

890212AM

CHOSEN BY GOD

As we pause to ponder God's providential work in choosing whom He will before time to be His children it goes against the grain of this world. This tension was captured nicely by Calvin Miller in his "PSALMS OF NIHILISM REVISTED". [A satire on Godless views of God.]

The Heavens declare the painted cave walls,
Glory of God Never dreaming that they
And the firmament showeth His once had been
handiwork The prisoners of the sea
[Blind eyes never see His till their amphibian
glory Lusts had drawn them
And miss the declaration]... to the shore,
Where they grunted on the sand
In thebeginningGod created andonly dreamedof walking
the heavens and the earth. In the forest.
Unfortunately, there is no
steno book
of data dating to the first And a million years swarmed
kineticsteakof light, overallthe momentsthat decayed,
So it must be, we've made great And vegetation rotted,
Yahweh sleep in slime with And mountain rivers gouged
slithering protozoa crying the valleys with magnificent
to be multi-celled. erosion.
And tar-pits grew.

And the evening and the morning
were the sixth day,
And ice in global tonnage And just before sunset
came and buried mastodons, on Friday afternoon,
And all of that which went God made Himself a bedroom
before was raped by glacial and terraced it with green,
flow, And Adam stepped from His right
And icy rivers washed their ways hand,
to shrouded seas, and Eve stepped from His left,
And mist and life caressed itself.
blew back, And they embraced.
And heavy-headed men And God said,
"That is good"--
The pair concurred.

Then a distant son of And the Heavens no longer

theirs named Moses
wrote creation in the
truth and beauty that
would replace

This blind
and ugly psalm.
And what this Israelite
Egyptian wrote
denied to men
their Genesis of slime
and placed it in the stars.

cried in their absurdity
that they were born in the fiery
happenstance of near-colliding
stars.

For in their gleaming
witness they had
issued from a womb of
black vacuity
And entered through
the birth canal of nothingness

And only dared to shine
when Yahweh said,
"Eden shall not be dark--
LET THERE BE LIGHT!"

But now we sleep uneasily;
we have lost the key to Eden,
And the light of science comes
and hangs horrendous

And the light
was the gift
of His compassion,
For He knew we were
afraid of darkness.

reconstructions of hominoid
beginnings in the family room
And then cries out:
"Man is happenstance--
let there be darkness!"
And we read their heavy books
and in our faithless times
we sleep in fear.

What a chronicle of how far down our society has gone.

*Now, to a little seaport town in ancient Greece...

A LETTER FROM THE APOSTLE HAS ARRIVED. IT BURSTS FORTH IN
THANKS TO GOD and FOCUSES on the FACT THAT v.2-3

- God is the Author "to the God of Th.
- God of Th should continue in our daily lives "always"
- God of Th does not neglect a single saint
- God of Th prompts spiritual benefits
- And THANKSGIVING IS FOUNDED ON GOD'S WORK OF ELECTION!

Let's begin this morning to search the Scriptures and thru them affirm
the three foundational truths of being "chosen by God" = ELECTION

On back of the bulletin they are listed [NOTE KEY WORDS IN TEXT]
> FIRST v.3 "Remembering" - This is the EVIDENCE OF ELECTION
> SECOND v.4 "knowing" this is the ASSURANCE OF ELECTION

> FINALLY, "chosen" this is the PROVIDENCE OF ELECTION

Let's start with the evidence [Read vs. 3].

What was Paul constantly remembering that demonstrated such EVIDENCE OF ELECTION?

Paul describes their exhanged lives in a 3-fold way:

WORK OF FAITH

LABOR OF LOVE

PATIENCE IN HOPE

Note that familiar ring that will repeat in many future NT letters

> FAITH, HOPE, LOVE.

*To name just a few note with me:

FAITH-HOPE-LOVE

I Th. 5:8 "But since we are of [the] day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of FAITH and LOVE, and as a helmet, the HOPE of salvation."

I Cor.13:13 "But now abide FAITH, HOPE, LOVE, these three; but the greatest of these is LOVE."

Romans 5:2 "...through whom also we have obtained our introduction by FAITH into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in HOPE of the glory of God. 5:3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulation, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; 5:4 and HOPE does not disappoint, because the LOVE of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

Gal. 5:5 "For we through the Spirit, by FAITH, are waiting for the HOPE of righteousness. 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through LOVE."

Col. 1:4 "Since we heard of your FAITH in Christ Jesus and the LOVE which you have for all saints;"

Heb. 6:10 "For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the LOVE which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. 6:11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of HOPE until the end, 6:12 that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. 6:13 For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, 6:18 in order that by two things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the HOPE set before us. 6:19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a [hope] both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, 6:20 where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

I Pet. 2:1 "Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, 2:2 like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, 2:3 if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. 2:4 And coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God, 2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

So LIFE IN CHRIST is described OFTEN in this FAITH-HOPE-LOVE way. BUT WE NEED TO FEEL THE DEPTH OF EACH ---

NOTICE...

WORK of faith -- this is James and Galations blended into one! Liter-ally it is the WORK PRODUCED BY FAITH.

Turn to James 2 - EARLIEST NT EPISTLES goes to HEART OF SAVING FAITH = NEW LIFE.

FAITH Vs. WORKS

James 2:14 What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him? 2:15 If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, 2:16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for [their] body, what use is that? 2:17 Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, [being] by itself. 2:18 But someone may [well] say, "You have faith, and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." 2:19 You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. 2:20 But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless? 2:21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? 2:22 You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; 2:23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness," and he was called the friend of God. 2:24 You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone. 2:25 And in the same way was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works, when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? 2:26 For just as the body without [the] spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

> Now read Gal. 5:5-6:

Thru Sp - by FAITH - thru LOVE - faith in me.

> Where's faith from? Eph 2:8-9 [For by grace..] > Acts 26:18

Now note the second...

LABOR OF LOVE

kopos NT "Toil to exhaustion, sweat and fatigue --

This is again LABOR PROMPTED BY LOVE. WHOSE love? GOD'S! Turn to Romans 8: God commended ...while we are sinners. This is God's love and we are completely UNWORTHY of it.

So man confronted with such love has only two responses: He MUST > REJECT it and be apart from God who = love. Read I Jn. 4:7-11

> or WONDERFULLY SUBMIT and be transformed.

So what about election --

Paul thanked God for His work of election.

He described it as a
- work produced by faith
- labor prompted by love

> Faith is from Christ
> Love is from God

Will you respond by submitting to that great love today?

What's next week? ENDURANCE FOUNDED UPON HOPE