

Unconditionally Chosen Unto Salvation

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Although it is today universally denied, young people, the truth of man's total depravity is a basic truth of Scripture. God told Adam that if he would eat of the forbidden fruit he would die that very day. Paul, in Ephesians 2:1 tells the Ephesians that before God quickened them, that is, made them alive, they were dead. And he, and God when He spoke to Adam, meant spiritual death. Man became totally dead spiritually. And even as a dead man cannot see, hear, talk, walk or do anything physical, so man became in Adam spiritually incapable even of wanting salvation, believing in God, "accepting" a kind "offer" of salvation from God. Total is complete, one hundred percent. It means that Adam became absolutely spiritually dead the day he sinned by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And because he became spiritually dead, not merely weak or sick spiritually, all the children he brought forth and are now brought forth, come from their parents spiritually dead. They cannot even want to be saved from this spiritual incapability of doing anything pleasing in God's sight. As we saw last time, except a man be born again, that he be given spiritual life, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven or want anything to do with it and its King. And, by God's grace, our churches are among the few churches today that believe this truth and are truly Reformed in all our preaching and teaching.

We do well to bear in mind that not only do we read in Scripture that God chose all the members of the body of Christ. His Holy Catholic Church, but also that He, before the foundation of the world, determined to make these, and these only, "holy and without blame before Him". Look up Ephesians 1:4 once again.

Denying this basic truth, there is an universally widespread doctrine concerning our salvation that insists that God chooses sinners, or if you will, elects them, after they accept Christ, and thus after spiritually dead men do perform a spiritual deed. God invites people, who cannot hear, cannot see the Kingdom of Heaven, have hearts that hate God and enjoy only that which God hates, to come and get a wonderful spiritual gift. They want an election in time, determined not by the sovereign, almighty God, but by a spiritually dead man. As Billy Graham states it: "You can be a born-again Christian, if you only ask for it." In salvation man comes first according to most churches today. God wants to save. He sent His Son to make it possible; but He cannot do it and will not do it until we let Him do so. That doctrine insults the living God and does not render to Him the praise due to His name.

The truth we must maintain, and our prayer to God is that when you take our places as fathers and mothers, and some of you as elders and deacons in His church, you maintain the basic truth of Unconditional Election that Paul presents in Ephesians 1:4 in these words: "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." That surely means that He chose us before we were born. We were not born before the foundation of the world, were we?

To defend themselves in this lie many churches say that this means that before the foundation of the world God foreknew who would accept, and therefore chose them. They will misinterpret Romans 8:29 where we read: "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." But notice that Paul does not say that God foreknew their works. He foreknew certain people. He knew them in love in His eternal counsel. What is more, notice likewise that He predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son. That means that they come into this world as not conformed to the image of His Son. It means that in no way and to no degree do they, when they come into this life, conform to the image of Christ.

Otherwise God would not have to conform them. It means that they teach that there is a spark of Christ's life in them that God did not put there, or did not decide to eternally give to them until they produced it themselves because of the "invitation" in the "free offer". Somehow, someway - and you can be sure the devil did not enable them — dead people manage to make themselves alive. It means, as we hear so much today, that spiritually dead men accept the offer and keep God from disappointments and from sending His Son for nothing to all that agony of hell that He suffered on His cross. It means that Christ did not die for certain, definite people but only to make it possible that dead men act, and earn salvation by that act, of accepting an invitation. They will deny that when you confront them with it. But a conditional theology, one that insists that there is a prerequisite that we have to fulfill before God will choose us and save and give us that which Christ earned, makes God dependent upon man. God is going to take a back seat. 0, He loves everybody in the world and wants to save them all, and that love is so great that He is willing to step down and let man decide whether or not he is going to be saved. That is not praising God but degrading Him in our speech. This simply means that in a very, very important and significant matter man rules God and can keep Him from getting done what He wants to have take place.

Remember and never let it slip from you that believing in Christ is an holy act. Believing is an holy act which we were chosen to perform, not one we performed and therefore were chosen. And again, how can an unholy person who died spiritually in Adam perform an holy act? How can an unholy person fulfill an holy condition, supply an holy prerequisite?

Now you may safely take the last two words of Ephesians 1:4 and add them to verse 5 so that we read: ". . . that we should be holy and without blame before Him. In love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will." Yes, it was in His love that God chose us. And it is very important that we be before Him holy and without blame. This being before Him in holiness means also that we love Him. But what Paul has in mind here is not our love to God, but God's love to us that predestinated us and chose us to be made holy and without blame in Christ. His love does not leave any possibility of those whom He loves not being saved, because they failed to do something. If He really loved us, and He did, He would not make our salvation a doubtful, risky and hopeless thing. The Arminian heresy does insult God and dishonors Him. Unconditional Election is the second of the Five Points of Calvinism. It is a truth we must hold to with all our strength.

There are conditions to our salvation; but they are conditions that God Himself fulfills. Christ did all the work. He paid for our sins. He performed the works of the law which we failed to begin to do. As far as man is concerned we must maintain that his salvation is unconditional. Deny that and we foolishly but also sinfully say that a dead man can do something. We deny total depravity. We say to God that He was mistaken when He told Adam that he would die THAT DAY that he sinned. We say to Paul that he was wrong, and we deny that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. For then Paul was wrong too, when he told the Ephesians that God quickened them, that is, gave them spiritual life. They really were not dead but only greatly incapacitated. Paul did not see things right and was not infallibly guided when he wrote that. Make total depravity mean every part of man but not every part completely; scoff at the idea that total means absolute; take the smallest part away from total to defend your conditional theology and maintain a sincere invitation of God in the hope that dead men will respond, and then you cannot maintain an unconditional election; but you must say that our salvation depends on what we do and not what God did and does and decided eternally. If election is unconditional, and it

is, then believing is also unconditionally given to us. As Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:4, we were chosen unto believing and not because we believed. Let us, young people, go back to that verse. God chose us so that we would become holy and without blame, not because we had a spark of holiness left and cannot be blamed for not “accepting” God’s offer, and of turning down His “invitation”.

Yes, we believed that there is a God. But the devil believes that too. But saving faith is that gift of God to us that causes us to put our trust in Him as our Saviour in Christ and His cross.

Denying Unconditional Election we deny that God saves us from unbelief, unholiness and guilt. Denying Unconditional Election we believe that we save ourselves. We by our own power save ourselves from not believing in Christ, and therefore God chooses to save us from our punishment. We save ourselves from unbelief and God saves us from what we deserve because of what we did before we changed our own hearts and we gave Him the green light to go ahead and save us. God then is not the Alpha, the beginning of our salvation, but only the Omega, the end of it. And then God lies to us when He says that He is the Alpha. Revelation 21:6. Faith is not His gift to us but our gift to Him. When Paul wrote the Ephesians that God quickened them because they were dead, the denial of Unconditional Theology teaches that both God and Paul come to us with an untruth.

Any doctrine that teaches that total depravity does not mean one-hundred- percent lack of spiritual life, an absolute incapacity to even want salvation from the power of sin, reveals that very depravity. One who cannot and will not say that fallen man can do nothing good in God’s sight, shows that he is depraved as far as this truth of God’s word is concerned. It shows that one dares to say that God was mistaken and did not speak the truth to Adam, or move Paul to speak the truth when he wrote Ephesians 2:1. That doctrine of conditional theology dares to oppose God. It claims to proclaim more fully and wonderfully God’s love to mankind than we as churches do. But actually, it performs an act of hatred against God. It is not love to God to say that He has to wait, and is limited as to how many He can save, by the will of a creature that depends upon Him for every breath of life. It is not love of God to say that He misspoke Himself to Adam and let Paul put in His holy word a lie.

No, young people, hold on to the truth of Scripture that God chose us in Adam before the foundation of the world, and chose to make us holy and without blame before Him. That means that we did have blame. It means that we were not holy. If there was something in us before God saved us, that made it possible for us to want to be saved, we had a spark of holiness, a good, holy desire. And because of this good, holy desire which we were able to produce and show, God chose to save us in Christ. That means that fallen man could give God something, and that he had something that God had not given him. Then we raise men above God. Man gives God something. God needs something that man has and has not been given him by God.

Let us instead render all the glory to God that is His. The truth of Unconditional Election does that. We sing that so beautifully in our Psalter versification of Psalm 139 with these words: (Psalter number 383:1.)

*All that I am I owe to Thee,
Thy wisdom Lord has fashioned me;
I give my Maker thankful praise,
Whose wondrous works my soul amaze.*

Our election we owe to God, and all our salvation, including our desire for it, is His gift to us. He

chose to make us desire salvation and did not choose us because we brought to Him the desire for it. He is the Alpha, the beginning of ALL of our salvation.

Originally Published in
Vol 46 No 10 December 1987