



Ephesians 2 HE CHOSE ME



TEXT: EPHESIANS 1:3-14

Paul makes what seems to be deliberate reference to the TRINITY.

v4-6 = FATHER CHOOSING ... AUTHOR + ORIGINATOR → Father is the subject of every main verb in every clause.

v7-12 = SON REDEEMING ... PIVOT + PURCHASER → Jesus mentioned by name, title or pronoun x15 in v1-14. Phrase 'in Christ' x11.

v13-14 = SPIRIT SEALING ... DIVINE EXECUTIVE → 'Every spiritual blessing' could be translated 'all the blessings of the Spirit'

→ Each mini-section concluding with 'to the praise of His glory' (v6,12,14)

→ Read Deut 28:1-14 and note the OT blessing promised. Then contrast with the New Covenant blessing of Eph 1.

HOW GREATLY WE NEED

a) The rich BLESSING, PROMISES, PROVISION of the Father.

b) To live a life framed by our NEW IDENTITY in Christ.

c) To lean on INDWELLING POWER of the Holy Spirit.

→ How important is the work of the whole Trinity in our lives? What different roles do they play?

OUR RICH SPIRITUAL BLESSING

a) He has CHOSEN us (v4)

* GOD has chosen YOU ... and you thought YOU chose HIM!

→ Who chose whom? Does it actually matter? What does 'sovereign' mean? How do we balance divine sovereignty and human responsibility (free will)? How much of all this is down to God and how much down to you? What are the dangers as that pendulum swings?

2 THEOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

i) PREDESTINATION = The sense God knows in advance, has an unbreakable plan, has promised/prophesied certain things that must come to pass (Rom 8:29-30).

ii) ELECTION = Some have been chosen by God for salvation.

* It comes down to balancing tricky tension between DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY and HUMAN FREE WILL.

* Isaiah 55:8-9 → When God says His WAYS are HIGHER, He's being POLITE!

* The heart of God: John 3:16, 1 Peter 3:9, Luke 19:10

* ⁴GOD [Father] chose US [you + me] in HIM [Jesus] → i.e. God the Father, in deep time past, chose us, who didn't yet exist, to be adopted, forgiven, redeemed thru sacrifice of Christ on the cross which hadn't yet happened = Higher thoughts!!!

→ Reading the material on Calvinism v Arminianism, which way do you lean? What are the strengths and potential dangers of each view?

→ As Ray McCauley says, God is cleverer than me! What things are just beyond our grasp + comprehension? Is that a problem? Is there a danger that we want everything wrapped in a bow, black and white, clear-cut? How do we handle the things we cannot understand?

SO WHAT?

i) Remember the main thing = He CHOSE YOU.

ii) THANK God DAILY for your salvation.

iii) Aim to TAKE AS MANY WITH YOU TO HEAVEN as possible.

b) He has ADOPTED us (v5)

* MEANS to choose to TAKE AS ONE'S OWN, to receive into a NEW RELATIONSHIP, to LEGALLY take into your own FAMILY.

* God brings us into a relationship, not of SERVANT to MASTER, but SON to FATHER. (Galatians 4:4-7)

CONSEQUENCES OF OUR ADOPTION

i) CO-HEIRS with Christ of all the spiritual blessings of the Father.

ii) We have a NEW FATHER (Abba).

iii) We have a NEW IDENTITY, NAME, FAMILY.

iv) We'll never again be ALONE, ISOLATED, ABANDONED.

→ How does the reality of your adoption into God's family affect your life / influence how you see things? What aspects do you still need to grow in?

c) He has REDEEMED us (v7)

* Once a SLAVE to sin and death, you have been PURCHASED by your beloved master and SET gloriously FREE.

* Emancipation = CHAINS gone, PRICE paid, DEBT erased.

REDEMPTION IS

i) Act of GREAT DIVINE LOVE

ii) Act of GREAT LEGAL SIGNIFICANCE

iii) Act of being freed FROM one thing TO another (John 8:34-36) → Death to life, sin to holiness, law to grace, frustration to liberty, stranglehold of satan to loving arms of God, from serving sin to serving God.

→ Have your chains gone? Are you still living as a slave? What still ensnares you? Why not pray into that?

d) He has SEALED us (v13-14)

* How do we know we're His? He puts His SEAL upon our hearts.

* With the Holy Spirit at work in your heart, you are UNSNATCHABLE.

→ Is it possible to lose your salvation? What role does the Holy Spirit play in sealing / guaranteeing / protecting that?

CALVINISM (John Calvin) makes 5 doctrinal statements to explain its position

1. Man's heart is depraved. If left to himself, he would only do selfish, sinful things (TOTAL DEPRAVITY).
2. However, God arbitrarily decided, before time began, which people would be saved and which would be lost (UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION).
3. Jesus Christ came to earth and died on the cross for the sins of those God had decided would be saved (LIMITED ATONEMENT).
4. The Holy Spirit comes upon a person's heart in an irresistible way, so the person will choose to be saved (IRRESISTIBLE GRACE).
5. The saved person can never become unsaved, no matter what (PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS – eternal security).

ARMINIANISM (James Arminius) made five counter-statements

1. Man's heart is sick, selfish + near-sighted, but he does not continually sin because his nature is not completely evil. Therefore, sin does not control man's will; he is still able to obey, believe + repent (FREE WILL).
2. God, able to see all things past and future, knowing who would say 'yes' to the Gospel, elected those people to salvation (CONDITIONAL ELECTION).
3. Jesus died on the cross giving everyone the opportunity to repent + turn to Him, excluding no one from the possibility of salvation (UNIVERSAL ATONEMENT) ... Not 'universalism' which says everyone will be saved in the end.
4. The call of God can be resisted +, ultimately, rejected (RESISTIBLE GRACE).
5. A Christian can turn from God + no longer be saved. Continual salvation is conditional upon continuing faith (FALLING FROM GRACE).

There are DANGERS (Joseph Mattera)

Hyper-Calvinist. This camp emphasizes God's sovereignty to the point that it bypasses what Scripture teaches regarding human responsibility. For example, during Charles Finney's ministry, he had to constantly debate hyper-Calvinists who taught that it was wrong for preachers to induce sinners to repent, make decisions for Christ, and/or do anything that aided in the process of salvation. Of course, the majority of Calvinists have not

taken this approach as we study the ministries of former heroes of the faith such as George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, Charles Spurgeon and other Calvinists who were mightily used of God to bring thousands of sinners to Christ by commanding repentance and obedience to the gospel.

Hyper-Arminianism. Those in this camp overemphasize human responsibility to the point that they nullify God's sovereignty. Extreme Arminianism such as "open theism" even goes as far as teaching that God doesn't know everything in the future and that God makes His decisions after He sees how humans respond to Him. They have reduced predestination (Eph. 1:4; Rom. 8:29-30) to "post-destination" and have created a god that responds to time and space rather than the One who controls it.

The difference between predestination and human responsibility is a scriptural paradox that will never be fully understood this side of heaven. I always say that Scriptures that emphasize predestination are taken from God's transcendent view of human reality (from heaven's perspective), and Scriptures that emphasize human responsibility are from an immanent view of human reality (from the earth's perspective).

"Likewise, the Arminian belief that one may lose his or her salvation may cause some to put too much emphasis on the believer's responsibility to maintain their faith by their own strength rather than relying on God to sustain them. The Calvinist's belief that you cannot lose your salvation may give some a license to sin, believing in their hearts that they can do nothing bad enough to be rejected by God. It seems that a biblical balance here would be that, even though believers go through times of great temptation, even failure, as long as that believer holds on to the source of his or her salvation, Jesus Christ, that person is safe. In other words, if one does not renounce faith in Jesus, and thereby become an 'unbeliever', that person is still a Christian. That is why the phrase "Security of the Believer" seems appropriate. As long as one believes [trusts, has faith] in Jesus, that person cannot lose his or her salvation."

"Can a person once saved ever be lost again? Why take a chance? A Christian is never in danger of falling from grace if he or she will simply, *"...love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength"* (Mark 12:30; cf. Matthew 22:37; Luke 10:27)."

<http://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/what-are-the-main-differences-between-calvinism-and-arminianism/>