

Lesson 12 – The Doctrine of Election

Key Verse: Ephesians 1:3–5

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.”

Overview

Every four years in the U.S. we have an election. We like the idea of being able to choose who we want to be president. But when people begin to talk about God electing and choosing His own people to be saved, the debates begin. One of the most controversial doctrines in all of Scripture is the doctrine of election. Also referred to as predestination, this doctrine is difficult for many people to understand and believe. The doctrines of grace use the acronym T.U.L.I.P. to help define its key doctrines. The “U” stands for Unconditional Election. Let’s look to God’s Word for clarity on what He says about the doctrine of election.

Is God Gracious to All?

1. Psalm 145:9. Who is the LORD good to? _____
2. Romans 6:23. What do all people deserve because of their sin? _____
3. Matthew 5:44–45. Who does God cause the sun to rise and the rain to fall on? _____

4. 2 Peter 3:9. What does this verse reveal about God’s character? _____

God’s Revealed Will vs. Hidden Will

1. Ezekiel 33:11. What does God not take pleasure in? _____
2. 1 Timothy 2:3–4. What does this verse reveal about God? _____

3. 2 Peter 3:9. What does God “wish” for in this verse? _____

4. Deuteronomy 29:29. What does this reveal about God? _____

5. Ephesians 3:10–11. When did God decree for His wisdom to be made known by the church? _____

6. 1 Corinthians 2:7. What does this tell us about God’s “hidden wisdom”? _____

7. Ephesians 1:4. When did God choose believers to be saved? _____

“God’s revealed will . . . tells us what is pleasing to the Lord in and of itself, and it reflects His eternal holy character. God’s hidden will . . . consists of His eternal decree that ordains all things.”
—R.C Sproul

New Testament Teaching on Election

1. Acts 13:48. What does this verse reveal about those who believe? _____

2. Ephesians 1:4–5. What did God do? When did He do it? _____

3. Romans 8:28–30. What is God’s ordained order of salvation (“the golden chain” of salvation) in these verses?

4. 2 Thessalonians 2:13. What has God chosen us for? _____
5. 2 Timothy 1:9. When was our salvation determined? _____
6. Revelation 17:8. When were the names of believers written in the book of life? _____

“Our destiny was determined and sealed before the world began.”
—John MacArthur, *TMNTC, 2 Timothy*, pg. 24

What does this mean?

1. Romans 8:28. What does God work all things out for? _____
2. Romans 8:30. What is the promise for all those whom God has chosen? _____
3. 2 Timothy 1:9. Why does God do this for believers? _____
4. Ephesians 1:12. How do we respond to this great doctrine? _____
5. 2 Timothy 2:10. What is the end for all of God's elect? _____

“Election is thus a cause for comfort and for assurance that God will work for our good today.”
—Wayne Grudem, *Christian Beliefs*, pg. 80

What does this not mean?

1. Acts 2:23. It does not mean that we don't have personal choice. People will always choose according to their nature. For unbelievers, choices arise from a fallen human nature, which is fundamentally opposed to obeying God. For believers, we choose Christ because we have a new nature; we are born again.
2. Romans 10:13. It does not mean we should stop preaching the gospel because God elects. All are commanded to repent and believe and will be held accountable for their unbelief. (see John 5:40 and Romans 1:20)
3. Ephesians 1:4–5. It does not mean God looked ahead and foresaw a decision that someone would make to trust in Him. He chose believers “before the foundation of the world.” (see also 1 John 4:19)

Application

1. How does the doctrine of election comfort you?
2. How does the doctrine of election help you understand the choices you make versus the choices the world makes?
3. In what ways have you seen God's sovereign, perfect plan play out in your life?