

# Reformed Theology 3—Election and the Glory of God

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[ 0 : 00 ] Defining the doctrines of grace, the doctrines of Calvinism.! So I think the first week we talked a lot about compatibilism,!

Is it when I grab ahold of Christ by faith, or is it when Christ does that secret work of regeneration, you know, the wind blows where it wills, causes us to be born again, so that through the work of the Spirit, I put my faith in Christ, respond in repentance.

Today we're going to look at election and the glory of God. So this is a subject. Hope you've got enough coffee, because we're going to need it today. Well, the doctrine of election has brought strong reactions for a long time.

And the doctrine of predestination, which I'm going to define the difference between the two, but brings probably the strongest reactions and has for hundreds of years.

In fact, and I put this in the outline just for your amusement, on March 11, 1779, a beautiful and quite humorous poem appeared in the Continental Journal called On Predestination.

[ 1 : 34 ] If you don't have an outline, there are some still in the back, so you can grab one. So On Predestination. So someone wrote this, So you know where this writer is coming from.

If we're driven by faith, either this way or that, as the carman whips his horses in a chariot, then no man can stray, all go the right way, as the stars are fixed on their courses.

But if by free will we can go or stand still, as best suits the present occasion, then fill up a glass and confirm him a donkey that depends upon predestination.

So you get where he's coming from. Well, two weeks later, another poem appeared in the Continental Journal of our young republic and said, If an all-perfect mind rules over mankind with infinite wisdom and power, sure he may decree, and yet the will may be free, the deeds and events of each hour.

If scripture affirms in the plainest of terms the doctrine of predestination, we ought to believe it and humbly receive it as the truth of divine revelation. If all things advance with the force of mere chance or human will are directed to preach or to pray, we'll be time thrown away.

[ 3 : 05 ] If it's in our hands, our teachers may well be rejected. Therefore, let human pride and vain cavil subside. It is plain to a full demonstration that he's a wild donkey who over his glass dares ridicule the doctrine of predestination.

I thought that was pretty humorous. But it does actually, in its humor, its creativity, it captures the temptation.

You know, I think, like we talked about with compatibilism, you know, when God's sovereignty is stated in such a way that there's nothing for man to do, which is not the sovereignty of God in the Bible, it seems like we're just locked in faith.

We're pawns. We're in the matrix. Now, that's one that I guess you wouldn't understand anymore, but we're like in 1984, you know, and big brothers controlling our life. We don't know what's going on. And yet, it's actually putting it in the other side as well.

If human responsibility is exaggerated to the point that everything is conditional upon it, that's actually a very scary place. It's scary for preaching.

[ 4 : 18 ] It's scary for praying. It's scary for facing the difficulties of this life. And so, that captures the tendency.

So, there's many strong reactions to the doctrines of Calvinism, doctrines of grace, most significantly this point of election, predestination, and specifically this question.

Why and on what grounds are some chosen and others are not? Why and on what grounds are some chosen and others are not? I kind of broke this out in a couple pairs of threes, I think. The first is three cautions before considering divine election. We must remember, firstly, that gospel defines us not the doctrines of grace.

Now, the late R.C. Sproul, who's quite a humorous guy, was once asked, can you be a Christian if you don't believe in the doctrines of grace? And he said, barely.

[ 5 : 20 ] Now, he was tongue-in-cheek, but it's a very important thing. It's not the doctrines of grace that define us. It's the gospel that defines us. It's not believing in the doctrines of grace that saves us from God's wrath, but believing in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Because the word says to him, Charles Spurgeon says there, and I think it's helpful, we give our hand to every man that loves the Lord Jesus Christ, be he what he may or who he may.

The doctrine of election is not intended to divide Israel and Israel, but between Israel and the Egyptians. Not between saint and saint, but between saints and the children of the world.

I think it's helpful. That's the purpose of it. Therefore, it doesn't define us, and it doesn't define us as a church, and you don't have to believe this sold out, you know, to be a part of this church or to benefit from this church.

Secondly, we must remember God is God and we are not. You know, that's probably a really good daily reminder. God is God, you are not God. Which means there's just lots of limitations that inherently come with that.

[ 6 : 32 ] One of them is wisdom and knowledge and the best things and all those things. There's limitations. Keep this in view. God is creator. We're creatures. God is infinite. We're finite. God's all-knowing.

We're limited. God is holy and we are sinful. So some of the things we think are the most holy ends might not, in fact, be. Not only that, God has not told us everything. God has not told us everything. He's only told us what we need. Deuteronomy 29.29, which is a great one to memorize, commit to memory. Tuck away in your Bible. You're going to need it, not just in this conversation, but in lots. The secret things belong to the Lord, but this is the end of Deuteronomy, which is second law is what Deuteronomy means. And so he's talking about the law that has been revealed. God's told you everything you need to walk with him, commune with him.

The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed, that's the law, belong to us and to our children forever that we may do all the words of the law. So God, all that God knows, he doesn't tell you.

[ 7 : 35 ] And in a lot of ways, it's for your good. John Calvin has a nice quote there that I'm not going to read for the sake of time, but essentially encourage us to be wise.

You know, essentially we should go as far as Scripture goes, but no further. And in the history of the church at times, in this doctrine, there have been too much speculation, in my opinion.

And so we, you know, we have to worship the God as he's revealed himself to be. And anything beyond Scripture, if we explore it, we should be very careful because we're on our own mind at that point.

Thirdly, we must remember that God would have been just if he condemned the whole world for rebelling against him. Discussions about predestination and election inevitably lead to discussions about the justice of God.

Is God just in ordering things this way? But it's critical that we begin discussions on justice on the right foot. Why is so-and-so over here saved and so-and-so over there not saved?

[ 8 : 43 ] That's not the critical question. The critical question is, why is anyone saved? To put it another way, the critical point is remembering the mercy of God in saving anyone.

Because it could have been just Noah. You know, I mean, not even Noah. It could have been a flood. Flood the whole earth and condemn the whole earth. God doesn't need it. And so, if anyone does not get what they deserve, it's because God is merciful.

And so, we need to remember that. We talk about justice. All right. Secondly, so that was kind of the three cautions about divine election. Secondly, the definition of divine election.

So, election, in many ways, there's two explanations that talk about this. Divine election. Does God elect people because they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? And this is kind of just summarizing basic camps.

Or does God elect people in order that they may believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? You know, generally, in an Arminian view, what they would say is God elects people because they believe in Jesus Christ.

[ 9 : 48 ] So, when they talk about foreknowledge, they would say that God kind of goes, and you probably heard phrases like this, He goes through the corridors of time and sees who would respond to Him and chooses those, after He foreknew them, He chooses to predestine them to be saved.

And so, ultimately, God chose them because they believed in Him, because they were a good enough person or something like that. He knew they would be raised in a great family. And obviously, God knows all things, knows all things, not just all things that do happen, but all things that could happen.

But, that's not the way foreknowledge is talked about. We'll talk about that later. But, in the Calvinist view, it's the opposite. God elects people in order that they may believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. If God elected people because they believe, that election would be contingent upon their response. Does that make sense? It would be contingent on what they would do in time.

So, theoretically, God could elect them and then not choose them or something like that. But, that's not the way the Bible presents these things.

[ 10 : 59 ] It presents God in His sovereignty and in His electing purposes knowing that all people were in, under the judgment of God, desperately sick with the sin, unable to respond to the gospel.

So, He elects them and kind of weaves them into His purposes of saving grace. Our statement of faith, which is, you know, important because it is our guiding document, says it like this.

And, I think we have this big chunk for you so you might look down. God, in His great love before the foundation of the world, chose those whom He would save in Christ Jesus. God's election is entirely gracious and not at all conditioned upon foreseen faith, obedience, perseverance, or any merit in those whom God has chosen.

His decision to set His saving love on the elect is based entirely on His sovereign will and good pleasure. The number of God's elect is fixed for eternity and no one who has been chosen by God will be lost.

In the mystery of His will, God passes over the non-elect. God withholding His mercy and punishing them for their sins as a display of His holy justice and wrath.

[ 12 : 12 ] So, that's the statement of faith trying to summarize what Scripture says. Now, I just want to take us to the Scripture. So, actually, if you have a copy of the Scriptures, it might be good to open to Ephesians 1.

Can I have that beside you as we start? because as we start talking about election, we want to unpack it biblically.

First is, when defining God's election, God chose, you know, that's the same, elect us, that's the word for election. God chose before time.

And we see this in Ephesians 1, 3, through 5, but particularly verse 4. So, the doctrine of election, therefore, these saving purposes of God occurred, or the beginning of them, occurred before the foundation of the world, before we had been born, obviously, before the universe had been created, before Adam, had fell.

So, God, you know, the story of the Bible is not that Adam fell and God had to, he was confused, he was shocked. The story of the Bible is somehow in the mystery of his sovereign purposes, all that took place was planned to take place.

[ 13 : 40 ] And so, that means God did not look through the corridors of time. If he chose us before the foundation of the world, he chose to save a people before time.

So, it helps us to understand when were, you know, Jesus said, don't rejoice that demons submit to you, rejoice that your name is written in heaven. When were the names written in heaven?

Or, you know, we talk about the book of life in Revelation. When were the names written in the book of life? I think, biblically, if we're putting our Bible together, this is when it occurred, before the foundation of the world.

So, secondly, and all these kind of flow together, but I wanted to pull them out. God chose us on the basis of grace, not anything else. And I think Ephesians 4 holds us out very strikingly.

If you look down there with me, it says, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world.

[ 14 : 43 ] So, he, that is God the Father, so there's a cluster of wonderful pronouns right there. He, God the Father, chose us, that is the elect, the people of God, throughout every age, in him.

Who's that referencing? Jesus Christ. Right? God chose us in him before the foundation of the world.

These are very emphatic. So, if God chose us in him, then he did not chose us for anything we had done. So, he chose us on the basis of grace.

The fact, it's just stunning to think God in his saving purposes had us and Christ together before the foundation of the world. In his mind, for his saving purposes and for his good.

Yeah, Eva? Eva? It even says Christ was slain before the foundation. does say that. It's talking so provocatively. What's that mean?

[ 15 : 47 ] It's talking provocatively about the plan of God is as good as done before it begins. That's what that means. It doesn't mean Christ offered his sacrifice in the heaven, but it does, I think, actually, you may be prophetic because you kind of anticipated my next point, which I think God choosing us in him.

Now, we had some good reformed people in the room. We do have a Presbyterian in the room, former Presbyterian, would understand that this, God chose us in him before the foundation of the world, seems to be a reference to what they call the covenant of redemption, to this covenant God the Father made with God the Son before the world began.

And so, before the world began, before Adam had sinned, the mind of God, the Godhead knows what's going to happen. Jesus Christ puts himself forward to bear the penalty for our sins.

And so, that helps us understand, actually, it helps us understand the particular nature of the redemption as well, that God chose a certain people before the world began.

and helps us understand that. There's other passages of Scripture that make this clear. I can't remember if I put John 17 in the outline. Did I put that in there? So, John 17, and all throughout John, Jesus references the people the Father had given him.

[ 17 : 15 ] So, when did the Father give him these people? It seems that this happened before the foundation of the world. And that's what John 17 is pointing to, and you can enjoy that.

All right, turn with me to Romans 9. Any discussion on the doctrine of the election can't bypass Romans 9. Paul, in Romans 9, Paul uses two biblical examples for how salvation can still be of God even though Jews do not believe, some Jews do not believe, and Gentiles do.

So, all throughout the Old Testament is very clear. Jews were the chosen people, the chosen race, and so, how could God's saving purposes be going forward if Jews are, some Jews do not believe and Gentiles do.

And so, Paul is unpacking the fact that it wasn't, it wasn't because they were Jews that they were Jewish.

it was because God chose them, if that makes sense. Maybe that's not the best way to say it, but it's not their Jewishness that makes them the people of God. It's not their history.

[ 18 : 32 ] It's God's saving purposes, his choosing purposes, which means, well, I'll let Paul tell you what it means. So, he talks about, first about Isaac and then about Jacob and Esau.

So, look down there with me in verse 6. He says, so again, like I told you, you know, that's kind of the argument. Like, how could this be right, you know, if Jews aren't believing? And so, he says, but it's not as though the word of God has failed.

So, you know, it's not like God's not fulfilling his purposes. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel. So, not all who have the right family tree and all that stuff belong.

Not all who are children of Abraham, not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but through Isaac shall your offspring be named.

This means it's not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise who are counted as his offspring. For this is what the promise said about this time next year, I will return and Sarah shall have a son.

[ 19 : 41 ] Now, there's many sons of Abraham, right? Abraham had many sons, many sons, you know, but he had many literal sons as well. He had Ishmael by his servant, Hagar, Isaac by Sarah, his wife Sarah, Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shua by his wife, Ketorah.

So, what is the point of this argument? Well, Abraham had many sons with the same father himself and different mothers, but only one was the chosen son.

So, he had many, that's the argument Paul's making. He had many sons with the same father and a different mother, but only one was the chosen one.

That means God's purposes don't hang together because of paternal privilege, because of who your dad is. So, being born of the right father is not enough to be born again into the kingdom of God.

Now, lest we think being born of the right mother is enough, he presses on. Look in verse 10. He says, and not only so, so that's introducing another example, but also when Rebecca had conceived, that's Isaac's wife, had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, I guess I didn't have to tell you that, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad, in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works, but because of him who calls, she was told the older will serve the younger, as it is written, Jacob I loved, Esau I hated. [ 21 : 24 ] So, Abraham's son, Isaac, had two sons with the same father and the same mother in the same womb.

and yet only one is the chosen son of God. And Paul is very explicit.

Why is that the point, he says down there, look, though they were not yet, in verse 11, in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works, but because of him who calls, because they had done nothing good or bad.

So, what's the point of this section? I mean, this is a big, hard section for people wrestling with the doctrines of election. You know, some may object that Isaac was preferred over Ishmael because of his mother, but Jacob and Esau had the same mother.

So, that doesn't hold there. Second, Jacob's preeminence was promised before he was born, and therefore could not have been based on anything he had done. Now, Isaac, appeared to be a pretty rotten father, honestly, and favored Jacob.

[ 22 : 43 ] So, the favoritism should be condemned. And yet, God had a choice before Jacob chose and favored that son.

And then, thirdly, Jacob, being the younger brother, makes it even clear that God's purposes do not flow by human preferences, because a younger son would not receive the inheritance in that patriarchal culture.

So, what's the point of all this? One of the points of these two examples is election is not on the basis of anything we have done or could do. Not because of human ability or work, but on God's activity, purpose, and grace.

It's so important to remember the original context, this context, the confusion of people in that day when Jewish people were rejecting Jesus Christ.

This is supposed to be the Messiah. They're rejecting him. And all these Gentiles are accepting him. You could hop into Acts 13 if you want to see this live and in color. So, it's a crisis. What's going on?

[ 23 : 52 ] Isn't this supposed to be their Messiah? And he's helping them to see that just because you have the right family doesn't mean you have the right father, if we could say it that way.

And so, God's electing purposes. And it sounds harsh in this setting, but what it's helping us to see liberates the gospel, so to speak, to proclaim it to every tribe, tongue, and nation.

Now, what does it mean that God hated Esau before he was born? That is very important. I think it's very important to understand what we mean by that.

I mean, at first I'd say we shouldn't import our understandings of hate, hope everybody's okay, hate into that category.

So, we often think of hatred only as sinful hatred, as vindictiveness, anger, arrogance, bitterness, right? And yet, you know, the Word says, numerous places God hates, and yet we know God is not vindictive, not unrighteous, not sinful, and so I think it's best to understand that as a reference to his holy judgment upon Esau in his mysterious purposes before he was born, his holy judgment on those who rebel against and passing over them with his saving love.

[ 25 : 24 ] All right, thirdly, God chose specific persons whom he foredo and predestined. Now, I think it's, I think one of the arguments can be that God chose a general people and then kind of the specific people filled in the gaps by faith or something like that, you know, it's a little bit confusing, but if we read our Bibles, we know God choosing specific people has been a part of his purposes all along.

God chose Abraham, right? He called him out of Ur of the Chaldeans. He was a moon worshiper, according to Joshua 24-2. Called him out of Ur of the Chaldeans to worship him. He said, I'm going to make a great, I'm going to do great things through you, and I'm going to bless you, and give you a lot of people, and give you a land. And he didn't make that promise to a lot of people. He actually made that promise to one person. We see that in Noah, too, you know. I mean, Noah's a striking story of election. Certainly, if you keep reading in Genesis, it appears Noah was not this stellar guy. He was a sinner, like you and me. God chose Israel. Deuteronomy 7 is a wonderful meditation on that, where he says, I didn't choose you because you were great. I didn't choose you because you were powerful.

[ 26 : 46 ] You're the least of all the earth. Basically, don't let it go to your head, which is the way. I think the New Testament teaches in numerous places God saves specific individual people.

If you look, you have your Bible open to Romans 9, look at Romans 8. Romans 8, 29-30, it says, this is a way of arguing, who are the called?

In 28, who are those who are called according to his purpose? Who are these people? For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

those whom he predestined he also called, those whom he called he also justified, those whom he justified he also glorified. I think Taylor hit some of this last week, was talking about how the divine acts of God just come on soaps, they appear completely simultaneous.

You know, we see that in conversion, we kind of see that in this before the creation of the world, before time began thing, where it's breaking down foreknowledge, and I've already talked to you a little bit about that, but what does it mean to be foreknown or to foreknow?

[ 28 : 00 ] It's the distinguishing love of God whereby People are set apart for salvation. So God foreknew, I think it's really important, like if you take this word foreknow, so we talked about that, going through the corridors of time, well, the problem with that is, there's a number of problems with it, one, it discounts Ephesians 1, but one problem is know is not used that way.

Know in the Bible is one of the most intimate, deep, it's used to describe what a husband does with his wife on the wedding night, I mean, it's intimacy, it's this deep communion and fellowship, so I don't think foreknow can merely refer to this seeing who might choose him, it's referring to a loving act of God before the foundation of the world, setting his saving love, distinguishing people, just like he did with Israel for the foundation of the world, and then with them he predestined them, so predestined, you know, pre is the prefix,!

and then destined, so it's a destiny, it's setting the chart of their destiny, it's making specific decision to save those, save God, that's kind of a funky sentence, specific decision to save God made concerning people he knew, that's a clunky way to say it, which I wrote, so sorry about that, you know, it's the decision to save them, so those whom he foreknew he predestined, and the argument of Romans 8 is that who are these people who are called, well, it's the ones that were called before the foundation of the world, not called, but it's the ones that were set apart before the foundation of the world, they were foreknown, they were predestined, all those whom he predestined, he also called, that's in time, savingly, called them, faith, repentance, those whom he called, he also justified, declaring them righteous for God, and those whom he justified, he also glorified, you hear it's talking past tense, why?

because it's as good as done, no man can stay his hand or say to him what will he do, you know, God's purposes are as good as done, so that helps unpack those words, I think, so God made this decision to conform a certain people into his image, to save them, to adopt them, to inherit them, fourthly, God chose according to his sovereign will and good pleasure, we see this, here's three references here on the will of God, you know, in him we've obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of his will, who works all things according to the counsel of his will, Romans 8, 2 Timothy 1, Romans 9, they're all stressing that if all these people are saved according to the purpose of his will, what it's saying is that nothing outside God moved him to do what he did, he was led and moved by his own sovereign will and brought it to pass,

God is not a man that he should lie, or the son of man that he should change his mind, has he spoken and will he not do it? That's Numbers 23, 23, 19, his purposes are as good as done and so we see that, all of it according to his will, so it's critical and that would be his sovereign will as we talked about several weeks ago.

[ 31 : 37 ] Point five, God passes over the non-elect punishing them for their sins. Revelation 20, 15, and if anyone's name was not written in the book of life, he was thrown into the hell of fire, which is exceedingly distressing, right?

Anybody that faces even the wrath they deserve, exceedingly distressing. I think one of the things that comes up in this section is what's often talked about people outside the Calvinist camp, but inside sometimes do, the doctrine of double predestination.

So some argue that well, God predestined those to be condemned, I mean, he predestined those to be saved, and he also predestined those to be condemned.

Now, I don't think that's the best way to think about it. I don't think that collects all of Scripture's weight. I mean, yes, God chose a certain people to be saved, and therefore certain people were not saved, but the emphasis of Scripture is that God chose people to be saved according to his mercy and grace.

And God passed over other people and they were not saved, but rather received the judgment for their sins.

[ 33 : 18 ] That makes sense? It helps articulate the stress of Scripture, which again and again and again is that all those who are not saved are not saved because they refused the Lord.

They stiffen their backs and they receive the judgment for their sins. The dean of the pastor's college where Daniel is, I think, says this helpfully in our statement of faith, well, in one of the footnotes.

Rather than explicitly expressing a double decree, so that's double predestination, of election and reprobation, which treats the two decrees as virtually parallel, the statement explains reprobation in terms of predation, God's passing over of the non-elect.

Such an approach seems to better reflect the asymmetry between election and reprobation. God actively and positively brings about the salvation of the elect, they are saved solely by His grace, but He does not actively and positively bring about the damnation of the non-elect.

They are justly condemned because of their sin. I think that's very helpful. It's nuanced, but it's very helpful. I remember being in a New Testament studies class at the University of Tennessee and this lady that went to Duke Divinity School sounding off on double predestination and this type of accent is very important I think to hold these things together.

[ 34 : 51 ] I know this is a lot of stuff. It's going to give you plenty to think about. Third, three hard questions about divine election.

Is God unjust? Now, it's important. Actually, Romans 9 is a defense of God's justice. So if God determines who receives mercy, is He unrighteous because He does not base His decision on anything we do.

Well, the assumption of the question is that God would only be righteous if He chose people on the basis of what they do. And think about it in the context of Israel, the assumption is God would only be righteous if He chose those who had Christian parents.

Or had a proper Christian undergraduate education or something like that. But that's not, you can see how much trouble we get into there. No, He would be unrighteous if He had based it on anything we had done before we had done anything.

You know, right? He would be unrighteous if He based on anything we had done before we had even been created. And so, I don't think you can say He's unjust because of that. I actually have two threes in mind.

[ 36 : 11 ] Two threes in yellows? Secondly, is God unfair? Does election mean God rejects people who want it to come? You know, some say that's what the doctrine of election seems like.

Or that's what it seems to teach. That all these people are standing at the door of heaven, knocking on the door, and God is saying, no, no, not you. You know?

No. But that's not the reality at all. Actually, the doctrine of election is alerting us to the reality that God is urging all people to come to Him, but all people are running away from Him.

running headlong towards hell. And the only thing the doctrine of election means is that God chose to rescue some from that hell-bound race, change their hearts, turn their minds and souls to Him, and grant them everlasting life.

Mark Webb says, I just think this is a helpful two sentences, election keeps no one out of heaven who would otherwise have been there, but it keeps a whole multitude of sinners out of hell who would otherwise have been there.

[ 37 : 14 ] Were it not for election, heaven would be empty and hell would be bursting at the seams. Right? That makes sense. It helps us understand there was no one knocking on the door of the ark to get in.

Right? They're mocking. And so the same thing goes on. The gospel is rejected and does, does, thirdly, does election mean prayer, evangelism, effort, and Christian obedience do not matter? And I'm going to leave that for our last session with Tim because he's going to hit the benefits of a lot of these things. But I think that's where we have to remember compatibilism. You know, we have to remember this truth that God is absolutely sovereign.

Man is 100% responsible. And so, you know, some have said, work like an Arminian and sleep like a Calvinist. you know, the idea is work like it all depends on you, sleep because it all depends on God.

You know, now, I wouldn't commend that type of work, but there is this real idea, actually, because that divorces these two and they're friends, they're not enemies. And rather, it should arm us with so much confidence in evangelism because God has purposes, God has people.

[ 38 : 33 ] You know, I think if it all rests in our hands, it wouldn't arm us with confidence, you know, just like it says in different places, but one, as many as were appointed to eternal life believed.

And so, the work of evangelism is not saving souls. The work of evangelism is proclaiming the gospel and trusting God to save souls and those who are his children for their ears to hear and respond.

All right, fourthly, three important functions of divine election. Humility is number one. I've heard one teacher say, I agree that there are huge problems that go along with believing the doctrine of election, right?

Huge problems. God choosing people to save them and God choosing to pass over people before the foundation of the world. But he says there's even huger problems if you deny it.

There's huge problems if you believe it, but huger. And he says, choose between the two, huge or huger. And what he says is, he asked his students, why are you a Christian and your roommate is not?

[ 39 : 50 ] I had roommates at university. And you might say, because I accepted Christ and my roommate didn't. Right, but why did you accept Christ and your roommate didn't? Well, because I repented of my sins and my roommate wouldn't.

Right, why did you repent and she wouldn't? Well, I suppose it's because I was willing to admit I was a sinner and she didn't want to. Right, but why were you willing to admit you're a sinner and she wasn't willing to admit it?

He went on and on and on to help him to see the only difference between you and them is the mercy of God. It's the grace of God. So that's really what all this means.

Otherwise, the difference between you and them is your background or your Bible memory or your Bible sword drills or something like that. That's the difference. That's not true biblically because God's purposes stand.

God's purpose is election. Remember your calling as we talked about in 1 Corinthians 1. Not many of you are wise or powerful or noble birth, but because of him you are in Christ Jesus. Two, assurance.

[ 40 : 57 ] And this is so critical. What was going on in Romans 8? Romans 8 was a passage written to help people to stand firm in assurance in the midst of suffering.

The creation groans for the revealing of the sons of God. And what does he say? He proclaims these truths. Sometimes we say you shouldn't be talking about God's sovereignty in the hospital room.

Well, that wouldn't work with Romans 8. Romans 8 is written. And what does it tell us? It gives us assurance. And this is one of my favorite quotes. I'm going to read it. David Wells said, The Christian faith began in the eternal counsels of God.

Without the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ, there would be no Christian faith. But without the eternal counsel of God, there would have been no incarnation, atonement, or resurrection. Right?

That's all the way back to the covenant of redemption. That God has thus planned our redemption from all eternity delivers a declaration louder than a thunderclap.

[ 41 : 58 ] It means that He is for us, that He's always been for us. He was for us in the far reaches of eternity. It was there that He took thought of us even before we existed.

It was there that He planned to act for us. The plan was there from the very beginning. What does that do? It's telling you like these eternal purposes and the working out of them in time is meant to communicate.

You can't get lost. All those whom He called, He justified. All those whom He justified, He glorified. What does that mean? It's a chain. That's what William Perkins called it, a golden chain that holds God to you. And all His saving purposes. Shall death separate us from the love of Christ?

I mean, Paul just goes on into the stratosphere after that. So assurance should be deeply rooted. You know, like my faith didn't begin because I'm impressive.

[ 43 : 08 ] Sometimes I like to say to the Lord, I didn't start this. Like you started this. Like you came after me. I was not looking for the Lord. If you think you're looking for Him, then we need to talk again about your conversion.

And so that's all my confidence in life. Yeah, Spurgeon says somewhere talking about all the things that assailed him. You know, he had gout.

It was so brutal. Last 30, you think about Spurgeon, you know, his sermons were printed in the front page of the New York Times, wired across the ocean on Monday morning.

I think it's something like one-third of his Sundays in his final 30 years he spent at home suffering from gout or rheumatism, all these things.

He says somewhere, I'm just recalling it, but, you know, he said something like, I believe in the options of grace because I wouldn't live without them. I couldn't get out of bed without them.

[ 44 : 10 ] What's he saying? Not that I know I'm in God's hand. I know that when the tragedy strikes, I'm in his hand.

It's credible. It's assurance. That's what ultimately gratefulness. What do you have that you didn't receive? Yeah, that's our past year last week. What do we have? We don't have anything we didn't receive.

And I think Taylor read that Spurgeon quote last week, so I won't read it, but it is a great one to post on your wall or something like that. So thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you.

Any questions? I can take one or two or anything immediately to stand out. Board. I think your description of the double predestination argument is really helpful because it's part to me, there's those that argue against predestination, the double predestination is like, oh, everybody's the same and some people have chosen to go to heaven and some people have chosen them to go to hell. No, everybody is in hell. And through grace and mercy, some are chosen. to leave hell, that's such a helpful, that was so helpful to hear.

[ 45 : 29 ] I think that was so liberating for me in helping to understand this because and even the way Jeff says it, actively, positively working for salvation for the elect, but not actively and positively working in the same way, rather passing over, you know.

Yeah, any other comments or questions? Eva? The roof and the tears from Matthew 13 show the chosen and the unchosen.

Are you saying, does that reference like the chosen unchosen? God came and planted his people and then he rested and then Satan came and planted his people so you have God's predetermined and Satan is for the world.

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, I mean, I think, I don't think the main purpose of that is to say, I think it's doing two things, and I'd have to look back at the text a little bit more to speak with greater authority, but I think the main purpose is alerting the people that the people of God continue to be people in the world.

And so the wheat and the tares, this idea that, you know, we're in the world, probably an application also could be that this idea that not all those are in the visible church are a part of the invisible church.

[ 47 : 13 ] And what that's saying is like, not all those are in the field, so to speak, or in the church, so to speak, you know, showing up, sitting down, stuff like that, are a part of the invisible church, which is all people who trust in Christ.

So it's, you know, I think that's probably what it's referencing. This idea, and then at the end, you know, Christ will make clear, you know, and we know there's other parts of scripture that alert us this reality.

People say, you know, did I not cast out demons in your name? Jesus said, depart from me. I never knew you. That's that foreknowledge word, but I never knew you. And so they're clearly a part of the external people of God, not a part of the internal, part of the visible, not a part of the invisible.

I mean, obviously election is part of that. I don't think that's the main point of that text though. Any other thoughts, questions, cries of outrage? You know, I think it's just so important, you know, like, I think it's so important to hold on to the mercy of God and hold on to the appropriate sobriety and humility of talking about these things.

You know, they're really meant to be internal things, so please don't include this in your evangelism track. you know, if you don't respond to it's because you weren't chosen, you know, that's not going to go well or not the purpose of those.

[ 48 : 46 ] Anchor someone in assurance. Paul uses it in Ephesians 1, just celebrate. I mean, he's just on a rampage, a joyful rampage, triumphant rampage of all that God's done and that's where it flows out.

What are these spiritual blessings? blah, blah, blah, blah. You know, and so, but also just sobriety and humility. God is God we're not.

And when we talk about these things, we just got to be careful that we're not setting ourselves up as wiser than God, but instead, you know, going where scripture goes and then submitting ourselves to God and his purposes and, you know, and then when you do that to the roommate that doesn't respond, your response is, is, is, you're so blown away by mercy, you want him to know the mercy, you're praying for him.

You know, Augustine said he'd never been, he never would have been converted if his mom hadn't prayed for him so much, you know. So if you've got a kid you're praying for, Augustine's mom should say, don't lose heart.

And so, that's the way God's work is. So, let's press on together, all right? Father in heaven, thank you for these few minutes. We give you thanks. So we do, we want to think right thoughts after you, we want to think about you in right ways as you revealed yourself.

[ 50 : 10 ] And we want to be comfortable, we want the secret things to stay the secret things and the things that you haven't revealed to us. Instead, God, we want to walk in light of the things you have revealed for your purposes in Christ's name.

Amen.