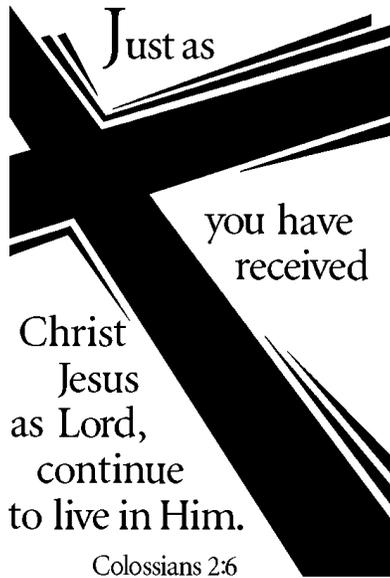


For HIS Glory
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Pray for the persecuted.

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In this little issue, and Lord willing, *every* issue, our *only* purpose is to honor Jesus Christ.

The Doctrines of Grace ~ 4

Their Second Point—Unconditional Election

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We will now observe the doctrine of the second point.

I. Unconditional Election Defined. *Election* is “that eternal act of God whereby He chooses a certain number of people to be the recipients of His eternal salvation.” The adjective, *unconditional*, stresses the fact that “God’s choice was of His sovereign good pleasure, and in no way conditioned upon any merit in the chosen ones.”

II. Unconditional Election Contrasted. The opposite of *unconditional* election is *conditional* election. A foremost example of the latter in the earthly realm is a political election in which a voter chooses which candidate is most worthy of his vote. It is heretical to apply this principle in the *spiritual* realm. Some would do so by declaring that God chose to salvation those whom He foresaw making themselves worthy of it. Some say, “God chose in eternity those whom He foresaw in time choosing Him.” They usually claim proof for their statement in the fact that the chosen were “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father” (1 Peter 1:2). They interpret God’s foreknowledge to be mere prescience, or prior knowledge of the future. However, the Greek words for foreknowledge are never, in the New Testament, used of God in the sense of mere prescience. Rather, God’s foreknowledge is the basis of His foreordaining counsels and purpose (as in Romans 11:2; 1 Peter 1:20; Acts 2:23).

III. Unconditional Election Proven.

1. Election is a Biblical doctrine. It astounds us that so many professing Christians deny this truth of God. The doctrine of election is found throughout the Bible. If one would look in his concordance for words such as, “election,” “elect,” “chose,” “chosen,” and other kindred words—including, “predestined”—he would find a multitude of instances in which this doctrine is taught. He who denies this doctrine either has never read God’s Word or willfully denies what he knows to be true. The saints of God find this doctrine throughout Holy Scripture—and rejoice in it! We here will observe this doctrine as it is set forth in two texts. According to Ephesians 1:4 and 2 Thessalonians 2:13: “He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.” “But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation.” Let us here observe:

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i. The author of election is “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus” (Eph. 1:3). “*He* chose us.” “*God*...chose you.” This truth is resounded throughout Holy Scriptures. They speak of “election by God” (1 Thess. 1:4) and, “the people He has chosen as His own inheritance” (Psa. 33:12). “For the Lord has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel for His special treasure” (Psa. 135:4 [Jacob and Israel, here, refer to God’s chosen people, not merely the patriarch so-named.] God says of them, “But you, Israel, are My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen...I have chosen you and have not cast you away” (Isa. 41:8f; 44:1). God’s elect are, therefore, called, “His chosen ones” (Psa. 105:6; 43), “His elect,” “Whom He chose” (Matt. 24:31 with Mark 13:20), “His own elect” (Luke 18:7), “God’s elect” (Rom. 8:33; Titus 1:1), “The elect of God” (Col. 3:12), “A chosen generation...His own special people” (1 Peter 2:8). God calls them, “My chosen” (Psa. 89:3), “My people, My chosen” (Isa. 43:20), “My elect” (Isa. 65:9, 22), the people “whom I have chosen” (Isa. 41:8; 43:10; 44:1, 2). They acknowledge themselves to Him as, “Your chosen ones” (Psa. 106:5). Jesus Christ, who is One with the Father (John 10:30), says to them, “You did not choose Me, but I chose you” (John 15:16). They reply to Him, “Blessed is the man You choose” (Psa. 65:4).

ii. The nature of election is that of God choosing from the whole of mankind a people for Himself—“He chose us.” “God...chose you.” “[T]he Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth” (Deut. 7:6).

iii. The objects of election are those who will acknowledge themselves as, “brethren beloved by the Lord” and, “the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus” whom God has “blessed...with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3)—“He chose *us*.” “God... chose *you*.”

iv. The foundation of election is the “Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 1:3)—“He chose us *in Him*.” “Christ is My first elect, He said, then chose our souls in Christ our Head” (from a hymn of Isaac Watts; see Isaiah 42:1).

v. The time of election is in eternity past—“He chose us...before the foundation of the world.” “God, *from the beginning*, chose you.” Election, therefore, is “according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began” (2 Tim. 1:9). Accordingly, the names of God’s elect were “written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8; 17:8).

vi. The purpose of election is that God’s elect should be the recipients of His eternal salvation—“He chose us...that we should be *holy* [i.e., sanctified] and *without blame* [i.e., justified] before Him in love.” “God...chose you for *salvation*.” Election is not salvation, itself, but rather identifies who will receive salvation (2 Tim. 2:10)—“The elect...may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus.” And God’s election is only and always unto salvation. Holy Scriptures know nothing of the idea that God chose some for damnation—a heresy wrongly ascribed by deniers of the Biblical doctrine of election to us who believe it.

2. Biblical election is unconditional.

i. God’s choice was not conditioned upon any foreseen good or merit or works in the persons God chose. Rather, election is conditioned upon God’s purpose in saving grace, alone. Various texts set forth this truth of God.

Romans 9:11, 16—“The purpose of God according to election might stand” because it is “not of works but of Him who calls...So then it is not of him who wills [i.e., of him who would have the willingness or disposition to receive it] nor of him who runs [i.e., of him who would exert himself in the proper way to receive it] but of God who shows mercy.”

Romans 10:20f (quoting Isaiah 65:1f)—“I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me...All day long [even from the dawn to the evening of time] I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

1 Corinthians 1:27-29—“But God has chosen the foolish [i.e., dull; from Greek *moros*, hence, “moron”] things of the world...and God has chosen the weak [i.e., with no strength] things of the world...and the base [i.e., ignoble] things of the world and the things which are despised [i.e., contemptible] God has chosen, and the things which are not [i.e., entirely overlooked as though they had no existence]...that no flesh should glory in His presence.” In summary, those whom God chose for salvation could not meet *any* condition for it, and are entirely devoid of glory. All the glory for election to salvation goes to God, alone.

2 Timothy 1:9—“Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.”

ii. Good works are a *result*, not the ground, of election.

John 15:16—“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain.”

Ephesians 2:10—“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

iii. Faith is a *result*, not the ground, of election.

Acts 13:48—“And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.”

1 Thessalonians 1:4f—“Knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God. For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance.”

2 Thessalonians 2:13f—“But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit, and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Next month, Lord willing, we will discuss the third point, **Limited Atonement**.