

"Understanding Election"

Ephesians 1:4

Introduction: Today as we return back to the letter to the Ephesians, we are going to look at a very misunderstood subject and it is the subject of ELECTION. There is in our nation a major movement of what is known as New Calvinism. The teaching has made its way into many churches which at one time were very solid and sound. Many of the Southern Baptist Churches have accepted and adopted the teaching of New Calvinism.

I know a young man who got plugged into a group known as Teen Challenge and the teaching made its way into that group also. I feel it is my responsibility to teach you the Truth of God's Word concerning ELECTION so that you will be able to notice the false teaching of Calvinism when you encounter it. Allow me to use Paul's Words from Ephesians 4:

Ephesians 4:14

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

I. What does the Calvinist Believe?

There are Calvinists and there are Hyper-Calvinists. But we are not going to take the time to separate the two but instead we are going to look briefly at what they believe.

The Calvinist and the New Calvinist believe that God only chose certain people for salvation. They teach that if you are not one of the chosen or one of the elect then it is not possible for you to be saved. They deny that God chose some for heaven and others for hell, but if He chose some for heaven and they are the only people who can be saved then the others would have had to be chosen for hell. Let me point out some of the verses which they will use.

Notice Ephesians 1:4-5

Romans 8:28-30

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

29 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.

30 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.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

2 Timothy 2:10

¹⁰ Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

1 Peter 1:1-2

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

² Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

John 15:15-16

¹⁵ Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

¹⁶ Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

Acts 13:48

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.

There are many other verses, but I use these to show you what the Calvinist uses to make their point. So, they teach two points which I want to bring into a clear focus.

1. Jesus died only for the elect.
2. Only the elect can be saved.

Before we see the meaning of the word "ELECT", I want to explain WITH THE BIBLE why the Calvinist view cannot be accurate. Their interpretation of these verses cannot be correct.

II. Jesus Died for all Mankind.

Hebrews 2:9

⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

1 John 2:1-2

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

² And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

From these verses we can clearly see that Jesus did not only die for a select few but He died for the sins of the entire world.

John 3:16

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

So, when Jesus died, He died for all sin.

Isaiah 53:4-6

⁴ Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Years ago, I had someone who did not believe that Jesus died for all ask me a question, "If Jesus Christ died for the sins of every single person then why is not every single person forgiven?"

The answer to that question is, Jesus did die to pay the sin debt of every single person but in order to have His death applied to our account we must accept Him as our Savior. There are many who refuse to accept His death as payment for our sins.

Romans 3:22-23

²² Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

III. Salvation is Available to ALL

There are many verses which we can look at to support this Truth.

John 3:16

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Romans 10:13

¹³ For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Revelation 22:17

¹⁷ And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Now let me just remind you that the Calvinist believes that only the ELECT can be saved, or that only the CHOSEN can be saved. There are 3 passages which are in complete contrast to this.

2 Peter 3:8-9

⁸ But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

1 Timothy 2:1-4

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

² For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

³ For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

⁴ Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

It is God's will that ALL would be saved and if it is only the chosen that can be saved then we must conclude that God cannot even fulfill His own will.

Mark 16:14-16

¹⁴ *Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.*

¹⁵ *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

¹⁶ *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

Here is an interesting passage. Jesus told His disciples to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to EVERY CREATURE. Now listen to this, the Gospel is that Jesus died for our sins and He was raised again on the third day. So, if they were to take this to ALL THE WOELD. So, if Jesus only died for certain people and if only those who are chosen can be saved then the moment, I tell someone that Jesus died for them and they are not one of the chosen then I lied to them and Jesus ordained that lie. See the problem?

So, we can determine that Jesus died for all and whosoever will may come to Him and be saved.

This now takes us back to the word "ELECT".

IV. What does the Bible mean when it tells us some are the ELECT?

There are 3 groups in the Bible that are referred to as the ELECT.

1. Israel

Isaiah 45:4

⁴ *For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.*

Matthew 24:31

³¹ *And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

2. The Church

Romans 8:32-33

³² He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

³³ Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

Colossians 3:11-13

¹¹ Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

¹² Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

¹³ Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

There is yet one more group which is referred to as God's ELECT.

3. The Righteous Angels

1 Timothy 5:21

²¹ I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

Now this is very interesting. This makes it very clear to us that when the Bible refers to the ELECT it has absolutely NOTHING to do with salvation. I say this because salvation is not for angels. The angels that sinned against God are the demons of today and some have been locked up for a day of judgment.

Jude 1:6

⁶ And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

Now if someone is going to teach that the ELECT refers to those God has chosen for salvation then that teaching MUST be consistent the entire way through the Bible and it is not because salvation is not for angels.

So, what does the Bible mean when it refers to the ELECT?

The ELECT refers to a group which God has chosen to be His representatives and who serve Him in the day in which they live in.

Israel - As the ELECT of God represented Him in the Old Testament to the world and God gave the Law to the Nation of Israel.

Church - We are God's representatives to the world today. We are ambassadors for Jesus Christ. We also minister to the needs of others.

Angels - They are God's ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who are the heirs of salvation.

Conclusion:

Notice Ephesians 1:3-5

Romans 8:28-30

²⁸ *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

²⁹ *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.*

³⁰ *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.*

God predetermined before the world began that there would be a group of believers known as the church. The invitation is for all to be a part of this group. Those who are will be made into the image of Jesus and will be blessed with all spiritual blessings.