

Eph 1.3-6 Praise for the Father's Loving Purpose of Election

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[0 : 00] We're going to read the first chapter of the book of Ephesians. Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, by which he made us accepted in the beloved.

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of time, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth in him.

In him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things, according to the counsel of his will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of his glory.

In him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of his glory.

Therefore, I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation and the knowledge of him, the eyes of our understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he worked in Christ, when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come.

[3 : 04] And he put all things under his feet, and he gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Our great God, as we gather this morning to look to your word, Lord, I pray that you would give us an anticipation to hear from you. I pray that you would attend the proclamation of your word with your spirit and accomplish the purposes through the means of the word and the spirit.

And I pray, Lord, that you would grow us in unity. I pray that you would grow us in knowledge of truth, that you would enlighten our minds, that you would illuminate your word as we look to it.

And I pray, Lord, that you would give us a right understanding and that we would grow in faithfulness as servants of Christ. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. So again, we're continuing in our series in the book of Ephesians, and we're in the first chapter.

Last time we looked at verses 1 to 2. So now we move on. And as we remember or recall about the book of Ephesians, the book of Ephesians is a pastoral and theological letter written to Christians, to saints, to those separated to God, and for the purpose of strengthening them or to fortify church unity with teaching and exhortation.

[4 : 32] First, with what is to believe, and then what is to be done. And as Ian Hamilton explains, the imperatives of duty are rooted in and flow out of the indicatives of grace.

So, in chapter 1, verses 3 to 14, it focuses on the glory and greatness of God and the riches of his grace in the God-given, Christ-secured, Holy Spirit-applied, blood-bought privileges in God's plan of redemption, the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Our text that we're going to be looking at, as a part of this section of verses 3 to 14, is a doxology of Trinitarian work of redemption. It is redemption from the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit.

So, today, our focus, or our text, is going to be verses 3 to 6. Ephesians 1, 3 to 6. So, keep your finger at this spot.

This is where we will work through and continue to come back to. So, verses 3 to 6 is praise for the Father's loving purpose of election unto all spiritual blessings.

[5 : 44] We're going to look at three main headings as our outline. One is the expression of such praise. Two is the object of praise.

And three is the reasons for praise. Now, a majority of our time will be spent on three, on the reasons for praise, but we'll work through these three main points. So, first of all, the expression of praise in verses 3 to 6.

You see, starting in verse 3, it says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now, when we read that, and we consider as we just read through it, we just read that God blessed us with every spiritual blessing.

So, if God blesses us with every spiritual blessing, then how could we bless God? Or how do we bless God? How does one bless God? Now, the significance of the distinction is between that of one of action versus one of expression.

God blesses us by way of action. We bless God in return by way of expression. Charles Hodge explains it as an expression, so to bless God is an expression of thanksgiving and praise to God on account of those peculiar benefits which we receive from Him through Christ.

[7 : 06] So, it's that expression of thanksgiving and praise to Christ. The statement goes on and says, Blessed be the God and Father. So, here we have God whom we are blessing, an expression of thanksgiving and praise to God.

It is God who is praiseworthy. It is God who is the blessed one. Matthew Poole further explains and says, We bless God when we praise Him for and acknowledge Him in His excellencies or benefits.

So, our blessing God is ascribing to God glory and honor. It's declaring His excellencies and wondrous works. It's through, when we bless God, we praise Him.

We bless His name. The text continues, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

Now, notice those three words, has blessed us. It's so easy to skip over these small details as you read through a text, but let's stop on those three words and consider the implications of it.

[8 : 12] Has blessed us. Has means actually redeemed and in present possession of the unspeakable blessings of Christ. This is not speculative.

It is actually redeemed and in present possession of the unspeakable blessings of Christ. Has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. The abundant spiritual wealth in Christ and then spiritual blessings are then listed.

So as they are further listed, before we look at those texts and unpack them and break them down, there are some distinctions that need to be made. So having looked at the expression of praise, we want to now look at the object of praise.

Notice the object of praise in the beginning of this letter to the Ephesians is not the Ephesians themselves. The object of praise is God. God the Father. Praise to the Lord God Almighty.

Salvation belongs to the Lord. Now when I was much younger, where I grew up, there was a game that was played. I'm not sure if it's still played or welcome to have people come to people's doors to do this, but it was called Bigger and Better.

[9 : 24] So a number of people would break up into groups and it was a competition where each group or each team has an item that is very small and insignificant in value and then they go and find people to trade that item with for something bigger and better.

And then whatever they get that's bigger and better, they take that and continue to trade, to trade, to trade. And the object is to get something bigger and better. And then at the end of the game, the team that has the biggest and best item wins.

And oftentimes people would get things of significant value by just mere increments of Bigger and Better. Now it's a fun game to play. Unfortunately, it's also a way which people attempt to do their theology about God by taking something small, such as a creature, and making that creature bigger and better to give it the most value and to say that is God.

However, the end result is just having a bigger and better creature. And God is not a creature. God is other than. So that's a significant distinction that we have to make as we unfold the passages of these texts.

Bigger and Better is a fun game, but it's not a good way to formulate our understanding of God. John Calvin said, in order to uphold the authority of Scripture, the Apostle Paul declares that it is divinely inspired.

[10 : 50] For it to be so, it is beyond all controversy that men ought to receive it with this reverence. Now, if we remember when we looked at verses 1 and 2, we considered Paul's apostleship and the authority of it and the inspiration of Scripture, right?

The inscripturation of the written word that is the breathed out, spoken word of God. So having that understanding as laid out in 1 to 2, as we look at the subsequent texts, let's remember that, that this is the inspired word of God and look to it, expecting to hear God speak through it and to receive it with reverence.

So distinctions, as I mentioned, distinctions that we have to make before we move on is distinctions of what Scripture is speaking about. There are passages in Scripture that speak on the nature and perfections of God.

For example, what is God? And it sets him apart as other than. So there's passages which we can look to that speak clearly about who God is or about what God is, about the nature and attributes of God.

There are also passages in Scripture that speak about the internal works of God. So for example, the works accomplished by God in eternity. For example, his eternal decree, election.

[12 : 14] And then the third distinction we want to make is that there are texts which what they are speaking about or speaking to is passages on the external works of God. For example, the works of God toward the created order and carried out in time.

So there's those three distinctions, those three orders of Scripture. A key element we want to remember when we interpret Scripture is that Scripture interprets Scripture.

So if there is a passage that seems to perhaps contradict my experience or another verse that I read or seems to contradict, first of all, remember the inspiration of Scripture that the primary author of Scripture is God.

God cannot lie and God does not change. So Scripture must harmonize with Scripture. Therefore, Scripture interprets Scripture. So if we have a passage which we may not exactly understand what it's saying about God but the objective of that passage is speaking about how God works towards the created order carried out in time, then we take with us what is clearly stated about God and bring that with us to understand who God is and then how God acts.

So before we unpack that further as we consider this text, understand that the external works of the Trinity are indivisible and we're going to see that in our text.

[13 : 47] And in fact, the portion that we're looking at speaks to the Father. But the external works of the Trinity, so the works of God toward the created order, are indivisible.

That means that when God acts, He always acts as God the Trinity. All three persons are always involved and engaged. God's activity in relation to the created order is always the work of all three persons.

Point in case here is God's work of redemption. Yet, in this indivisible work of the Trinity, a particular work or action may be attributed to the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit.

So, all three persons of the Trinity are engaged in the work of redemption, yet a particular work may be attributed to a particular person of the Trinity. Such appropriations are made to draw our attention to distinctiveness of each person of the Trinity.

So, we do not make the mistake to think that God is one person who takes on different forms at different times. There's one God in three persons and our attention is drawn to the distinctiveness of each person in the Trinity.

[15 : 05] Consider Ephesians 2.18. For, through Christ, we have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now, why is this distinction important?

Why is understanding this about God important? Because it protects us from theories that separate God and the world or from creaturely experiences, remembering that bigger, better way of doing theology, it protects us from creaturely experience being predicated upon the infinite, divine essence of God.

God does not stand at a distance from his world but is present as creator, as sustainer, as savior, and a sanctifier. Praise to the Lord God Almighty.

Salvation belongs to the Lord. So this brings us to our third point and where we'll spend the majority of our time is the reasons for praise. The reasons for praise.

Now, every spiritual blessing, which is mentioned, is the blessings, the blessings consist of election to holiness, adoption as sons, redemption and forgiveness by Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the hope of the glory.

[16 : 14] So as we read through this section of verses 3 to 14, you see these blessings identified or itinerized. So as we consider the reasons for praise, there are three main things today in our text from verses 3 to 6 that we're going to draw out of election, adoption, and then the purpose.

So that's election, adoption, and the purpose. So back to our text, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ just as He chose us.

Now those three words, we're going to focus on that. He chose us. And as we understand what these words mean, we're going to look at three particular things. One is the fact of election.

Two is the objects of election. And three is the timing of election. So the fact, the objects, and the timing. Now, last week, Sarah and I flew down south and as we were at the airport going through airport security, the security personnel advised me that I had been randomly selected for further security screening.

And afterwards, I got to thinking, I wonder how I was selected. Who selected me? What's the, was there a reason why I was selected? What makes it so random? Is there actually some sort of calculator that makes it random?

[17 : 41] Anyways, my thoughts got to going about this, how or why I was selected or who selected me for this? So anyways, when we consider this text, it tells us he chose us.

God the Father, when it says he chose us, the he is referring to what was just outlined, God the Father. God the Father, who is the author and efficient cause, chose us.

So then the next question is chose us to what? I'm sure everybody here has received an email at some point saying that you have been chosen to enter into a draw for the possibility of winning a prize.

So it makes you think that you're in possession of a prize, but actually you've just been chosen to enter a draw should you click on the link and fill out all your information. That is not the case here. Chose us to what?

John Owen answered this question very well and succinctly by drawing on two passages of scripture. He says, we are first ordained to eternal life, Acts 13, 48.

[18 : 43] We are from the beginning chosen to salvation. 2 Thessalonians 2, 13. That which God in the first place intends as his end in the decree of election is our eternal salvation to the praise of the glory of his grace.

So what John Owen here outlines from scripture is ordained to eternal life and chosen to salvation. So chosen to what? Eternal life and salvation. Now, some try to argue against the doctrine of election by saying that God appears into the tunnel of time as though he takes his divine optics of omniscient magnification and mounts it onto a timeline and looks down to the timeline and dials it into the 20th or 21st century and observes, okay, he chooses me at this point and then takes note of it and then he chooses in response to people choosing.

Which, that's not God choosing, that's God reacting. And there's also implications of it. God is the first cause or God causes.

And when we remember our method of interpretation, we must consider the implications if we try to define God based on the way God acts towards the created order and use that to define God and dismiss the clear passages about what Scripture says about God, then we're going to run into problems.

There's implications of the doctrine of God, so we need to take the doctrine of God with us. So if God looks into the future to learn in order to react, what implications does that have on the doctrine of God?

[20 : 24] First of all, God is eternal, so God is outside of time. We're going to unpack that further when we look at the timing of election, but God is not in time where we have to look down the tunnel of time.

God is eternal. He is outside of time. God is also omnipresent. That doesn't just mean that at this moment he's everywhere. It means that he is outside of time.

He is transcendent. He is other than. He is imminent. So he is outside of time. So it's not just that in this moment he's everywhere, but in all of time as we know it, he is everywhere, outside of time.

God is also uncaused. God is not caused by his creatures. God is independent. God is self-existent. God is all-knowing. God doesn't ever learn something.

God doesn't have to look into the future to learn something in order to then, now he knows how he ought to react. God is all-knowing in eternity. God is also unchanging. God cannot be changed, and God cannot be changed by his creatures.

[21 : 29] God is almighty. So why do some people struggle with God's sovereign election? The majority of the time it comes down to the fact of my perspective. Now, those of us who are saved can look back through our life and say, but I chose.

I made a decision. I believed. And this is true. And in fact, all are called to have faith. So, well, from my perspective and my experience, I chose God, there's something more to this.

So, there's my experience, my perspective, that I chose God, but yet scripture tells us that before the foundation of the world, God chose us. So how do we harmonize these two things?

What do we do with it? Something that's important to consider is that of perspective. Now, from our perspective, when we explain what the sun does, or if we explain to other people what to expect from the sun, how do we describe the sun?

We describe it from our perspective, don't we? We describe that the sun comes up, we explain that the sun moves, that the sun comes down, the sun increases in light, the sun decreases in light, it increases in heat and decreases in heat.

[22 : 41] We explain the sun as though the sun is what changes. But in reality, we explain it according to our perspective here on earth.

It's not that the sun is what's moving, the sun is what's constant and the earth is moving and so therefore it's our perspective having our feet planted on the earth. Similarly, so this is an illustration of our perspective.

Similarly, our perspective of salvation is as creatures with our feet planted here on earth. So how do we harmonize our perspective here on earth versus what scripture says?

First of all, our experience, our perspective never trumps scripture. Between the two, my experience versus scripture, only one of those two things is infallible and it's not my perspective, it's the word of God.

So, when we understand, redemption is according to the divine purpose of eternity and then it is realized in time. Time belongs to the created order, right?

[23 : 50] does God belong to the created order? God is not a creature, God is other than. So God, who is other than, God who is creator, has decreed his work of redemption in eternity, which is realized in time and we, who are creatures, bound by time, perceive it accordingly.

So, we take the doctrine of God with us into our understanding of the Father's election and redemption. The Father is the author, the planner, the architect, the initiator, the efficient cause, the beginning of activity, the fountain and wellspring of all activity.

We correctly define God not according to creaturely perspective but by his divine testimony. So those three distinctions are important and the object of praise in the work of salvation is God the Father.

God the Father, authoring and electing in redemption indicates God's sovereignty in the work of grace. Salvation belongs to the Lord. God is to be praised. Blessed be the God and Father.

Secondly, the objects of election. So the objects of election, those three words, he chose us. We consider the background of the us mentioned in this text.

[25 : 11] We're given some further details. If you turn, you probably turn your page to chapter 2. It tells us the background of the objects of the saints in Ephesus. Consider this.

And you, he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

So here we have some context of the us part of election. So he chose us. The state in which saints were chosen out of.

They're not chosen, as we see from these three verses, we are not chosen because we are holy, we are chosen to be holy. So who specifically are the objects of election?

He chose us. Unpacking that us, who specifically are the objects of election? So election is a fixed number of specific names recorded in eternity.

[26 : 39] Christianity. When we look in the book of Revelation, it tells us that no one can enter the new Jerusalem, the city of God, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. And then also in Revelation 20, it says anyone whose name not found written a Lamb's book of life, he has thrown into the lake of fire.

So there's one of two options, the new Jerusalem or the lake of fire. And the distinguishing factor is whether or not the names, specific names, specific people, are written in the Lamb's book of life.

So the question then arises, when was this Lamb's book of life written? When were the names written in this book that decide their eternal outcome? They were recorded, we see in Revelation 13, chapter 8, that these names were written before the foundation of the world.

in the book of the life of the Lamb who was slain. And then Revelation 17, 8 says, those whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world.

[27 : 52] So the names that are written in the Lamb's book of life were written before the foundation of the world. Election is a fixed number of specific names recorded in eternity. Election is of individuals for salvation appointed to eternal life from eternity.

Which brings us to our third point, the timing of election. As our text says, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world.

So here we have the timing of election. Election is fixed and determined before the foundation of the world. As if you recall, we saw in Revelation 13, 8, names were written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

Now, when we consider before the foundation of the world that the names were written in this book, there's a tendency to put this on a timeline. This event of names being written or God's choosing before the foundation of the world, we have a tendency of putting on a timeline and at the start of a timeline.

So picture that if you will, if you have a piece of paper in front of you and you draw a line across it and that's the line of history, that's timeline, right? That's time. You put increments on it, you put markers on it.

[29 : 19] We're at this current moment on this timeline in history. There's the future, there's the past, right? We can't change the past, God created.

So that's the initial mark on our timeline. There's a tendency to, when we read before the foundation of the world, to put this as another marker on the timeline just before in the beginning.

But in the beginning when God created, also was time at that point created. So it's not that God always was and always will be, but when we consider the eternity of God, it is that he transcends time.

He's not bound by time, he's outside of time. So it's not that before the foundation, this is, when we have the tendency of putting before the foundation of the world on the timeline as a past event just before the creation of the world, we're missing the point of the text.

The point of the text is that God is eternal. God is outside of time. So outside of time, not bound by time, is what we're looking at.

[30 : 24] So it's not a moment on the timeline because God is eternal and outside of time. God is not a creature who is bound by time.

God is other than. God is infinite, transcendent, immense, and eternal. So if it was not a moment on the timeline, this goes without saying, but just to drive the point home, there was not a moment in eternity where I sat at a round table with the Trinity and negotiated with God the terms of my election.

All of the causes of predestination are entirely without us before the foundation of the world. Isaiah 46, 10 to 11 says, I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand and I will accomplish all my purpose, calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country.

I have spoken and I will bring it to pass. I have purposed and I will do it. Further in our text, it says, he chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless.

He chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless. So, holy, to understand this word, holy means consecrated, separated, or set apart.

[32 : 00] So, again, we are not chosen because we are holy, but as the text says, that before we even existed, we were chosen that we should be made holy as the effect of our election.

This involves both current reformation and future transformation. current reformation is the here and now and the earthly life, while we are in this state of grace.

1 Peter 1.15 says, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, you shall be holy, for I am holy.

And then also 1 Peter 1.2, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father and the sanctification of the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ. Ephesians 4 says, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God and true righteousness and holiness.

So it's current reformation, but it also involves future transformation or the state of glory. In Philippians 3, it says, we'll transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body.

[33 : 14] And then also in Hebrews 12, without holiness no one will see the Lord. Now our text says holy and without blame or blameless.

This means being free from blemish or fault, without defect or blemish. Now obviously we are not perfectly without fault or blemish.

We are without blame because or with Christ as the sacrificial lamb. Consider 1 Peter 1.19 where it says that we are ransomed with the precious blood of Christ like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Ephesians 5.27 that he might present her to himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing but that she should be made holy and without blemish.

We are not chosen because we are holy we are chosen to be holy. Further it says that we should be holy and without blame before him.

[34 : 26] This is in the sight of God before whom all things are laid bare before God who sees all and is not deceived seen without blemish or spot.

So before an all seeing all knowing holy God he made us accepted in the beloved. That means having a pardon by Christ suffering and dying in our place.

It means being declared righteous by Christ's righteousness accredited to your account and that received by faith alone. Further in our text that we should be made holy and without blame before him.

what if being chosen we are not perfectly holy? What if being chosen our remaining corruption remains within us?

Will God rescind his eternal decrees and change his purpose that is cease to be God merely to comply with sinners in their sins?

[35 : 31] the point of this is that whomever God purposes to save he purposes to sanctify for those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son Ephesians 8 John Owen again states it arises from hence that we can have no evidence of our interest in God's decree of election whereby we are designed unto life and glory without holiness effectually wrought in us so what about those who profess or the professor who prefers his sin over holiness so those who profess to be a Christian but yet prefers sin over holiness prefers his sin over holiness and conformity to the image of Christ if somebody thinks that they are set apart for God but rejects holiness what part of heaven do they think they will desire if someone still loves their sin more than holiness what will they love in

Christ's kingdom of righteousness where there will be no more sin what delight will they find in God who is holy holy holy what portion of the songs of his praise will they enjoy rather the redeemed long for the consummation of Christ's kingdom with the company of blood bought saints with heated affections worshipping the worthiness of a holy God therefore let everyone that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity our text gives us two more words in love to briefly note a couple things on this God is not moved from his holiness to love rather God God is the efficient cause in love according to the will of

God the father the purpose the architect the source the un caused first cause this is free undeserved eternal love enduring love steadfast love immutable love this brings us to our second reason of praise that is adoption having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to himself to adoption is incorporation into the family of God which comes by union with the son of God God's election of his people includes foreordaining them to adoption this is a state of sonship being in Christ a right to glory joint heirs with Christ the father accepts us in Christ as sons including as Romans 8 lays out freedom from bondage future resurrection and glorification Richard Muller describes it as such that adoption of the believer as a child of

God occurs as the immediate corollary and result of the forensic declaration of righteousness on account of faith those justified by the grace of God are also made co-heirs with him of the kingdom and are declared sons with Christ because of their union with him it then goes on to say by Jesus Christ so if you remember how the works the external works of God are accomplished by the Trinity yet particular distinctions are attributed to a particular person we see that unfolding here so through the son Herman Bobink explained that special properties and works are attributed to each of the three persons though not exclusively the father works of himself through the son and the spirit all the external works of God have one single author namely God but they come into being through the cooperation of the three persons each of whom plays a special role and fulfills a special task all things proceed from the father are accomplished by the son and are completed in the holy spirit so when we consider the work of redemption and the accompanying spiritual blessings which includes adoption is from the father through the son by the spirit and third we have the purpose according to the good pleasure of his will to the praise of the glory of his grace by which he made us accepted in the beloved we are blessed with every spiritual blessing why according to our worth according to our merit according to our loveliness no according to the good pleasure of his will according to whose will according to whose will do these blessings come to us according to the good pleasure of his will it is not that some people will to come to

God but God keeps them from coming to them because he hasn't chosen them we see in Revelation 22 says let those or sorry let the one who desires take the water of life without price so when we remember the differences of perspective with our feet firmly planted on earth and our experiences consider that when it says whoever desires or whoever wills it is exclusively those who have been predestined names recorded a fixed amount determined effectually called drawn by God and respond to his preceding measures John 6 44 says no one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him the problem is that man's will is corrupted and dead in sin and does not will to come to God without divine intervention to give him a new heart and a new will and the gift of faith what is a man's fallen natural will then the

[41 : 53] Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked for the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God for it does not submit to God's law indeed it cannot no one seeks after God so then it is not of him who wills nor of him who runs but of God who shows mercy but to all who did receive him who believed in his name he gave the right to become children of God who were born of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of man but of God for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for his good pleasure having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will and finally you did not choose me but I chose you there are many more texts we could look at but the bottom line is that if

God did not choose then nobody would some may find this offensive because it means by implication that we don't have sovereign autonomy however does the almighty not have the right to do his holy will election is an eternal act of God he chose he predestined it is two temporal creatures in time us it is an act of grace according to the good pleasure of his will it is for the effect of knowledge of his goodness Romans 9 23 says that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had prepared beforehand for glory election is for the purpose of the praise of the glory of his grace the Geneva Bible in the notes states that the principal end of our election is to praise and glorify the grace of

God and in Romans 11 33 to 36 says oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out for who has known the mind of the Lord or who has become his counselor or who has first given to him and and and it shall be repaid to him for of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever amen so application the question might arise why evangelize if God chooses before the foundation of the world why evangelize so the answer to that which would be in refutation to hyper Calvinism's fatalistic apathy towards evangelism is first of all God's decretive will or God's secret will is not the rule of our conduct so for example what God decrees in time namely election is not our rule of conduct we are not God nor are we his counselors second

God's preceptive will or God's revealed will that which God commands us to do is the rule of our conduct it is our duty to call all to faith it is our duty to scatter seed on all soil types just as God foreordained who will be saved he also foreordained the means for their salvation consider Romans 10 13 17 everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved how then will they call on him in whom they have not believed and how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard and how are they to hear without someone preaching and how are they to preach unless they are sent as it is written how beautiful are the feet of those who preach comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ it is our privilege and joy to be used by the almighty so it's not a question of should we evangelize it is a question of how do we evangelize as we pray thy will be done thy kingdom come what about the non-believer who has the dismissive claim well

God didn't choose me nobody knows the decretive secret sovereign will of God only God does if someone does not want to turn to Christ and tries to justify it by blaming God for their choice of a carnal life they are still accountable to God if they do not turn to Christ they will be subject to eternal condemnation and torment in hell where they will be by their own choice with no one to blame but themselves and there will be no second chance or opportunity to repent but will find themselves Christless speechless and hopeless the word of God contains all that we need to know to be made right with God to repent and believe in Christ in the shedding of his blood for forgiveness of sins the accrediting of his righteousness to our account his being raised from the dead and seated in heaven with all authority and power and he will return to judge the wicked now is the acceptable time believe on the

[47 : 32] Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved if you have not yet closed with Christ turn to Christ receive and rest on him his righteousness and promises some further application is the assurance the abundant consolation election is the foundation of assurance when we consider election remember we are elected to what are we elected to a clean slate are we elected to a fresh start are we elected to a second chance no we are elected to salvation ordained to eternal life to eternal glory and a right relationship with God being justified by Christ alone assurance of the immutability of God's sovereign election God who declares the end from the beginning consider Romans 8 whom he predestined those he called whom he called these he also justified and whom he justified these he also glorified

Romans 11 for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable Philippians 1 he who began a good work in you well perfected until the day of Christ Jesus and 1 Thessalonians 5 faithful is he who calls you and he also will bring it to pass consider the words of John Bunyan it is by grace that chooses it is grace that calls it is grace that preserves and it is grace that brings to glory even the grace that like a river of water of life proceeds from his throne of grace and hence it is that from first to last we must cry grace grace unto it in conclusion this doxology of trinitarian work of redemption should enlarge our minds and expand our hearts and cause us to long to serve and obey Christ as we glory in our redemption lovingly purposed by God the

Father it should heat our affections to bless God to praise him for and acknowledge him in his excellencies and benefits in his trinitarian work of redemption and finally consider the words of Sinclair Ferguson just as we have been baptized into the name of the trinity we enjoy fellowship with each person in his distinctive expressions of grace toward us as we do so the frequently sung words of the doxology now better understood give expressions to our affections for we have been loved by the Father reconciled through the Son and are being transformed from one degree of glory to another by the Spirit praise God ascribe him glory and honor declare his excellencies and wondrous works praise him bless his name let's pray our great God we thank you for your word which you have given us by divine revelation I pray Lord that you would help us to store up knowledge of your word

I pray that you would give us a right understanding I pray that you would enlarge our minds I pray that you would enlighten our minds that you would open our eyes and our ears and our understanding and incline our heart to you and I pray Lord that you would warm our affections towards you as we consider the depths of your mercy and grace towards us that we consider who you are as an eternal and infinite and immense transcendent God who is other than us and your work in redemption electing us not because of anything that is worthy in us of your choosing but because of your grace because of your mercy to show your love to us I pray Lord that this would indeed cause all of our hearts to be enlarged and that with great affections and thanksgiving that we would praise you for you are worthy to be praised you are the blessed one and Lord I pray that as we consider the blessings of salvation from election to adoption that we would praise you that we would obey you and that we would seek to be conformed into the likeness of

Christ to be holy as you are holy as you have set us apart to you for holiness we thank you Lord for your graces we could do none of us that we may know the riches of your grace and so Lord I pray that you would help us to apply this as we go throughout this week that we would love you that we would praise you that we would bless your name and Lord indeed we do praise you pray this in Jesus name amen stand and we'll sing the doxology praise God from whom all blessings flow praise him all creatures here below praise him above the heavenly hosts praise father son and holy ghost amen you can be seated and as we work through an orthodox catechism in the section of the

[53 : 19] Lord's supper we are at question 90 how is the kingdom of heaven opened and shut by ecclesiastical discipline the answer the kingdom of heaven is shut when according to the commandments of christ those who profess to be christians but who in their doctrine and life show themselves aliens from christ and after being admonished will not depart from their error heresies or wickedness are made known to the church if they do not obey the church's admonition they are by the same church to be kept from the sacrament and shut out of the congregation by authority received from christ and by god himself shut out of the kingdom of heaven the kingdom of heaven is opened of such persons as above profess and declare an amendment of life nothing to be the contrary being able to be proved upon strict scrutiny and search these are to be received again in love and tenderness as members of christ and his church let's pray lord again we thank you for this lord's day we thank you for your word and that which you accomplished through the proclamation of your word i pray that you would continue to be at work in our minds as we recall the text of the passage we worked through this morning and lord as we as we now move on to lunch i pray lord that by your grace you might grow us in love for one another i pray that you bless this food to us and our conversation and our time together i pray this in jesus name amen good morning hey we're gonna have lunch cal