

Election

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[0:00] Our pastor may have just enlightened me as to what one of my problems has been this week. As of late yesterday afternoon, I was still at 27 pages on my notes, and for anybody who has ever done this, that's way too many.

And it's because that maybe we're looking at two words this morning. One is election and the other is reconciliation. I have not read Packard's chapter on reconciliation yet.

But as I approached the subject, I struggled deeply with how to deal with election without going into God's grand plan of reconciliation. Romans 9, verse 6.

It is not as though God's word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel, nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children.

On the contrary, it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. In other words, it is not the natural children who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring.

[1:11] For this was how the promise was stated. At the appointed time, I will return, and Sarah will have a son. Not only that, but Rebecca's children had one and the same father, our father Isaac.

Yet before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose and election might stand, not by works, but by him who calls, she was told, the older will serve the younger.

Just as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated. What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all. For he says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.

It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy. For the scripture says to Pharaoh, I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

Therefore, God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden. One of you will say to me, Then why does God still blame us?

[2:19] For who resists his will? But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, Why did you make me like this? Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?

What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath prepared for destruction? What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory, even us whom he also called not only from the Jews, but also from the Gentiles?

I still remember as a teenager, at one point after hearing this passage read and hearing many of the arguments and divisive stands being taken by people, prayed a prayer something like this, Lord, I know that everything you say is right and true, and there is so much that we do not know and will never understand because you are so infinitely above us, but why, Lord, didn't you leave this unknown?

Why didn't you just leave Romans right out of our Bibles to reduce all the infighting that it has caused? What possible benefit could there be for having revealed this mysterious truth to us?

Well, as I began preparing the chapter, I was surprised to learn that my question so many years ago is not unique. Packer writes, At such times we see it, the doctrine of election, as a mere useless encumbrance, serving no purpose save to divide Christians who are otherwise united, and to give agnostics ground for criticizing the Christian view of God, and to put distraction and stumbling blocks in the paths of those whom we seek to point to Christ.

[4:13] We could almost reproach God for having put it in the Bible at all, and we feel sure that our wisest course for the future will be to put it out of our minds and to try to stop others from thinking or talking about it any further.

Having reason from the fact that our arguments about election are not edifying to the conclusion that the doctrine itself is not edifying, we feel certain that it is part of our Christian duty to play it down, to insist that it is not a doctrine that matters much, and that we should all be well advised to give our minds to something more profitable.

So why is the doctrine of election in our Bible? Why is it found on almost every page of Scripture? Paul prayed for the Ephesians, In a recent sermon, Pastor John observed that knowing the love of Christ was essential for living the Christian life.

Well, election is simply the outworking of the love of Christ. It is through God's plan of redemption culminating at Calvary, but beginning in eternity past, that His love shines most brightly.

To delve into a study on election is to seek how to love our God and to seek to understand how He loves us. It is through the doctrine of election that the love of God becomes personal and profound.

[5:50] So let us begin with a definition of the biblical term of election. Election carries the idea of selection.

To elect or to choose expresses the idea of picking out or selecting something or someone from a number of options, a number of available alternatives.

We see an example of it with David in 1 Samuel 17, when he picked out the stones from the brook. Then he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the stream.

There were many stones in the stream. He chose out. He picked from many options five. The same word is used for the choice God makes when electing a people to salvation.

Romans 11, 5. So too, at the present time, there is a remnant chosen by grace. Just as David selected out of many options five smooth stones, so we are told throughout Scripture that God is selecting, He's choosing, He's electing people onto salvation to be recipients of His redemptive plan.

[7:01] But we need to back up for a moment. The election is going to be difficult to understand, let alone appreciate and glory in, without considering it within the larger context of the biblical picture.

And I'm calling that bigger picture this morning the plan or the need for reconciliation. First, the need for reconciliation.

First point on your sheet. Everything God created was very good. I'm going to very briefly go through these. We need to get the context. Everything God created was very good.

We know that from Genesis 1.31, but we also read in Ecclesiastes 7.29, this only have I found, God made mankind upright. Everything was good, including mankind.

But this goodness was shattered by man's rebellion. Which leads to the second point, when man rebelled, he died. When man rebelled, he died. We read in Genesis 2.16 and 17, And the Lord God commanded the man, you are free to eat from any tree in the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it, you will surely die.

[8:24] While certainly man began physically dying at the point of his sin, more significantly, the day he rebelled, he died spiritually. And what is spiritual death?

It's separation from God. But this separation occurs on two fronts. Because God's just, he could no longer maintain fellowship with his sinful creation.

A perfect, just, holy God cannot leave sin unpunished. But separation also flows from man to God. And it is this truth that has been so widely lost in modern evangelicalism.

Man hates his God, the true God of creation. Oh, he may not hate the God of his own imaginations, but when presented with the God of Scripture, with the true creator God revealed in his word, he will do anything he can to remain separated from him, even going so far as to kill him if given the chance.

And we know that played out in redemptive history. Why is the doctrine of election so widely rejected? Well, I'm sure there's many reasons, not the least of which is the poor graces of some who claim to hold to it.

[9:45] But I'm also convinced that it's because we've lost sight of this bigger picture, of the desperate plight and need of man. The predominant view of man today, even in Christian circles, is that he really isn't so bad, and that if given the chance, many people would choose fellowship with God and service in his kingdom.

And if only true believers, I'm sorry, if we truly believe this, that many people are good at heart and would love to follow Jesus if only given the chance, can we see how repulsive the doctrine of election would be?

Within this framework, election makes God out to be the bad guy, choosing to send some people to hell who otherwise would have lived their lives for him.

God's made into a wicked tyrant doing evil to otherwise good people. In other words, for most of us, separation from God is a one-way street.

God has separated himself from us, and yes, we've sinned, we're sinners, but for many of us, we feel we're sorry for that sin, and if God would only have us if he would forgive us, we would certainly want to be reconciled back to him.

[11:05] Well, this is what many parts of Christianity has disintegrated into after having purging itself of the doctrine of election.

So how important is this doctrine in our Bible? Well, I hope we will see this morning it is profoundly important. It is, in fact, central to everything we believe. The third point in the need for reconciliation when man died, he became depraved.

When man died, he became depraved. I previously quoted Ecclesiastes 7.29, which observes that God made mankind upright, but the verse goes on to say that men have gone in search of many schemes.

Right out of the gate, we must emphasize that man's sin and rebellion is of his own doing. God did not create man sinful and rebellious. God created man good.

It's been our choice to rebel against him. It is all our fault. Is man's spiritual death really just a skinning of the knee, as it were?

[12:23] Or is it a cancer that's permeating every part of our being? Listen to a couple of passages. Mark 7.21-23. For from within, out of men's hearts come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly.

All these evils come from inside and make a man unclean. Psalm 14.1-3. The fool says in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt.

Their deeds are vile. There is no one who does good. The Lord looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. All have turned aside.

They have together become corrupt. There is no one who does good, not even one. Isaiah 64.6. All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags.

We all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind, our sins sweep us away. In Isaiah 53.6, We all like sheep have gone astray.

[13:31] Each of us has turned to his own way. Since this is also not a lesson on depravity, I will stop there. But let me give you an ever so brief summary of just some of the things Scripture says about natural man.

And none of it's good. God declares that all men are swept away by sin, are dead in sin and transgressions, live to gratify their sinful nature, desire, and thoughts, have hearts from which every kind of evil flows, have hearts whose every inclination is only evil from childhood, have turned from God's way to pursue their own way, are hostile to God, do not submit to God's law, are unable to submit to God's law, are by nature under the wrath of God, find their best deeds as filthy rags in God's sight, cannot please God, are dead to God.

They cannot and will not respond to him. But here's the rub. Even though we are so evil and corrupt in our natural selves, we're completely blind to the depths of our own wickedness and corruption.

And we even can believe ourselves to be good, at least somewhat good. Jeremiah 17, 9, the hardest deceitful above all things and beyond cure.

In this aspect of our depravity, our self-deception, our self-deceitfulness, enables us to think so highly of ourselves in spite of what God's word declares with such profound clarity to the contrast.

[15:06] So with this backdrop, our need for reconciliation, I want to move into the body of the morning's lesson, which is to consider God's plan for reconciliation.

God's plan for reconciliation. What do we know about God's plan? Well, it was conceived in eternity past. It's going to speak to who would be the recipients of that plan.

It needs to satisfy God's just sentence against the elect. We're going to come back through these so you don't need to fill them all in quickly. God's plan needs to overcome the depravity of man.

And then it's going to guarantee the final eternal fellowship of God and His elect. If man is this wicked, if there is this divide between God and man that cannot be reconciled by man, then if anyone would be saved, God had to devise a plan for it to come to be.

An election is at the center of that plan. First, only one verse. God's plan was conceived in eternity past. We could obviously spend much time on this. Ephesians 1.4, for He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight.

[16 : 30] His plan started before He made anything. He knew everything that would happen. He knew all that we would do. And He chose in eternity past, before the creation of the world, to choose out, to elect, those who would, in fact, be redeemed.

So it began back there. We will see some of this before the beginning of creation in some of the passages we'll be reading as well. But secondly, God's plan speaks to who would be reconciled. Please turn to Matthew 11.26. Matthew 11.26. As Creator and Redeemer, it's God's prerogative to save whomever He wishes.

He could have chosen to save no one and send all to hell. Or He could have chosen to save everyone through His redemptive plan. Or He could have chosen to save only a few guilty sinners. The Bible teaches that God picked this third option, to save only some. It's often at this point that many struggle with the doctrine of election. First, because we perceive it unfair that some would be saved while others are left damned.

[17 : 45] I wonder, how bad does someone have to become in your mind before fairness leaves the equation?

If God chose to save every human being, but He left Satan and the fallen angels condemned to hell, would we cry, it's not fair?

Why should He save us and leave Satan still condemned? And in fact, in this subject, I don't know that I've ever heard anybody complain within the Christian community where, I'm talking the evangelical community, where we all believe not everyone's going to heaven, some are not, this question of fairness that Satan wasn't given the opportunity for redemption.

No, there's something within us, something within our mind, and I can't explain it, but there comes a crossing point at which somebody becomes so evil that we would never, it becomes repulsive to think in the terms of fairness because they only deserve one thing, and that one thing is judgment. Well, here's the penetrating question. Would we consider ourselves, apart from Christ, and his restraining grace, understanding he is the one who is restraining us from becoming all the evil that we could become, would we consider ourselves as being in the same category as Satan?

[19 : 22] Listen to Jesus' words in John 8, 44, speaking to the Pharisees. You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him.

When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and a father of lies. Jesus declared unregenerate man to be akin to Satan.

I choose the word akin very carefully from the English language. The American Heritage Dictionary defines akin as one of the same kin related by blood. Jesus called the Pharisees to whom he was speaking the sons, Satan being the father of them.

And number two, having a similar quality of character. He also said, you want to carry out your father's desire. That means they have the same character as Satan. So I would ask us, if this fairness question comes into our mind, we need to stop and consider, do we really grasp, have we really considered what I am apart from Christ and his grace?

Not only saving grace, but restraining grace, even among those who are not his elect. But the second reason I believe some struggle with the doctrine of election is because there are numerous passages that call men to faith and repentance.

[20 : 55] Let me read a couple. John 6, 35. Then Jesus declared, I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

It's a call to come. In Matthew 11, 28, you are right in that section. Matthew 11, 28, come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.

The reasoning goes like this. If God commands man to come to himself, then certainly man has it within himself to respond to that command and to come to God.

This, of course, makes man the initiator of his own personal reconciliation to God and it makes God the responder of man's request for salvation. But just because God gives an invitation to be

reconciled doesn't imply that we have the ability within ourselves to respond to that invitation. And so look at Matthew 11 beginning at verse 26, just preceding verse 28. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

[22:05] All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses, there's our word again, to reveal him.

Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. The call is universal. It is not dishonest. God genuinely wants all to be reconciled to himself.

But man is unable. He cannot. No one can know the Father except for those whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Likewise, turn to John 6.

John 6. I read John 6. 35. Which again said, Then Jesus declared, I am the bread of life.

He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

Whoever wants to believe, whoever is hungry, whoever wants to come to him, may.

[23:19] me. But if we go forward a couple of verses and start reading in verse 37, we read, All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

Anyone who comes to God, he will not drive away. Anyone may come. But, there's a catch, and the catch isn't with God. And this is, look at verse 39, And this is the will of him who sent me, that I will lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

For the Father's will is that everyone looks to the Son and believes in him, shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. And now jump down to verse 44.

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. That's to compel with irresistible authority. And I will raise him up on the last day.

No one will come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. Is that because God is holding them back and keeping them away? No. We just read that his desire is for everyone to come to him.

[24:35] It's just a fact of what we are. God is unfolding his book and showing us what we are made of and telling us the reality of our desperate situation.

Look at verse 63. The Spirit gives life. The flesh counts for nothing. If we're counting on the flesh, we'll get nowhere because our flesh does not want God.

It's the Spirit that gives life. Verse 65. He went on to say, this is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him.

We need the enabling power of the Father for any of us to ever come to him. Why is man unable to respond to God? I refer you back to our brief study on depravity, which is why we started there.

But also Romans 8, 7, and 8, I believe gives a very concise answer. It's an issue of ability.

[25:46] We do not have the ability to please God. We cannot and we will not. So since no man would ever choose God, there's only one hope for man, and that is that God would have chosen him.

Many people read in Romans 9 where it talks about God not depending upon man's will.

Let me go back to it before I muddle it. It does not, there, verse 16 of chapter 9, it does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.

And they look at that as what kind of a God is this? that man's desire and effort doesn't come into play in this. That is the most gracious statement in Scripture because if it depended on man's desire and effort, none of us would come to God.

So it's a statement of grace that it doesn't depend on your desire or effort, but it depends on God's mercy that any of us come to him. Since no man would ever choose God, there is only one hope for man, God's love for God.

[27:00] God would choose him. John 15, 16, you did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit. Romans 10, 20, and Isaiah boldly says, I was found by those who did not seek me.

I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me. In Acts 16, 41, one of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. Who is it then who believes the gospel message? Is it those who are smart enough or wise enough to understand it?

When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord, and all who were appointed for eternal life believed. I'm quoting so many passages to just substantiate and show how this permeates our scripture.

So then, having decided in this great plan of his who would be elected, who among this rebellious human race he was going to choose out, God had to proceed to overcome two obstacles.

[28 : 14] First, satisfaction of his righteous wrath against those whom he had elected, and second, the overcoming of the rebellious wicked hearts of those whom he had elected.

So first, or third, on your point under God's plan of reconciliation, God's plan satisfied God's just sentence against the elect.

God's plan satisfied God's just sentence against the elect. God overcame the first obstacle, his own righteous anger towards his elect through an unthinkable and amazing plan of redemption.

And again, the lesson is not on redemption, so we're going to go over this briefly, but 1 John 4, 9, and 10, this is how God showed his love among us. He sent his one and only son into the world that we might live through him.

This is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. God became man so that infinite God could himself propitiate the infinite wrath of God.

[29 : 23] What would have taken man and will take finite man all of eternity to satisfy in the lake of fire, the God man endured in three eternity compressed hours on the cross.

And so Jesus redeemed all those whom God had chosen through his substitutionary death on the cross. Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you, I will give men in exchange for you and people in exchange for your life.

Isaiah 43, 4, which we'll be coming to in our verse pack soon. God accepted the exchange of Christ's death, his suffering, as being a redeemer for his people.

But fourthly, God's plan overcame the depravity of the elect. The second obstacle that God had to overcome to secure his people was their reconciliation.

But not to at all belittle the unthinkable work that he did. That was not enough. We've already seen God's word repeatedly emphasized that when left to himself, no man would ever come to God.

[30 : 36] So even though Christ died on a cross and redeemed his people, left in themselves, they would still reject him. God's eternal plan of reconciliation, therefore, had to account for man's rebellion.

When Christ endured God's wrath in the place of his elect, it only solved half of the reconciliation equation. If left unchanged, his people would still be God haters. clearly something had to be done. And listen to what God did. Deuteronomy 30, the Lord your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul and live.

Jeremiah 32, 40, I will make an everlasting covenant with them. I will never stop doing good to them and I will inspire them to fear me so that they will never turn away from me.

Ezekiel 36, 25-27, I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you.

[31 : 42] I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh and I will put my spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old is gone, the new has come. All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

From these few passages, we see God overcoming the second obstacle by circumcising or giving a new heart to his elect, removing their dead heart of rebellion and replacing it with a heart of flesh that is able to respond to his word and his spirit, cleansing them, freeing them from all the impurities and idols of their heart, giving them a heart of love for their God, inspiring them to fear their God, putting his Holy Spirit in them to move them to follow his decrees and to be careful to keep his laws in short by making them into new creations.

The end result is the accomplishment of God's plan of eternal reconciliation for his elect. Fifthly, on your sheet, God's plan guarantees the eternal fellowship of God with his elect.

The end of the story is secure because God elected his people to eternal life. It's God who conceived the plan, who is working out its every detail with his sovereign providence, and who is the guarantor of its success by his eternal power and wisdom.

[33 : 20] John 10, 27-29, My sheep listen to my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.

No one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father who has given them to me is greater than all, and no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. Well, there's many practical applications to

this doctrine of election.

We obviously only have time to consider a few. So, very quickly, election makes salvation personal. The concept of a Savior who died an ineffectual death for every human being who has ever lived is a very impersonal religion.

Christ died for a mass of humanity without really knowing who or how many would actually receive him as he sits by hoping that some might possibly come to him. contrasts this popular belief with the biblical doctrine of election applied to the Christian.

God chose to set his affection on me from eternity past. Jesus went to the cross to specifically secure my salvation.

[34 : 35] When I finally came on the scene, God called me out of this world by personally seeking me out and changing my hard, stony heart, into a heart of flesh.

And he sent his spirit to dwell within me as a guarantee of the fellowship that we would enjoy together for all eternity. Election makes salvation very personal, but it also makes salvation supernatural.

Salvation that is man-centric is also natural and powerless. The idea that I have it within myself to come to God makes salvation obtainable through human ability and desire.

God contrast, biblical teaching and God's eternal plan of reconciliation is a grand idea that overcomes seemingly insurmountable odds.

And it requires nothing less than supernatural power applied to every single human being that he is going to call out onto salvation. After all, his son had to die a death of eternity for that one he was going to save.

[35 : 45] And after all, he's got to change the heart of that one, completely transforming them into a new creation. That's miraculous. Thirdly, election makes evangelism possible.

God has chosen to accomplish the salvation of his elect through an effectual call. Romans 8.30, and those he predestined he also called.

2 Thessalonians 2.13, and 14. But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

He called you to this through our gospel that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. God chooses to work out his plan of reconciliation in the lives of his elect by calling them to repentance through the gospel.

Paul and his co-workers shared the gospel with people at Thessalonica, and through this means God called his elect within that city to himself.

[36 : 50] So we see that God usually uses people to outwardly deliver his call. We therefore preach the gospel to everyone, knowing that the elect will hear and believe because of the power God will exercise on their behalf.

2 Timothy 2.10, 1 Thessalonians 1, 4, 5, 1, 4, 5, For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction.

this lesson has really been directed to believers among us but I want to just pause and state a brief word to you if you are outside of Christ today.

You've just heard God's glorious plan of saving grace. His command to you is to look to Jesus and live. Do not allow a question of whether or not you are one of God's elect to make you hesitate in obeying the call.

Respond in self-abasing faith and belief knowing that your dawning understanding of your own depravity that would even make you want to possibly look to Jesus and your desire to come to Christ are in themselves gifts of grace from this God who is calling you to be reconciled.

[38 : 24] But returning to believers, the election evokes a rather simple but powerful application as it relates to this subject. I forgot our subject of evangelism.

As we share the gospel, we can do so with unthinkable confidence, knowing that it will all come with God's power to those whom he is going to call out and elect from those we are speaking with.

God has given it to us to share the glorious message of Christ to a dying world. 2 Corinthians 5.20, we are therefore Christ's ambassadors as though God were making his appeal through us.

We implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. And we do so that he will perform a miracle of grace within the hearts of his elect.

We don't have to perform that miracle. This gives us confidence and boldness since we know that the success of our mission is guaranteed. Fourthly, election gives life profound purpose.

[39:32] And I'm going to skip over that as we're running out of time. Life gives, I'm sorry, election gives life profound purpose. But fifthly, election produces humility in man.

Election produces humility in man. 1 Corinthians 4, 7, For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

Can we see how election humbles and lays us low? Is there something I am especially gifted in? It is God who distributed that gift to me.

Do I desire to please God? This desire is a grace from God. Do I find myself obeying his decrees? When those around me spurn his laws? It is God who is daily moving me to follow his decrees and be careful to keep his laws.

Do I have a soft, sensitive heart? It is God who removed my heart of stone and gave me a heart of flesh. Do I have an understanding for the secrets of the kingdom of heaven while those around me remain blind to it?

[40:40] Jesus replied, The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven have been given to you and not to them. election. We could go on and on, but the application is obvious.

Since it is God who has given me all things, I should be glorying in him rather than myself, which is our final point. Election gives God the glory due his name.

And this is really the jewel of the entire doctrine. election. Listen to Ephesians 1, 3 to 6, and note how Paul sandwiches the thought of election in this passage.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy. In love, he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ in accordance with his pleasure and will, to the praise of his glorious grace.

Did you hear it? What is this all about? It's for the praise of the glorious grace of God. Every sin we commit should become an opportunity for repentance and worship of the God of all grace and mercy, who has chosen me such a wretched sinner, which I just again proved through that sin.

[41:56] He sent his son to redeem me from the terrible debt of that sin, and he's promised me perfect fellowship with him for all eternity. Oh, as I sin, I should flee back to Christ in the cross, but as I do so, I should do it in worship of God.

Every good grace I see being produced within me, and every good deed that flows from me should prompt me to lift my worship to him who is the one supplying all grace and mercy.

Matthew 5, 16, in the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. I will close as Paul did after spending three chapters unpacking the glorious doctrine of election in Romans 9-11.

He concludes with this rapture doxology. Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable his judgments and his paths beyond tracing out, who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor, who has ever given to God that God should repay him, for from him and through him and to him are all things.

To him be the glory forever. Amen.