identified with it.

You became examples unto those around you. You witnessed, you set forth the Gospel to other places. **Verse 9**; *“You turned to God from your idols to serve the living and true God.”* And **verse 10**; *“And you’re waiting for His Son from heaven.”*

You know your election by your calling. A man who despises the Gospel has no need for the Gospel, no use for the Gospel, no interest in the Gospel, no identification with the Gospel, no love for the Gospel. You’re not one of God’s elect.

But a man who does; God gave him that desire. *“Who made you to differ?”* You see, the Bible doesn’t say, “Ho everyone that is elected come to the water; it says; *“Ho everyone that thirsteth.”* The Bible doesn’t say; “Come unto me all of the elect;” it says; *“Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden.”* The Bible doesn’t say; “He that is elected hath eternal life;” it says, *“He that believeth hath everlasting life.”*

The Bible doesn’t say, “Whosoever is elected shall be saved;” it says: *“Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”* You know your election by your calling. He called you and you called on Him. You see; those who believe are elected and those who are elected believe.

Well, last of all: What are the effects of election on an individual?

“What does election do for you preacher, divine election, blessed election, God’s election? What does it do for you?” Three or four things; listen:

First it brings joy to my heart! The Scripture says; *“Blessed (happy), is the man whom God chooseth and causes to approach unto him that he may dwell in God’s courts.”* That’s **Psalms 65:4**.

Secondly: It glorifies God, it glorifies God!

He said: *“He chose those that were foolish and base and despised and weak that no flesh should glory in His presence but that Jesus Christ might have all the glory.”*

Thirdly: It promotes humility!

Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 4**; *“Who made you to differ? What do you have that you didn’t receive? Now, if you received it; why do you glory as if you didn’t receive it?”* Why are you proud and boastful and arrogant?

“I am what I am by the grace of God.” And the more I realize that the more it brings me down in the dust at His feet, making me to realize that what I have is by His grace. *“It’s undeserved, unmerited favor.”*

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Grace is God giving me what I don't deserve and mercy is God not giving me what I do deserve.

Fourthly: It gives me comfort in trials!

What I know, *"That all things work together for good to them who love God, who are His called;"* why, it gives you comfort.

Fifthly: It gives you confidence!

If God be for me; who can be against me? If He chose me, justified me, called me, glorified me; *"What shall we say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us?"*

And then last of all: It gives me comfort to die by!

If you'll read **1 Samuel 23**; when King David was dying and spoke his last words he said this; *"Although it be not so with my house, God hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. And this is all my salvation and all my desire."*

David found his comfort by which to die in God's everlasting covenant!