

# Handout on Election

Introduction:

Article 11 Election in the Faith and Order of the Bible Fellowship Church

11-1 Election is a free act of the sovereign God in which from eternity, for reasons known only to Himself, and apart from any foreseen faith and/or goodness found in man, He graciously chose from among the fallen mankind a people unto salvation, that they might be conformed to Christ's image. Those so chosen He redeemed by His Son and seals by His Spirit.

Theme: Why is it important to study, understand and embrace the doctrine of election?

- I. First and foremost because it is taught in the scriptures.
  - A. God is not ashamed of the doctrine and neither should we.
  - B. In fact, rather than God being ashamed of the doctrine of election, it is to be understood as bringing glory to God.

Ephesians 1:4 (ESV) even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love  
Ephesians 1:5 (ESV) he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,  
Ephesians 1:6 (ESV) to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

1. First it brings glory to God by providing us with a proper perspective of God.

Ephesians 1:3 (ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

God is to be adored, a source of delight. It is a response of the heart that says, "Isn't God good?" My, how wonderful our God is!

2. Secondly, it brings glory to God by eliciting our praise of God.

Ephesians 1:4 (ESV) even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love  
Ephesians 1:5 (ESV) he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,  
Ephesians 1:6 (ESV) to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

II. Secondly, it is important to study, understand and embrace the doctrine of election so that we would more fully comprehend the basis of the blessings that we enjoy as a people of God.

A. God has blessed us already.

Ephesians 1:3 (ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

B. God has blessed us in, through, and because of our relationship to Christ.

Ephesians 1:3 (ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

1. “in Christ” means in union with Christ. It is in our union or connection to Christ that we are blessed.

Ephesians 2:4 (ESV) But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,

Ephesians 2:5 (ESV) even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

Ephesians 2:6 (ESV) and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

Ephesians 2:6 (ESV) and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

2. Christ is the sole basis of our being blessed.

C. God has blessed us with every single blessing there is and He has left nothing out.

Ephesians 1:3 (ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

- D. God has blessed us in the sphere of His own personal domain.

Ephesians 1:3 (ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

Ephesians 2:6 (ESV) and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

Ephesians 2:7 (ESV) so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

- III. Thirdly, it is important to study, understand and embrace the doctrine of election to more fully comprehend the surety of our blessedness.

- A. We are sure to be blessed because God has chosen us to be united to Christ

Ephesians 1:4 (ESV) even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love

- 1. The emphasis is that God chose us not that we chose God.

John 15:16 (ESV) You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

- 2. The being united to Christ is the result of God's activity

- B. We are sure to be blessed because He chose us even before anything was made.

Ephesians 1:4 (ESV) even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love

- 1. Note the past perfect tense of Ephesians 1:3

Ephesians 1:3 (ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our

Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

2. This is a blessedness that occurred in the past and continues to be experienced now and into the future.

- C. We are sure to be blessed because God will find no fault with us when we stand before Him.

Ephesians 1:4 (ESV) even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love

Romans 8:33 (ESV) Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

Romans 8:34 (ESV) Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

- D. We are sure to be blessed because God predetermined to make us part of His family.

Ephesians 1:5 (ESV) he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

Ephesians 1:6 (ESV) to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

1. The Greek word translated as predestined means to decide upon beforehand to choose before hand.

*Arndt, William et al. A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature : a translation and adaption of the fourth revised and augmented edition of Walter Bauer's Griechisch-deutsches Worterbuch zu den Schrift en des Neuen Testaments und der ubrigen urchristlichen Literatur 1979 : 709. Print.*

2. God decided before hand, before the foundation of the world and before we were born, to make us His own.

Ephesians 1:4 (ESV) even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love

Romans 9:10 (ESV) And not only so, but also when Rebekah had

conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac,  
Romans 9:11 (ESV) though they were not yet born and had done  
nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of  
election might continue, not because of works but because of him  
who calls—

Romans 9:12 (ESV) she was told, “The older will serve the  
younger.”

- E. We are sure to be blessed because in choosing us, God set His love upon us.

Ephesians 1:4 (ESV) even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love Ephesians 1:5 (ESV) he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

1. God’s love for his own is a very unique love.

Romans 9:10 (ESV) And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac,  
Romans 9:11 (ESV) though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—

Romans 9:12 (ESV) she was told, “The older will serve the younger.”

Romans 9:13 (ESV) As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

2. Much has been written on this subject of God's love for Jacob and God's hatred of Esau. We need to understand this verse in a comparative manner. The love that God has for Jacob so far exceeds His love for Esau that in comparison it is like love for Jacob and hatred for Esau.

- a. For an example of this comparative use of love hate note Luke 14:26

Luke 14:26 (ESV) “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

Surely, we are not to hate our wives. However, our Love for God is to be so great that in comparison, our love for our wives is closer to hatred.

- b. It is quite significant that in this very book of Ephesians the admonition that husbands are to love their wives is founded upon Christ's unique love of the church.

Ephesians 5:25 (ESV) Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,

- c. We know that we are to love all mankind, including our enemies. That does not, however, mitigate the fact that we are to love our own wives, in a unique way, distinguishable from, and far superior to other loves. So too, Christ's love for the church is distinguishable from and far superior to other loves. .

- 3. The assurance of God's abiding love for us who are in Christ is wonderfully articulated in Romans 8.

It is important to keep in mind the pronouns "we" and "us" refer to the elect.

Romans 8:31 (ESV) What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Romans 8:32 (ESV) He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

Romans 8:33 (ESV) Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

Romans 8:34 (ESV) Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Romans 8:35 (ESV) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

Romans 8:36 (ESV) As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

Romans 8:37 (ESV) No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

Romans 8:38 (ESV) For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,

Romans 8:39 (ESV) nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

4. Is it any wonder then that it is crucial for us to understand this very unique and amazing love that God has for us in choosing to make us His own.

a. So Paul prays that God would strengthen us in our faith.

Ephesians 3:14 (ESV) For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,

Ephesians 3:15 (ESV) from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,

Ephesians 3:16 (ESV) that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

Ephesians 3:17 (ESV) so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith —that

b. Our whole relationship to God is based on His love for us.

Ephesians 3:17 (ESV) so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

c. So the prayer is that we would grasp this amazing, glorious, redeeming, love of God which he has for us His chosen ones.

Ephesians 3:18 (ESV) may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

Ephesians 3:18 (ESV) may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

Ephesians 3:19 (ESV) and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

IV. Fourth, it is important to study, understand and embrace the doctrine of election to more fully comprehend God's plan for our blessedness.

A. We are sure to be blessed because God predetermined that we would belong to Him.

Ephesians 1:5 (ESV) he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

B. God predetermined that His will, goal, desire, and end that we would belong to him would be accomplished and fulfilled.

Ephesians 1:5 (ESV) he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

Ephesians 1:11 (ESV) In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,

Romans 9:11 (ESV) though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—

C. It is God's will that is the basis of God's choice not man's will.

Ephesians 1:5 (ESV) he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

Romans 9:16 (ESV) So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.

John 1:12 (ESV) But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

John 1:13 (ESV) who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

V. Fifth, it is important to study, understand and embrace the doctrine of election so that God would be appropriately praised for His grace to us.

Ephesians 1:6 (ESV) to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

A. That which we are to praise God for is His grace.

Ephesians 1:6 (ES to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

Ephesians 2:8 (ESV) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

1. Salvation is gracious for it not merited or earned in any way.

Ephesians 2:8 (ESV) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

Even our faith is not meritorious.

Ephesians 2:8 (ESV) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

2. The fact that salvation is by grace alone is driven home with a number of assertions.
  - a. Ephesians 2:8 (ESV) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,
  - b. Ephesians 2:8 (ESV) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,
  - c. Ephesians 2:9 (ESV) not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

3. Therefore, we can make no claims for deservedness in being saved.

Ephesians 2:9 (ESV) not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

There is nothing in us that warrants our being saved when others are lost.

- B. That grace is said to be glorious.

Ephesians 1:6 (ESV) to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

1. That is, that it is most worthy, deserving appropriate for praise.

Once again this doctrine is to result in God being praised!

2. It is a glorious grace because it is costly grace.

- a. It came at the expense of His son whom He loved dearly.

Ephesians 1:6 (ESV) to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

- b. It came at the expense of His beloved son's life.

Ephesians 1:7 (ESV) In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace

3. It is a glorious grace for it so undeserved.

Ephesians 1:7 (ESV) In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,

4. It is a glorious grace because it is such an abundant grace.

Ephesians 1:7 (ESV) In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,

God is wealthy in the amount of grace that He has.

5. It is glorious grace because it is given so freely.

Ephesians 1:8 (ESV) which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight

- a. God is not stingy with His grace.

- b. Nor is He reluctant to give us of His grace.

6. It is a glorious grace because God has revealed it to us.

Ephesians 1:8 (ESV) which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight

Ephesians 1:9 (ESV) making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ

We would never have understood His grace had God not let us in on the secret of His grace.

7. It is a glorious grace because God has given us the capacity to understand it.

Ephesians 1:8 (ESV) which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight

Ephesians 1:9 (ESV) making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ

It is due to the fact that the wisdom and insight comes from God that Paul prays that God would give His people even more wisdom and insight.

Ephesians 1:15 (ESV) For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints,

Ephesians 1:16 (ESV) I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,

Ephesians 1:17 (ESV) that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,

Ephesians 1:18 (ESV) having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you,

what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

Ephesians 1:19 (ESV) and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might

Ephesians 1:20 (ESV) that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,

8. It is a glorious grace for it all is in keeping with God's purpose. He thought of it. He designed it.

Ephesians 1:9 (ESV) making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ

9. It is a glorious grace for it is all accomplished through Christ from beginning to the end.

Ephesians 1:9 (ESV) making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ

Ephesians 1:10 (ESV) as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

10. It is a glorious grace for it is an extensive grace.

Ephesians 1:11 (ESV) In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,

- C. God will in fact be praised for His glorious grace when we are before Him.

Ephesians 1:12 (ESV) so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 1:13 (ESV) In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,

Ephesians 1:14 (ESV) who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

- D. Let us give praise honor and glory to God now for all that He does for us, in us and through us.

Ephesians 3:20 (ESV) Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,

Ephesians 3:21 (ESV) to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

## VI. Conclusion

- A. God and God alone is to be praised for the great salvation that we enjoy.

- B. God is to be praised and glorified for His great grace in making us His

own.

- C. We are to be assured of our acceptance with God because He chose us to be holy and without blame when we stand before Him in judgment.
- D. We are assured of experiencing every spiritual blessing because of our relationship to Christ that He has established.
- E. A relationship that is the result of God having chosen us to be adopted as His children even before the world was created.