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# UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

by David Dye

## **Note to the judicious reader:**

Please emulate the noble Bereans—Read this treatise with your Bible at hand—

Search the Scriptures to see whether or not these things are so.

*“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.”*

—2 Thessalonians 2:13

**T**HE Lord Jesus Christ said, “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within and defile the man” (Mark 7:21-23). The Lord, speaking through the prophet Jeremiah, declares, “The heart is deceitful above all things and who can know it?” (Jer 17:9). The Psalmist David confessed that he, as well as all other men, was born in sin, stating, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psa 51:5). Again he declares, “The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born speaking lies” (Psa 58:3). The apostle Paul declares the whole world of mankind guilty of sin before God, stating, “There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understand, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Rom 3:10-12). These scriptures reflect upon the fact that all mankind, Christ Jesus excepted, are fallen, ruined sinners with a nature that is corrupt, perverse and sinful throughout; spiritually dead in trespasses and sin (Eph 2:1-3), estranged or alienated from God, and, whose will is enslaved to his evil nature. Man did not come from the hands of his Creator in this depraved, corrupt condition. God made Adam upright; there was no evil whatsoever in his nature. Originally, Adam, the father of all mankind, was upright or right and innocent before God (Eccl 7:29; Gen 1:26,27). Adam did not remain right and innocent before God. He and Eve, the mother of all living, fell from their first estate as it is recorded in Genesis 3:1-24. The divine record of the fall is the only possible explanation of the present condition of the human race; it affords the only adequate explanation for the universality of sin. Sin is universal because all men share a common ancestry; all spring from a common stock. “In Adam all die” (1 Cor 15:22). The divine record of the fall alone explains the mystery of death. Receive and accept the fact that “By one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned” (Rom 5:12). Because of Adam’s transgression, his descendants enter the world as guilty, lost sinners. As fallen creatures they have no desire to have fellowship with the Creator. He is holy, just and good, and they are sinful, perverse and corrupt. Men, left to their choices, inevitably follow the god of this world and do the will of their father the devil. Consequently, men have cut themselves off from the Lord of heaven and have forfeited all rights to His love and favor. It would have been perfectly just for

God to have left all men in their sin and misery and to have shown mercy to none. God was under no obligation whatsoever to provide salvation for anyone. It is in this context that I shall endeavor to set forth the doctrine of UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION. Let me point out that those not chosen to salvation were simply passed by and left to their own evil devices and choices. It is not within the creature's jurisdiction to call into question the justice of the Creator for not choosing everyone to salvation. It is enough to know that the righteous Judge of the earth has done right. Let it be borne in mind, that if God had not graciously chosen a people for Himself and sovereignly determined to provide salvation for them and apply it to them none would be saved. The fact that He did this for some, to the exclusion of others, is in no way unfair to the unchosen ones, unless you believe that God was under obligation to provide salvation to sinners; a position which the Bible utterly rejects. To better understand the doctrine of election it must be viewed, not only against the backdrop of human depravity and guilt, but in the light of the eternal covenant of grace; that agreement made between the members of the Godhead before the foundation of the world. It was in the execution of this covenant that the Father chose out of the world of lost sinners a definite number of individuals and gave them to the Son to be His people. The Son, under the terms of this covenant, agreed to do all that was necessary to save those "chosen" and "given to Him by the Father." The Holy Spirit's part in the execution of this covenant was to apply to the elect the salvation secured for them by the Son. Election is a very important aspect of the saving purpose of the triune God. However, it is but one aspect of salvation and not itself salvation. The act of election itself saved no one. What it did do was mark out certain individuals for salvation. We must not separate the doctrine of election from the doctrine of human guilt, redemption and regeneration, or else it will be distorted and misrepresented. The doctrine of election is to be kept in its proper Biblical balance and correctly related to the redeeming work of the Spirit Who brings the elect to faith in Christ. The reason anyone believes in election is that he finds it in the Bible; no man could ever imagine such a doctrine. That's because it is, in itself, contrary to the thinking and the wishes of the human heart. Everyone, at first, opposes the doctrine, and it is only after many struggles under the working of the Holy Spirit that we are made to receive it. The Bible makes election prominent; it puts election basal to the entire scheme of grace; it makes it the supreme law; the under-lying principle of the Gospel. Election is the cement that holds together the entire scheme of sovereign grace. It is the golden thread that runs through the whole Christian system. I say this in a very cautious manner, so as not to speak disparagingly of the atonement; but there is a sense in which election is more important than blood redemption. How can that be? Here is the reason. To deny blood redemption is to close the door of mercy to man. But to deny God the right to choose His own family is to rule Him out of the Bible. To deny election is to rule God out of the Bible, to rule God out of His universe, to deny that His will is supreme. It is to strip Him of His sovereignty and to reduce Him to a mere speculator on the sideline. What is election? Just for the moment let me say that election is that act of a sovereign God, whereby out of pure grace, apart from any merit on our part, He chose a people unto Himself. The doctrine of election runs through the entire Bible, so I will quote for you a few passages. "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you" (Deut 7:7,8a). "Thou art the Lord, the God who didst choose Abraham" (Neh 9:7). "Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee" (Psa 65:4a). Now let us look at a few verses in the New Testament. "For many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt 22:14b). "But for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt 24:22). "And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto him?" (Luke 18:7). "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" (Rom 8:33). "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ according to the faith of God's elect" (Titus 1:1). "Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (1 Peter 1:2a) "Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies" (Col 3:12). "God hath not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess 5:9). "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and the belief of the truth" (II Thess 2:13). "According as God hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph 1:4). Let's look at the Bible idea of election. The words "elect" and "chosen" and the concept of election are used in more than one sense throughout the Word of God. For example: election refers to the nation of Israel as a people whom He chose for special privileges and for special service to be the repository of His Word for its preservation, and the people through whom the Lord Jesus would come into the world. Therefore they were chosen as a servant race, and this is their destiny to the world, rendering service for God to the blessing of the nations (Deut 4:37). So there is the choice of the nation of Israel to be God's servant people through whom Christ and salvation would come into the world. In the second place, God chose some individuals to some office or to the performance of some special service. Such election is seen in the choice of Moses to lead the children of Israel (Exo 3:10), the Old Testament priesthood (Deut 18:5), the kings to rule (1 Sam 10:24), the prophets (Jer 1:5), and the apostles (John 6:70). God has chosen and called out certain ones, even some of these lost men to do His will and further His kingdom; so there are some men chosen to a particular office and or service. But the great and overwhelming teaching of the Scriptures on the subject of election is the choice by God of some individuals to be the children of God and heirs of eternal glory. It is an election of grace (Rom 11:5,6). This election is based on grace not works, decisions, religion, faith or anything else.

So, what is grace? It is divine grace. It is the sovereign and saving favor of God, exercised in the bestowment of blessings upon those who have no merit in themselves. It is, in fact, the favor of God shown to those who have no positive rewards of their own, but who are thoroughly ill-deserving and hell deserving. It is completely unmerited and unsought; it is altogether unattracted by anything in, or from, or by the objects upon which it is bestowed. Grace can neither be bought or earned,

nor won by the creature, therefore, grace is a perfection of the divine character which is exercised only toward the people of God. He chose some; a remnant. Paul says it's a remnant according to grace. Remnant—this word is better understood if you think of a bolt or a whole roll of cloth. A remnant of cloth is the unused end piece and not the entire bolt. You ladies know what it is to buy a remnant of cloth. You don't buy the entire roll, but a small part, a remnant. Paul says here there is a remnant and only a remnant according to the election of grace. Now let's see what sort of folks God has chosen: 1 Cor 1:26-29, "Not many wise" (according to human standards); "Not many noble" (not many of high and noble birth); "But God hath chosen the foolish;" (Which in the world is considered foolish?); "The weak" (that which the world considers as weak); "The base" (the low born and insignificant); "The despised" (the outcasts—those treated with contempt); "The things which are not" (those considered by the world as non-entities, as nothing). Now, why does God make such a choice as that? Why does God, as it were, raise up the poor out of the dust? Why does God do the work of a scavenger? Why does God collect garbage? Why does God run a salvage operation extracting the ruined from their fallen estate? The apostle answers this for us in verse 29, so "that no flesh should glory in His presence" (boast or brag in God's presence). You mark it down, in heaven there will be no bragging about my foreseen faith, my good works, my merits, what I was and did, and what I know. You won't even be able to brag about believing the "Five Points of Calvinism"; God is going to get all the glory for our salvation. We can glory in one thing only; in that we are in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. There are many more verses of scripture that positively declare this truth of unconditional election, however one more reference will suffice. (II Thess 2:13,14). Mr. Spurgeon, speaking of this text, said, "If there were no other text in the sacred word except this one, I think we should all be bound to receive and acknowledge the truthfulness of the great and glorious doctrine of God's ancient choice of His family." Having established from scripture the doctrine of election, let's look at a definition of it. What does it mean? Almost every one who reads scripture must admit to some kind of election taught there. Even the preacher, in Birmingham, who took for his subject: "I chose to be chosen" had to admit the Bible teaches some kind of election. Even though that very title would take election out of God's hands and place it in man's. Abraham Booth, a Baptist minister in the 18th century, defines election in his work *The Reign Of Grace* on page 55, "God, of His free distinguishing love, chose a certain number out of the apostate race of Adam and ordained them to a participation of grace here; and to the enjoyment of glory hereafter; in the execution of which purpose, by means every way becoming Himself, He determined to glorify all His infinite excellencies, such is that imminent act of God, which is commonly called election." Dr. Louis Berkhof, Professor for thirty eight years at Calvin Seminary, states on page 114 of his volume of *Systematic Theology*, that election may be defined as: "That eternal act of God, whereby He, in His Sovereign good pleasure, and on the account of no foreseen merit in them, chooses a certain number of men to be the recipients of special grace, and of eternal salvation; it is God's eternal purpose to save some of the human race, in and by Jesus Christ." C.H. Spurgeon, called the prince of preachers, preached at least twenty four sermons where he dealt with election or some aspect of it. Dr. John Gill in his "Body of Divinity," devotes sixteen pages to the doctrine of election alone. There are many other able and well qualified preachers, teachers and Bible scholars who have written on the subject. Let me name a few Baptists: C.H. Spurgeon, John Bunyan, A.H. Strong, J.W. Pendleton, John A. Broadus, B.H. Carroll, James P. Boyce, T.P. Simmons, C.D. Cole and many others. Election is not a new doctrine; all major denominations have held to this through the ages, contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. I call your attention to these well known Baptist and their stand on unconditional election because many of us are Baptist; but there are many more of the same persuasion who are not Baptist. You cannot read the Presbyterian Westminster Confession and the Larger and Shorter Catechism, nor the Old Belgic Confession of the fifteen hundreds, or the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563 without coming across the doctrine of election. The Seventeenth Article of the Church of England is as straight as an arrow on election and predestination. That heroic band of Christians called "The Waldenses" who were hunted down like wild animals by the Roman Catholic Church, and can be traced back to the year 1176, stated the following in one of the oldest written evangelical confessions of faith on record: "God saves from corruption and damnation those whom He has chosen from the foundation of the world, not for any disposition, faith or holiness He foresaw in them, but of His mere mercy, in Christ Jesus His Son, passing by the rest according to the irreprehensible reason of His own free will and justice." And, there is much more of this type of historical evidence of the truth of election, but let us move on. Let us look at some of the characteristics of election.

First of all it is an expression of the sovereign will of God; it is His divine good pleasure (II Tim 1:9). Election did not take place in time, and it was an act of God's sovereign will. He did not look down into the hearts of man and say, "Now, there is a good one and there is a bad one, and I'll take the good one and leave the bad one." God is not bound by circumstances; He chose because He chose to choose; and it's not that man chose to choose. Man had nothing to do with the matter of God's choice.

In the second place, election is immutable, and that simply means that God never changes His mind about what He decides to do. Everything with God is eternal; He has not learned anything and he has not forgotten anything. He has always had an election and that election does not change; it is eternal and this is what renders salvation absolutely certain (Rom 11:29). The mercies of David are sure mercies; God will not call you, regenerate you, give you faith and repentance, declare you justified, adopt you into His family, sustain you in progressive sanctification and enable you to persevere almost to the end. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance, or without a change of mind on the part of God.

In the third place, election is eternal. That is, it is from eternity; it did not take place in time, after the world was created, but before God made anything (Eph 1:4). "According as He hath chosen us" after we decided to give God a chance, after He foresaw we were the best in the lot, when we made a decision for Christ, when we fell in at the altar. It does not say or even imply any of that pretentious nonsense. It does say, "He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." Let men say what they will; God tells us that election took place before the foundation of the world. God says He set His heart upon His people in Christ and ordained them to eternal life in Him before the sun, moon, stars, heaven, earth, or any other thing was formed. Now you must believe this or else you must call God a liar, throw the Bible in the trash can, admit you are a practical atheist, and not willing for God to rule over you. In the last place, election is un-conditional. That means that election does not depend upon anything the creature is or that the creature does; but that the reason for election is to be found in God Himself. Look at Acts 13:48, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." The Arminians and liberals have done everything in their power to make this verse say the very reverse of what it really says. They try to make it say, "As many as believed were ordained," but in spite of their violent attempts to twist the words so as to eliminate the doctrine of election and predestination, the language experts say it means what it says: "As many as were ordained [appointed, predestinated] to eternal life believed." There in the context Paul and Barnabas had turned from the Jews and began preaching to the Gentiles. They rejoiced and embraced that which the Jews had rejected; the Gentiles were glad. They glorified the word of the Lord; they gave God the praise; and as many as were ordained, or, predestinated to eternal life believed. We learn four things from Acts 13:48. First, that believing is the consequence, and not the cause of God's decree. Second, that a limited number only are ordained to eternal life; for if all men without exception were thus ordained by God, then the words "as many as" are a meaningless qualification. Third, that this ordination of God is not to mere external privileges but to eternal life; not to service, but to salvation. And, last, that all, "as many as," not one less, who are thus ordained by God to eternal life, will most certainly believe. Rejoice in this sure salvation.

### SOVEREIGN GRACE

The old time gospel of God's sovereign grace has almost been lost in the mad modern race. The race to appease Satan and deify man, seems to have the upper hand. But never fear, dear saints of God, you tread the path sufficiently shod. The gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation given by grace. The breastplate of righteousness is yours as well, for in the temple of your body the Holy Spirit doth dwell. The truth is yours in this day of the lie, for the old time gospel cannot die. Against God's elect all hell may direct its fury and malice and serpentine effect, but the gates of hell cannot prevail against the church established so well. The foundations of our faith are solidly laid on God Himself who granted us aid. Before God effected the creation of man, He drew up salvation's wondrous plan. He decreed in the counsel halls of eternity past to grant salvation to part of the mass their number as large as the sands of the sea, their salvation as sure as His sovereign decree. So God who cannot fail and cannot lie, sent His Son Jesus Christ to this world to die. And die He did on that cross of old to shed His blood to save my soul.

*Let moderns speak with their velvet tongues,  
And roll out their words of religious dung;  
All painted with a psychedelic hue,  
To fool the ones who sit in the pew.  
But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord,  
The same Lord revealed in the Holy Word,  
Not the god of the liberals who died years ago,  
But the God of all power who governs the foe.  
The God of all glory immense as all space,  
The God whose presence fills every place;  
Whose eye is fixed on the acts of all men,  
Who keeps a record of every man's sin.  
All glory to this God so great,  
That this lost world seems determined to hate,  
And by His grace I pray I will stand  
To proclaim to the end that I'm Christ's man.  
All glory to the Lamb that was slain...Amen!*

