



Banner of Grace

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Prayer Requests

- Prayer for church revival throughout our land
- Remember our servicemen and women
- Pray for the leaders of our nation
- The Green Family and their upcoming new arrival
- Pray for our churches that are searching for a pastor



Inside this issue:

Chosen by God	1,2
With all his heart	1,3
Food for Thought	3
Creation Quiz	4
FWPBC Annual Meeting	4
Banner of Grace	4
Church Contact Info	4

Chosen by God

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. - Ephesians 1:4-6

Does it surprise you to know that the Bible teaches the doctrine of election? In the verses

quoted above, the Apostle Paul teaches the church at Ephesus about one of the most comforting Biblical principles. It is also one of the most misunderstood portions of the Bible to modern Christianity. If we have a clear understanding of this precious doctrine it will assist us in better understanding the strength and glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It will also influence our daily activities and life choices. It is my desire to explore the intended meaning of this and other verses in relation to election. I also want to address some of the misconceptions about this teaching.

The Apostle Paul states that God's people were chosen before the world was spoken into existence. This is an incredible statement! What were we chosen for? Simply stated, we were chosen to enjoy unbroken fellowship with Him in Heaven some day. We also enjoy the daily blessings of God as we obey His commandments in this world. Please notice that He chose us. We did not--we *could not*--choose Him. According to scripture, we had not the ability because of sin. Paul describes the human condition in Romans chapter 3.

Contd. on page 2

With all his heart...

II Chronicles 31:21 "And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered."

King Hezekiah served God "with all his heart". It is to be understood that this "heart" is a God-given "heart" (Ezekiel 36:26) that is tendered toward the things of God. Four things are listed that he did "with all his heart":

1) "in the service of the house of God", (2) "in the law", (3) "in the commandments", (4) "to seek his God". Today, our "service of the house of God" should be to go to Church on meeting days and be involved in the worship services.

Contd. on page 2

Chosen by God contd.

In verse eleven he lays it out very clearly: "There is none that understandeth, 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." Because of the results of sin we are unprofitable servants at best. We had not the ability to seek Him, but He sought us. Deuteronomy 32:10 refers to the time when God found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness. We find ourselves in a similar situation spiritually. If not for the electing grace of God we would all be condemned because of our sinful nature.

In Romans 8:1 Paul declares that, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Who are they that are in Christ Jesus, that walk after the Spirit? They are the ones chosen in Him from the foundation of the world. In verse 29-30, Paul writes, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them

he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." *Predestinate* simply means that one's destination was determined beforehand. Paul is teaching that God chose a particular people to be His children and enjoy the blessings of Heaven. We were predestinated before the world ever existed. This fact alone takes human works out of the equation of eternal salvation. Those who were predestinated are called irresistibly by the Spirit of God. They are found just (or righteous) because of the blood of Christ and will one day be glorified in Heaven.

The above mentioned verses are only a few dealing with the topic of election. It is comforting to know that salvation is not dependant on men. We are surrounded by instability in this world, but the foundations of God stand strong. As God's children we were chosen before the world ever was. Salvation was secured when Jesus entered into the world, lived a sinless life, and shed His precious blood for our sins. Jesus Christ is given the title of, "author and finisher of our faith" in Hebrews 12:2. We were condemned because of our sinful condition, but Jesus bore our pun-

ishment (the wrath of God) on the cross of Calvary. He did all that was necessary to save the people that were chosen by God. A clear understanding of this precious Biblical truth should cause us to rejoice in the Lord and foster a desire to serve the Lord who saved poor wretches like us! I am reminded of the classic hymn penned by John Newton, *Amazing Grace*.

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me....
I once was lost, but now is found,
Was blind, but now, I see.

God's grace is indeed awe-inspiring. When we understand God's wonderful plan of salvation and Jesus' amazing sacrifice, then we can serve Him acceptably. I hope to address some of the objections to the doctrine of election next week. It is my prayer that God will bless you as you consider this important Biblical principle.

Paul is teaching that God chose a particular people to be His children and enjoy the blessings of Heaven.

With all his heart contd.

Today our obedience to the "*the law*" and "*the commandments*" is to live and behave in a godly manner both at Church and in our daily lives and in caring for others. Hezekiah did these things "*to seek his God*"; (likewise, we should seek after our Lord that we might feel His almighty, tender-loving presence with us during this life. Hezekiah did these

things "*and prospered*"; that is, in the Lord's service. Seeking after God does not mean we will not have troubles, but it does mean that when we have troubles, the Lord will be there to deliver us. In the very next Chapter, Jerusalem came under the threat of an enemy attack; however, "*the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the*

hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side" (II Chronicles 32:22). Let us follow Hezekiah's example and seek after the Lord our God and serve Him with all our heart!

Your Brother In Christ,
J.C. Stanaland

Food For Thought

Dear Ones,

In Job 13:15-16 we read, *“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him. He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him.”* How long should we trust the Lord, although it seems that we do not have the answers we desire of him from our prayers? How much should we expect to endure, before we give up on God? He who is altogether good, who knows all things, who is perfect, whose love is everlasting, whose power knows no limit, whose mercy endureth for ever, and whose grace is sufficient for every need, is worthy of our trust *“though he slay me.”*

Just think of the multitude of blessings we have undeservedly received in the past from His bountiful hand. Just think of all we now have from our gracious God. And rest assured, God will continue to provide for our needs each day. So, would we even dare to entertain the idea that we would give up on God because of some desire WE have that WE don't think has been answered as soon as WE think it

should? Who do we think we are, anyway? We ARE the recipients of God's grace. (i.e., undeserved favor bestowed upon undeserving individuals) If God should henceforth withhold every blessing from us, He would still have already given us more than we have deserved.

So, in view of that, Job could say, *“Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.”* Further, Job determined to “stay the course” so to speak. Just as Jesus' disciples answered when Jesus asked them if they would also go away, Peter said, *“Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.”* (see John 6:67-69) He is our only Savior, so where else could we go? So, we should remember, *“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things.”* (Romans 8:32)

You see, He hasn't slain us, but he allowed His own Son to be slain for us sinners, that we might live. So live! And, enjoy the blessings we receive from His hand each day! And,

when we don't immediately have the answers we seek, TRUST HIM ANYWAY. He is no less good, and He is no less faithful; because, He cannot change!

May God bless each of us to continue to lovingly, patiently, and faithfully look to Him, though our patience has worn thin, though our pain or grief may be deep, or though the challenge seems so, so, great. *“He also shall be my salvation.”* Let us not be a hypocrite and only trust Him when we are happy with our present circumstances. Let's be like Job, who maintained his integrity, even though he suffered greatly. And remember, God has already sent His Son to die for us. So, let us in turn, live each day for Him.

May God bless each of you.

In the love of Christ,

Elder Clayton Nowell

Piney Grove PB Church

Headland, Alabama

Creation Quiz

- 1) Before the creation of the world as we know it, the earth: _____
- 2) How many days did it take for God to complete creating the world? _____
- 3) On the first day, God saw that the light was: _____
- 4) In order to give light to the world, on the fourth day God created how many great lights? _____
- 5) On which day were oxen created? _____
- 6) God called the dry ground _____; and the gathering together of the waters he called _____.
- 7) Man was created on what day? _____
- 8) Birds were created on the same day as: _____
- 9) How much of God's creation was man given rule over? _____
- 10) What was the first man formed from? _____



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Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ the same
yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

We're on the Web

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Fort Wayne Primitive Baptist Church

2010 Semi-Annual Meeting

April 17-18 2010

*Services will be held Saturday morning @ 10:30 with lunch
and afternoon services following. Worship will continue Sun-
day morning at 10:30. Elder Ben Winslett from Huntsville, AL
is the invited minister. We invite you to come and worship
with us!*



Tune in to the Banner of Grace Online Broadcast every Sunday evening from
6:00 to 6:30. You can listen via Internet or telephone at:

www.blogtalkradio.com/pastormichael

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