

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

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

We are continuing our study of 1 Peter. We are continuing to examine the first two verses of this epistle which forms the greeting.

Peter was writing these individuals in “**Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia**” (Area of modern day Turkey) in order to help them to understand how they should respond to suffering. In order to help prepare them for this he shares with them two things which were true of them.

First of all, that they were “aliens.” When they placed their faith and trust in Christ alone for their salvation they became citizens of heaven (**Phil. 3:20**). And since they were citizens of heaven they became aliens in this world. This of course would be very important for those who were about to go through extreme persecution.

Secondly, Peter shares with them, that they were not only aliens but were the “chosen of God.” Or as the KJV and NIV reads the “elect of God.” This has introduced us into a discussion concerning the “doctrine of election.”

The doctrine of election basically tells us that the Lord has selected out certain individuals to be the recipients of grace and eternal salvation totally apart from any merit of their own. This doctrine for many people is very controversial, but hopefully what we will discover when it is properly understood that it is one of the most comforting doctrines in all of the scriptures. In fact it is for this very reason Peter introduces this doctrine is because these people he is writing need to be comforted.

THE ELEMENTS OF ELECTION

1. THE ESSENCE OF ELECTION is God’s sovereign choice (Eph. 1:3-5; 2 Thess. 2:1-3).
2. THE BASIS OF GOD’S CHOICE is foreknowledge (1 Peter. 1:2; 1 Peter 1:20)

This is not prior knowledge about the person but rather a prior relationship with the person. (1 Peter 1:20)..... The elect, those God has chosen, to be the recipients of his grace have always been known to Him. They have always been special to Him. Those who have always been special to Him the Lord has chosen or elected to be the recipients of salvation.

As I was developing this message for you last week I contrasted for you how my grandmother had made me feel special and how I had failed to feel special to my parents..... This morning I would like to go back to my family again to help prepare us for the message this morning.

It might be that someone might be curious why I may not have felt special to my parents. I really do not know that I have the answer to that question but it might have been because of my father’s commitment to work. I have the highest respect for my father’s work ethic.

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He may have possibly failed in establishing a close caring relationship with me, but he did not fail in presenting to me a model of hard work. To this day there would not be a person of flesh and blood that I believe worked any harder than my father. He, as far as I know, never gave less than 100% to any task that he committed himself too.....

As you can tell I have great respect for my father in this area. He cannot be compared to the One who has been given the work of making sure that our election has a successful and glorious conclusion. What good is it if we are chosen of God unto salvation if we in the end are not saved. What good is it to be chosen to be a victor and end up a loser, but we can be assured that this will not happen because the One given the task to make sure it doesn't happen CAN BE COUNTED ON.

Outworking of Election

Being elect and being saved are two different things. All those who are saved are “elect.” But not all the elect are saved. We can be elect but not saved, but we cannot be saved without being elect.

All true Christians are eternally elect, chosen out by God before the foundation of the world not because of anything in their lives that would commend them to God but rather solely based on His sovereign purposes. Though all true Christians are eternally elect they are saved at a specific point in time..... I have always been elect of God, but did not become saved until I was in high school.

When we are born into this world, because of the transgression of Adam, we are born into sin and spiritual death. **Romans 5:12, “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.”** Even though I may have been elect of God before the foundation of the world, because of the fall of Adam, everyone enters this world very messed up, separated from God and destined for eternal destruction unless something happens to change this condition.

For the elect something does happen and what is that? It is the sanctifying work of the Spirit of God..... **Read. VV. 1-2, “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen (2) according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit....”**

The very same thought is contained in the writings of Paul in **2 Thess. 2:13 “But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in truth.”**

Sanctification literally means a “separation” or “setting apart.” In the biblical scheme of things this is a two sided coin. On the one hand we are separated from sin and on the other hand we are separated unto God. The work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the elect is to set them apart from sin unto God. This is the work of the Holy Spirit and the work of no other. If the elect are going to be set apart from sin it is fully, totally, and completely the work of the Spirit because the work of sanctification is the work of the Spirit. If the elect are going to be set apart unto the Lord it is fully, totally, and completely the work of the Spirit because the work of sanctification is the work of the Spirit.

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Whenever we are speaking of “sanctification” in the biblical context both of these concepts should be understood as being included. Though both of these concepts should be understood to be included only one of these concepts may be emphasized.

For example, we see the emphasis of our separation from sin in **1 Thess. 4:3**, “**For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality.** We see the emphasis on our separation to God in **Romans 15:14-16**, “**And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another. (15) But I have written very boldly to you on some points, so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God. (16) to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, that my offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit...**”

The more positive side of the sanctifying work of the Spirit; that of consecrating us to God is more predominant in the passage we see before us this morning.

A. Aliens **V. 1**, “**Peter an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen.**” How did the elect or the chosen become “aliens?” How did they become foreigners in the world and citizens of heaven? It was through the sanctifying work of the Spirit of God.

When we placed our faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit baptized us into the body of Christ (**1 Cor. 12:13**). Or in other words we were joined to Christ. At that very moment in time we became the citizens of heaven and aliens upon the earth. **THIS IS HOW GOD VIEWS US IN CHRIST.** It does not mean that we always feel like aliens in this world or even act like aliens it simply means that in Christ Jesus we are aliens. **WE CAN CALL THIS POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION.** It is true because of our relationship with Christ but it may not be true in practice. **AND THIS LEADS US TO V. 2.**

B. That you may obey Jesus Christ **V. 2** “**According to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ.**” Just because we are aliens in this world and citizens of heaven positionally by the sanctifying work of the Spirit does not mean that we become perfectly set apart unto the Lord from a practical standpoint. It does not mean that we are perfectly holy yet in our daily walk. It does not mean that we always find ourselves obeying the Lord. This is the ultimate goal of our salvation and the sanctifying work of the Spirit, but the scriptures are very clear that we have not yet arrived.

But even though we have not arrived we will in fact be moving toward that goal. There is no way that when the Spirit of God goes to work on the elect that they will not begin to move toward the goal of their election. **1 Thess. 1:2-4**, “**We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers; (3) constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father. (4) Knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you.** Now watch what happened to these Thessalonians

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(5) For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. (6) You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the Word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit.” When the Holy Spirit comes into our lives to sanctify us and to set us apart unto God He is not going to fail. It may be two steps forward and one step back but the direction of our lives will be forward.

In a very real sense once the Spirit of God sanctifies us positionally, placing us into Christ, He then continues to work in our lives to sanctify us practically or experientially. Or in other words the work of the Spirit conforms us in our practice to who we are in are position. I AM IN THE PROCESS THROUGH THE SANCTIFYING WORK OF THE SPIRIT OF BECOMING WHO I AM. AND THIS IS TRUE OF ALL CHRISTIANS.

CONCLUSION

My father was and continues to be a hard worker. I could always count on him to bring all that he had to the task at hand. And so with the Holy Spirit. Once we are chosen based on the foreknowledge of God, God the Holy Spirit is assigned the task of sanctifying us. He is the one who initially draws us to the Son by convicting us of sin , righteousness and judgment (**John 16:8-11**), He is the one who causes us to be born again (**John 3**) then He places us in the Son (**1 Cor. 12:13**), and then conforms us to the son as we see here in **V.2**.

The words “TO HIGHER GROUND” I WANT TO GO TO HIGHER GROUND AND IT IS THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT TO GET ME THERE AND I CAN COUNT ON HIM.