



Scriptures and Doctrine :: The Doctrine of Election ala Spurgeon

The Doctrine of Election ala Spurgeon - posted by run2win, on: 2009/6/14 16:49

I came across this from Charles Spurgeon the other day, and thought it was very good. Though the concept of election is scriptural, there are various interpretations, some of which require belief at the exclusion of other passages. I am editing it, but this selection is from the book Finding Peace in Life's Storms:

"Perhaps you are seeking God and are greatly troubled with the fear that you cannot be saved. I will give you some general truths that may give you hope.

First of all, some of you are troubled about the doctrine of election. I believe it and receive it with joy, and you may rest assured that it is true, no matter how much it troubles you. Though you may not like it, it is true. Remember that it is not a matter of opinion as to what you like or do not like, as to what you think or do not think. You must turn to the Bible, and if you find it there, you must believe it. Pay close attention to what I have to say about this. You have gotten the idea that some people will be sent to hell, simply because it is the will of God that they should be sent there. Throw the idea overboard because it is a very wicked one and cannot be found in Scripture.

Why, it would be a hell inside a man's conscience if he knew that he was condemned merely because God willed that he should be. Yet, this could never be the case, for the very essence of hell is sin, and a sense of having willfully committed it. There could not be any flames of hell if there were not this conviction in the minds of the people suffering them: 'I knew my duty but I did not do it. I willfully sinned against God and I am here, not because of anything He did or did not do, but because of my own sin.' Therefore, if you drive away the dark thought that God sends people to hell indiscriminately, you may be on the road to comfort.

Also, remember that whatever the doctrine of election may be or may not be, the Gospel gives a free invitation to needy sinners. 'Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely' (Rev. 22:17). Now, you may say, 'I cannot reconcile the two. ...God knows where these two things meet, even though you do not, and I hope you do not intend to wait until you are a philosopher before you will be saved...it is likely that while you are trying to be wise by persistently remaining a virtual fool, you will find yourself in hell where your wisdom will not do you any good.

God commands you to trust Christ and promises that all believers will be saved...In order to understand gospel doctrine, you must believe in Christ first. What does Christ say? 'No man cometh unto the Father, but by me' (John 14:6) Election is the Father's work. The Father chooses sinners; Christ makes the atonement. Therefore, you must go to Christ, the Atoning Sacrifice, before you can understand the Father, the God of election. Do not persist in going to the Father first. Go to the Son as He tells you to...Trust Christ, even if you should perish, and you will never perish if you trust Him."

The Doctrine of Election - posted by Logic, on: 2009/6/16 17:52

Personal Election (not corporate)

God does not elect without purpose, as electing some and not others, merely because he could or would. In other words, God does not exhibit his own sovereignty without any other reason than "just because HE wants to and that HE can".

It is a fact that God is infinite in grace and benevolence, all loving and merciful. It is therefore impossible that he should choose or act arbitrarily in any case whatsoever. He must have good and sufficient reasons for every choice and every act that He does.

Therefore, election is not an act of arbitrary choice from a sovereign will. It is not arbitrarily the choosing and acting from mere will alone, but from the wisdom of moral obligation and from the priority of HIS righteousness (doing what is right without partiality).

There is another defense in the "Unconditional election" myth is that God does not have to save all. Some say that God is not obligated to pardon all mankind because they are guilty in the first place. The example they give is that a judge is justified in pardoning one criminal and not the other. However, if God would pardon one and not the other HE would be showing partiality in His pardoning if the two criminals

are all together equal in there crimes.

Furthermore, God does not pardon arbitrarily, HE pardons from the reason of mercy upon request. Nonetheless, God's mercy has conditions based upon standards of conduct (Matthew 18:32-35).

The reason for electing certain men and not others must be based upon the foreknowledge that they will submit to the truth and ask for the mercy that is offered. In other words, God must have known whom he could save.

Election does not imply any obstacle to the salvation of the non-elect; it only implies the defiance and impenitence of the non-elect.

The fact that God saves only some does not imply any hindrance to those who will not be saved, but the stubborn refusal to be saved of those who are not elected.

The fact that God saves only some does not imply that God does not want to save them, but that HE can not.

Atonement is required for the reason of proving the true worth of God and His character which the law represents in relation to the crime committed in order for Him to forgive sin.

The one being atoned for must change in order for him to be forgiven. He must first meet the set conditions in order for the atonement to be applied for the forgiveness. This proves that the one atoned for knows the true value of the one who is forgiving so he knows that he can not take this whole thing lightly.

If the one refuses to acknowledge the true value and worth of God and refuses to meet the set conditions in order to be forgiven; if he takes lightly all that God has said and done to forgive, God can not forgive.

No one can possibly deny that God has made it possible for salvation of all. He certainly offers to save all, and has done all HE could and is doing all HE can do to save as many as HE can.

Those who are not elected may be saved, if they will comply with the set conditions, which they are able to do.

These conditions are not impossible to anyone; God can not give anything more than that HE has already given to all mankind.

There is no injustice to the non-elect by the election of only some. If he offers salvation to all upon terms that HE has set and if he does all he can for the salvation of all, shall some complain

Re: The Doctrine of Election - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2009/6/16 18:10

Logic,

God is not partial in the sense that he doesn't favor rich over poor, white over black. However, he does favor sheep over goats. That in itself is a form of partiality. If God was thoroughly and completely impartial in every way and sense, everyone would go to the same eternal destiny. God does not have any partiality in the sense of favoring one social class, race of man over another.

Election based on fore-knowledge isn't even election; it's just recognition. In any event, Paul teaches in Ephesians that God choose us out of the good pleasure of his will - no mention of "meeting the set conditions". Furthermore, the conditions of salvation (true faith in Christ) are in fact impossible for everyone, were it not for the grace of God, as the Lord taught in John 6:44.

Simply because God reveals no more to us about the inner-workings of election does not mean He just "chose without purpose". Deut 29:29 ...

With care in Christ,
Taylor

Re: The Doctrine of Election - posted by fuehrerbe21 (), on: 2009/6/16 18:16

Quote:

-----You have gotten the idea that some people will be sent to hell, simply because it is the will of God that they should be sent there.

Would God be unjust if this were true?

Can't God do whatever He wants, even if it means all are damned to hell?

Re: The Doctrine of Election ala Spurgeon - posted by sojourner7 (), on: 2009/6/16 18:18

The work of grace and salvation in us and through us is by GOD'S willing and choosing. HE has provided the offering and sacrifice of HIS Only SON for our atonement and redemption; believing and trusting in Christ as Saviour is our part.

Re: , on: 2009/6/16 19:42

Quote

"Would God be unjust if this were true?

Can't God do whatever He wants, even if it means all are damned to hell?"

God is immutable. He always acts according to His character. He is unchanging. I do not believe that anyone would seriously argue that babies go to hell(Catholic church just gave all pretense of that up, not that this would prove anything:) Yet, we have no Scripture to back that up, but we do have the character of God to appeal to.....Frank

Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2009/6/16 21:42

Quote:

-----Election based on fore-knowledge isn't even election; it's just recognition.

Good Point.

The following quote by John Murray is excellent in dealing with this issue: "Even if it were granted that 'foreknew' means the foresight of faith, the biblical doctrine of sovereign election is not thereby eliminated or disproven. For it is certainly true that God foresees faith; He foresees all that comes to pass. The question would then simply be: whence proceeds this faith, which God foresees? And the only biblical answer is that the faith which God foresees is the faith He himself creates (cf. John 3:3-8; 6:44, 45, 65; Eph. 2:8; Phil. 1:29; 2 Peter 1:2). Hence His eternal foresight of faith is preconditioned by His decree to generate this faith in those whom He foresees as believing." (<http://www.gotquestions.org/predestination-foreknowledge.html>) Source

Re: - posted by Logic, on: 2009/6/16 22:26

Quote:

-----tjservant wrote:

Quote:

-----Election based on fore-knowledge isn't even election; it's just recognition.

Good Point.

The following quote by John Murray is excellent in dealing with this issue: "Even if it were granted that 'foreknew' means the foresight of faith, the biblical doctrine of sovereign election is not thereby eliminated or disproven. For it is certainly true that God foresees faith; He foresees all that comes to pass. The question would then simply be: whence proceeds this faith, which God foresees? And the only biblical answer is that the faith which God foresees is the faith He himself creates (cf. John 3:3-8; 6:44, 45, 65; Eph. 2:8; Phil. 1:29; 2 Peter 1:2). Hence His eternal foresight of faith is preconditioned by His decree to generate this faith in those whom He foresees as believing." (<http://www.gotquestions.org/predestination-foreknowledge.html>) Source

In other words:

Elected according to the foreknowledge of God the Father (that He, Himself would give the faith which is needed to be elected) through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ...etc... **1Peter 1:2**

This is ridiculous!

This makes God directly responsible for the unfaithfulness of the entire history of mankind, because He did not provide the faith which He required.

It makes God at fault for mankind being condemned, not being man's fault for rejecting Him.

Reality is that mankind is elected because he puts his own faith (which he had all along) onto Christ & what He said & done. with repentance as proof of his faith.

Reality is that mankind is **NOT** elected because he refuses to put his own faith onto Christ with no repentance as proof.

Faith with the proof of repentance is the "set conditions" which must be met in order to be elected, which God foreknows.

Re: - posted by Logic, on: 2009/6/16 22:38

Quote:

-----fuehrerbe21 wrote:

Quote:

-----You have gotten the idea that some people will be sent to hell, simply because it is the will of God that they should be sent there.

Would God be unjust if this were true?

Can't God do whatever He wants, even if it means all are damned to hell?

God can not damn the ones who put their faith on Christ; He would break His promise if He did.

Re: The Doctrine of Election ala Spurgeon - posted by tjervant (), on: 2009/6/16 22:51

Just adding to thread.

God does not say that He foreknew the decisions that individuals would make, but rather, He foreknew the individuals themselves.

As we have seen, the common Arminian explanation of foreknowledge is that God foreknows those who would believe. That is, He foresees that some will trust in Christ and some will not, and then predestines on that basis. However, upon a close reading of Rom. 8:29 we see that this is simply not what the text says.

Let us examine this crucial passage more closely. Romans 8:29 says,

"For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn of many brethren."

Notice who or what is foreknown. Is it a decision? Is it a quality, such as faith? No! Rather, it is a person. An individual is known. Paul is making a relational statement. God foreknows persons, not merely events or decisions.

What we find in this passage is that those to whom Paul refers to as "the called" and those who Paul says were foreknown by God, are the same ones who were predestined by God. In each link of this golden chain, we have men portrayed as the passive recipients of God's gracious action. God calls them. God predestines them. He justifies them, and He glorifies them. If every subsequent link in the chain demonstrates God's activity and man's passivity, why should we think that the very first link in the chain, God's foreknowing, would portray precisely the opposite picture?

John Murray makes this point in His commentary on Romans:

"This interpretation, furthermore, is in agreement with the efficient and determining action which is so conspicuous in every other link of the chain - it is God who predestinates, it is God who calls, it is God who justifies, and it is He who glorifies. Foresight of faith would be out of accord with the determinative action which is predicated of God in these other instances and would constitute a weakening of the total emphasis at the point where we should least expect it It is not the foresight of difference but the foreknowledge that makes difference exist, not a foresight that recognizes the

existence but the foreknowledge that determines existence. It is a sovereign distinguishing love." (4)

And so we see that the Arminian view of God's foreknowledge in relation to predestination crumbles in the face of both the linguistics and the grammar of the most crucial passage in the discussion.

Complete article (<http://home.flash.net/~thinkman/articles/foreknow.htm>) here

Re: - posted by Logic, on: 2009/6/17 14:59

Quote:

-----tjservant wrote:

God does not say that He foreknew the decisions that individuals would make, but rather, He foreknew the individuals themselves.

God knows everyone so very well that He knows the thoughts and intents of the heart, which includes decisions which a person will make.

Quote:

-----As we have seen, the common Arminian explanation of foreknowledge is that God foreknows those who would believe. That is, He foresees that some will trust in Christ and some will not, and then predestines on that basis. However, upon a close reading of Rom. 8:29 we see that this is simply not what the text says.

Sure it does, if you know the extent to how HE (fore)knows.

Quote:

-----Notice who or what is foreknown. Is it a decision? Is it a quality, such as faith? No! Rather, it is a person. An individual is known. Paul is making a relational statement. God foreknows persons, not merely events or decisions.

Not merely, but His foreknowledge does know those aspects.

How is anyone elected in the first place?

The one elected must meet the requirements for election.

No one is ever elected for no reason at all.

Any criteria to elect must be apart from one's own bias, election must be made from qualities of the candidate, whether or not the candidate is qualified or not.

The criteria which makes one qualified for God's election are faith with repentance; these are nothing to boast in, for they are all mankind's reasonable service (what they are supposed to do in the first place) Luke 17:9 & Luke 17:10

Quote:

-----What we find in this passage is that those to whom Paul refers to as "the called" and those who Paul says were foreknown by God, are the same ones who were predestined by God. In each link of this golden chain, we have men portrayed as the passive recipients of God's gracious action.

No one is a "passive" recipient of God's gracious action.

The one being atoned for must change in order for him to be forgiven!

He must first meet the set conditions in order for the atonement to be applied for the forgiveness; these requirements (or "set conditions") are faith in what Christ has said & done and repentance to prove the faith to be real and genuine. This proves that the one being atoned for understands the true value of the one who is forgiving and that he can not take this whole thing lightly.

If one refuses to acknowledge the true value and worth of God by refusing to meet the set conditions in order to be forgiven; if he takes lightly all that God has said and done to forgive, he can not be forgiven. (Matthew 18:23-35, John 15:8)

The atonement ("God's gracious action") is an influence on one's heart/soul. The selfless, loving sacrifice on our account is to break the heart of the sinner and cause him to acknowledge his sin and the judgment of his sin. A revelation of the suffering of Christ should break and subdue one's heart and bring him to complete surrender to God. The atonement should

uld so affect our hearts that we turn from our disobedience in humble, sincere, and deep repentance, repenting out of a motive of love, remorse, and sincerity (1 John. 4:19). God is drawing all men to Himself through the atonement (John. 12:32), and it is His loving kindness (Grace) which draws us (Jer.31:3; Rom. 2:4).

The Atonement transforms and liberates through reciprocation, when men obey the gospel of Jesus Christ from the heart, God saves them.

Quote:
-----God calls them. God predestines them. He justifies them, and He glorifies them. If every subsequent link in the chain demonstrates God's activity and man's passivity, why should we think that the very first link in the chain, God's foreknowing, would portray precisely the opposite picture

Your mistake is thinking that man is passive in salvation.

Salvation is not a thing, but Jesus Christ Himself!
Our relationship with the Father through Christ is what saves us (gives us eternal life John 17:3)

Quote:
-----And so we see that the Arminian view of God's foreknowledge in relation to predestination crumbles in the face of both the linguistic s and the grammar of the most crucial passage in the discussion.

I'm not Arminian.
My view does not "crumble"

Re: , on: 2009/6/17 15:45

Quote from the other thread.....

" Re: AW TOZER ON CALVINISM/ARMIANISM QUOTE?

I was preparing to go to Nyack College. Before I left there was one burning question I had in mind, and I went to Dr. Tozer and said, "Could you give me some advice concerning the problem of Calvinism versus Arminianism?"

And I'll never forget the advice he gave me. At the time I thought it was rather inconclusive and not too helpful. But I listened carefully. He said, "My son, when you get to college you're going to find that all of the boys will be gathered in a room discussing and arguing over Arminianism and Calvinism night after night after night. I'll tell you what to do, Cliff. Go to your room and meet God. At the end of four years you'll be way down the line and they'll still be where they started, because greater minds than yours have wrestled with this problem and have not come up with satisfactory conclusions. Instead, learn to know God."

"In Pursuit of God" - The Life of A.W. Tozer, James L. Snyder p132

Pretty convicting eh?

:-)

Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2009/6/17 16:17

Quote:
-----Pretty convicting eh?

yes, especially coming from a man Leonard Ravenhill said the following about:

Dr. Tozer told me as a mature man in his sixties that there were times when he lay on the rug for an hour, two hours, th

ree hours, four hours and never uttered a word of prayer, and never uttered a word of praise. He said, "I'm lost in adoration, I see Him in His glory, in His majesty, in His beauty. I can hear those holy beings crying, 'Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord.'" And he said, "I'm silent in adoration before Him. I had no language, it is beggared." And he had a vocabulary as good as any man I know, and he had read more of the mystics, I think, than any man I know, and he had some of the closest encounters to God of any man I know.

Leonard Ravenhill

Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2009/6/17 16:22

Quote:
-----Your mistake is thinking that man is passive in salvation.

It is not my mistake. I did not wright the article. I included the source if you want to let him know how you feel.

Quote:
-----I'm not Arminian.

I know. Once again, I did not wright the article, I just included an excerpt in my post.

I am simply adding info to the thread.

****Edit****

I am done with this thread. I simply disagree with Mr. Logic's theology and ...logic. :-)

Re: - posted by donpjt, on: 2009/6/25 10:14

I actually like this one by Spurgeon... Though it is not on election but on Particular Redemption this might suit this thread..

Quote:
-----We are often told that we limit the atonement of Christ, because we say that Christ has not made a satisfaction for all men, or all men would be saved. Now, our reply to this is, that, on the other hand, our opponents limit it: we do not. The Arminians say, Christ died for all men. Ask them what they mean by it. Did Christ die so as to secure the salvation of all men? They say, "No, certainly not." We ask them the next question—Did Christ die so as to secure the salvation of any man in particular? They answer "No." They are obliged to admit this, if they are consistent. They say, "No; Christ has died that any man may be saved if"—and then follow certain conditions of salvation. We say, then, we will go back to the old statement—Christ did not die so as beyond a doubt to secure the salvation of anybody, did He? You must say "No;" you are obliged to say so, for you believe that even after a man has been pardoned, he may yet fall from grace, and perish. Now, who is it that limits the death of Christ? Why, you. You say that Christ did not die so as to infallibly secure the salvation of anybody. We beg your pardon, when you say we limit Christ's death; we say, "No, my dear sir, it is you that do it." We say Christ so died that He infallibly secured the salvation of a multitude that no man can number, who through Christ's death not only may be saved but are saved, must be saved, and cannot by any possibility run the hazard of being anything but saved

Well, if Christ died so as to save the elect from all their sins, then even our unbelief is a sin. And if we are dead in our sins as Paul says in Romans, we cannot bring ourselves to Christ, but God has to enable us to come to Christ. And if it is God that enables a person to come to Christ, how can it be that the person chooses Christ? Its because God has enabled him and given him grace to see Christ in his beauty that he accepts the saviour. Not because he saw Christ by himself. So then if that act of coming to Christ can be done by man himself, then man has credit for his salvation, doesn't he? And does the Bible teach anywhere that man has any credit for salvation? "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you..." says Christ. So choosing is by Christ and not by man. And whatever we say when we come to Christ we always know it was not of our own will because we were dead in our sins and could not even think of loving God and his statutes. Its because God has given us a new heart instead of our heart of stone as he has promised. So it is not of our own doing but God's. If all you can see in yourself is nothing but a bad sinner, then I cannot understand how anyone can ever point fingers at God for being unjust at not saving others, but just live a life plasing to God out of love and gratitude

for even loving us and being patient with us. And of course if he saved those who do not deserve to be saved, then God is just and gracious than we can imagine (because he has saved such poor sinners) and if that is who he is, then whether we can understand it or not, whatever he does flows out of his wisdom and we need not break our head over it, but just believe his word by faith. Thats all I can say...

Re: - posted by Friedrich (), on: 2009/6/25 11:05

Quote:

-----Quote from the other thread.....

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And I'll never forget the advice he gave me. At the time I thought it was rather inconclusive and not too helpful. But I listened carefully. He said, "My son, when you get to college you're going to find that all of the boys will be gathered in a room discussing and arguing over Arminianism and Calvinism night after night after night. I'll tell you what to do, Cliff. Go to your room and meet God. At the end of four years you'll be way down the line and they'll still be where they started, because greater minds than yours have wrestled with this problem and have not come up with satisfactory conclusions. Instead, learn to know God."

"In Pursuit of God" - The Life of A.W. Tozer, James L. Snyder p132

Pretty convicting eh?

Very true. Good quote, thanks.