

Election - Ephesians 1:3-12

Mike Treneer

Introduction.

- A. God promises to help his chosen servants. (Isaiah 41:8)
 - 1. He promises to help and strengthen his servants.
 - 2. He will deal with their enemies.
 - 3. God's servants are not to fear.
 - 4. God will help them with his powerful right hand.
- B. God deserves praise. (Ephesians 1:2-12)
 - 1. He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ.
 - 2. He chose us.
 - 3. His grace is free and provides forgiveness of sins.
 - 4. All things will come together in Christ.
 - 5. All things are predestined according to God's will.
 - 6. We are for the praise of his glory.

I. The theme of election is our theme for today.

- A. This is God's choosing love. (Ephesians 1:4)
- B. General observations on Ephesians chapter one.
 - 1. Praise begins and ends this passage.
 - 2. These verses are one long sentence in the Greek: It's about the heart of our faith more than it is about grammar.
 - 3. Paul repeats the phrase "In Christ" several times, summarizing the plan of God.
 - a. We are in Christ.
 - b. We are clothed in him.
 - c. This is the supreme position of believers.

4. Paul prays for us to understand this great truth, because it lays the foundation of our Christian living.

C. General observations from the rest of Scripture.

1. As a young Christian I couldn't grasp election because of the universal invitations in Scripture. (Revelation 22:17)

2. The invitation to the world is genuine, whoever will, may come.

3. However, the believers were chosen from before the creation of the world. (Ephesians 1:4)

4. These two truths seem to be irreconcilable.

5. The problem of reconciling the freedom to come and the idea that those who come were chosen before the creation of the world is based on grace given us in Christ before the beginning of time. (2 Timothy 1:9)

6. The cross applies to all human history, even before we understood the grace of God.

7. Grappling with these truths we must be careful to not get carried away emotionally.

8. Paul brings this truth of election up in praise not in theological discussion.

9. Our greatest intellectual difficulty is the emotional problem of understanding the consequences of those who do not come to faith in Christ.

a. Those not chosen are not treated much in Scripture, but Paul wrestles with it in Romans chapters 9-11.

b. Paul even wished he could be cut off for the sake of his people that had rejected Christ. (Romans 9:2-3)

c. But God is more concerned about Israel than Paul.

d. Election is not by works just as it occurred in Jacob and Esau. (Romans 9:13)

e. Pharaoh was also an example of election, but he hardened his own heart on some occasions before God hardened his heart also. (Exodus 7:13; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:12, 34, 10:20; 11:10)

f. There is mystery here; those who open their hearts find grace, but those who harden their hearts find judgment.

II. We will ask three questions regarding election:

A. Why did God chose us?

1. We were chosen for adoption as sons of God.

2. We were sinful but made heirs of God through Christ.
3. The sovereign grace of God lifted us out of the dust and made us sit with princes.
(Psalm 113:7-8)
4. Remember that we were lost sinners and we have no claim on God.
5. I have no business to teach the truths of God except by the grace of God.
6. Grace is freely given and lavished upon us.
7. We were picked out of the slave market of sin by a loving God who gave his Son for us that we might be forgiven.
8. We are totally accepted and totally cleansed by Christ.
9. As we partake of the Lord's Table let us come with confidence that we are chosen and elected to sonship according to the riches of God's grace.

B. Chosen how?

1. According to God's plan to bring all things to fulfillment in Christ. (Ephesians 1:9-11)
2. We are caught up in God's great plan.
3. It was God's good pleasure to save us.
4. It was God's purpose in Christ.
5. Jesus did not want to go the cross yet he submitted to the will and plan of God.
6. Only God knows how his plan comes together but we can trust him.

C. Chosen why?

1. That we who were the first to hope in Christ might be for the praise of his glory.
2. Not merely the praise of our lips but also the praise of our being and lives.
3. As we come to the Lord's Table let us pause and offer our beings in gratitude to God who chose us from before the foundation of the world.