

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

Chosen of God 1 Peter 1:1-2 Part Three

A father was tucking his 6 year old son in for the night. The father asked him, “Son, when does Daddy love you the most? When you’ve been fighting with your sister and getting into a lot of trouble? Or when you’ve been real helpful to mommy and real nice to everyone?”

The son thought for a moment and then said, “Both times.” “Right” the father said, “And do you know why?”

“Because I’m your special guy.” For that was his Daddy’s name for him, “Daddy’s special guy.” This young boy in his very short life had come to believe that his father’s nickname really in fact captured the reality of their relationship.

Isn’t it a wonderful feeling to feel special? I believe that I really experienced that feeling for the very first time in my life when I became a Christian. I grew up in a wonderful home by most people’s standards. But I do not believe that I really, for whatever reason, ever felt special. So when I came to Christ trusting in Him as my Lord and Savior it was a truly wonderful experience which continues even to this day.

What I did not realize then, but I realize now, was the fact that during all of those years before I came to Christ by faith that I was “special” to the Lord. And not just myself but all those who have come to Him in the past, who are coming to Him in the present, and who will come to Him in the future. All these are special to the Lord in a way which others who will not come to him are not.

This will hopefully be clear to us as we continue in our study of **1 Peter**. Peter is writing to a group of Christians in the area of modern day Turkey (Read **V. 1**). He is writing this letter in order to help them to understand the proper way to respond to persecution. In order for them to be prepared to do this Peter in his greeting is reminding them of who they were. He first of all addresses them as “aliens.” They were aliens because when they placed their faith in Jesus they became citizens of heaven and aliens upon the earth (**Phil. 3:20**). After this he addresses them as the “chosen of God,” or it can also be translated the “elect of God.”

This introduces us to a very controversial but also potentially comforting doctrine. And that is what theologians call the “doctrine of election.” Simply put, “election” teaches us that God has chosen certain people to be the recipients of special grace and eternal salvation.”

We have begun to consider the elements of that doctrine. Last week we considered THE ESSENCE OF ELECTION which is “God’s sovereign choice.” This morning we will be continuing on in this very difficult doctrine and consider THE SOURCE OF ELECTION.

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SOURCE OF ELECTION

We find that God’s choice of these Christians residing in Asia minor rests in God’s foreknowledge..... **V. 2 “according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.”**

Foreknowledge is the source or the basis of election. But how are we to understand this term foreknowledge. IS THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD SPEAKING OF A PRIOR PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE FACTS ABOUT THE PERSON OR IS IT SPEAKING OF A PRIOR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PERSON?

PRIOR PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE FACTS ABOUT THE PERSON

The first thought we might have is that the foreknowledge of God is speaking of a prior personal knowledge of the facts about the person or in others words the Lord looked into the future and saw what kind of people we would be. If He liked what He saw He would choose us. If He did not like what He saw He would not choose us.

Does this make sense? It makes sense only if you have no understanding at all of what the Scriptures teach in respect to God, man, or salvation.

1. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT GOD THAT MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO BELIEVE THAT GOD MADE HIS CHOICE ON THE BASIS OF WHAT HE SAW? The Bible teaches us that God is sovereign. In other words, the Bible teaches us that the world and the things in the world are not dictating what the Lord will do. IT IS RATHER QUITE THE OPPOSITE.

A. Is. 46:8-10, “Remember this, and be assured; recall it to mind, you transgressors. (9) Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, (10) Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things which have not been done, ‘Saying My purpose will be established.” The Lord is not choosing those whom He chooses in response to them but rather He chooses whom He chooses in response to His own purpose. He is not the one being dictated too He is the one dictating.

B. Eph. 1:11, “Also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will. The Lord in eternity past was not obligated to look into the future to see what we would choose to become or choose to do and agree with it. He had no such restrictions. Paul’s explanation of our future inheritance did in no way reflect on us, but solely and totally up to the COUNSEL OF GOD’S WILL..... We have looked very briefly at what the Bible teaches about God. Now let us take a look at man.

2. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH US ABOUT MAN THAT MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO BELIEVE THAT GOD MADE HIS CHOICE ON THE BASIS OF WHAT HE SAW? The Bible teaches us not only the sovereignty of God, but also the depravity of man. Or in other words apart from God’s intervention there is no redeeming value in man. This of course may not be the perspective of man but it is the perspective of God.

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A. **Is. 64:6, “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities like the wind, have taken us away.”** Apart from the intervention of the Lord if the Lord were to look forward into the future to see if there would be anything within us that would commend us to him, how many would have been chosen? NONE!!

B. **Rom. 3:10-12, “As it is written, there is none righteous not even one; (11) There is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; (12) All have turned aside together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one.”** If we can see ourselves for who we truly are apart from the Lord it is very that if we are going to be chosen by the Lord it has nothing to do with something good He may have seen there.

3. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH US ABOUT SALVATION THAT MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO BELIEVE THAT GOD MADE HIS CHOICE BASED ON WHAT HE SAW IN MAN? The Bible teaches us that men are saved by grace through faith, and not by works.

A. **Eph. 2:8-9, “For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God (9) Not as a result of works lest anyone should boast.”** How in the world could we say that salvation is by grace through faith alone and not by works and at the same time say that God made His choice of us based on what he saw beforehand would be true of us. If we were to say this then our salvation is the result of something in us rather than in Him.

B. **2 Tim. 1:9, “Who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.”** Certainly God knew ahead of time the facts about our lives. But there was nothing about the facts of our lives that would have commended us to God apart from His own intervention. And this verse is clear that even if there might have been some facts about our lives apart from His intervention that might have been considered in some kind of positive light, it would have no bearing at all on God’s choice of us.

C. **Titus 3:5, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”** We are saved not because God saw something in us that compelled Him to choose us either during our life or before in eternity past. God’s choice of us is fully, totally, and completely an expression of His mercy.

If God’s choice of us is based on God’s foreknowledge and God’s foreknowledge is not A PRIOR PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE FACTS ABOUT THE PERSON, THEN WHAT MUST FOREKNOWLEDGE BE REFERRING TO?

PRIOR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PERSON

Let me ask you a question. Do you KNOW President Clinton? I believe your answer would be , “No, I do not know him.” But now let me change the question and ask you , “Do you know about President Clinton?” And your answer hopefully would be certainly I know about President Clinton.”

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There is a vast difference between knowing about someone and knowing someone. One is speaking about knowledge of the person and the other is speaking about a relationship with the person. If God's foreknowledge in verse one cannot be referring to a prior knowledge about the facts then it must be speaking of a prior personal relationship with the person. AND I BELIEVE THAT THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT WE FIND IS TRUE IN THE SCRIPTURES.

1. IMMEDIATE CONTEXT: Take a look at **1 Peter 1:20**, “**For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you.**” What does it mean that Christ was foreknown. Does it mean that God the Father had knowledge about Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. Of course not, it means that He had a relationship with God the Son before the foundation of the world. And not just a superficial relationship, but a loving and caring relationship. Even though Christ had this relationship with His Father, He in spite of that “**appeared in these last times for you.**” That is what Peter is saying to those he is writing. God the Son was willing to leave the glory of heaven and even the glory of His relationship with His father characterized by infinite love and care for us. Foreknowledge is not talking about factual information but rather a personal loving, caring relationship.

THE EXPRESSION “FOREKNOWLEDGE” DOES NOT MEAN THAT GOD HAD INFORMATION IN ADVANCE ABOUT CHRIST, OR ABOUT HIS CHOSEN (ELECT), BUT RATHER IT MEANS THAT BOTH CHRIST AND HIS PEOPLE WERE THE OBJECTS OF GOD’S LOVING CONCERN AND ATTENTION FROM ALL ETERNITY.

CONCLUSION

Peter was writing not just Jewish Christians, but all Christians in the area of Pontas, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. In fact his audience would have been primarily Gentile. He is writing them so that they might be able to respond properly to the severe persecution that was about to take place. In order to prepare them for this Peter in this introduction reminds them of who they are. First of all he reminds them that they are “aliens.” Then he reminds them that they are “chosen of God” or the “elect of God.”

This last phrase the “elect of God” has moved us to now consider the doctrine of election and it's various elements. The first element was God's sovereign choice. This morning we have seen the basis of God's sovereign choice which was “foreknowledge.”

There were many in Peter's day who would view the Gentile's inclusion in God's plan of salvation a divine afterthought. However we learn from this passage that these Christians , that these Gentile Christians are God's chosen people because he has known them from all eternity.

Jesus Christ was foreknown by the Father before the world was created. The chosen people of Christ, Jew and Gentile, are also foreknown by the Father. Their inclusion in the people of God is no accident, no after thought, but God's purpose from the beginning.

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If you are here this morning and have placed your faith and trust in Christ as your Lord and Savior it is no accident. The Lord has sought you because he has known you and you have been the object of his affection from eternity past and He will not let you go. BECAUSE YOU ARE GOD'S SPECIAL GUY.

I find, I walk, I love, but O
The whole of love is but my answer, Lord, to Thee
For Thou wert long beforehand with my soul,
Always Thou lovedst me