

Election: Its Defense, Evidences and Effect

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5

Henry T. Mahan Tape Library
Zebulon Baptist Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501

Website: <http://www.sovereign-grace.com/13thstbap.htm>

Online Sermons: <http://mahan.sermonaudio.com>

Now let's read our text again, 1 Thessalonians chapter one verse four and five. And I want you to use your Bible tonight and I want you to, if you care to, jot down a note or two. You don't have to write down very many notes. There are just one or two things you might want to write down and remember on this subject.

I am speaking on the subject, "Election: Its Defenses, Its Evidences, Its Effects. The Doctrine of Election. Its Defenses, Its Evidences and Its Effects." And my text is 1 Thessalonians chapter one verse four, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God."

Now as Charles Spurgeon said, when we announce a topic such as this, election, when we read a text like this we get the following objections. First of all a man will say, "Well, why preach on such a profound and controversial subject as election? Why preach on election. It is profound. It is deep. It is controversial. So why preach on it?"

Answer: Because it is in the Word of God, because it is in the Word of God. And we are commanded to preach the Word of God.

Paul said, "I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." And election is part of that counsel. "I have kept back nothing profitable unto you." And a subject such as election is most profitable. It is mentioned so many times in God's Word and we must preach it.

All right. The second objection. "All right, granted. Election is in the Bible. But shouldn't we keep back from the people some things? Shouldn't we leave some things to be settled by the preachers and the theologians and just keep it from the people?"

Answer: That is Roman Catholic doctrine. That was what the Roman Catholic Church was built upon. That was the very theory by which the Catholics kept the Bible from the people and led them to burn Bibles instead of letting people have the Word of God when men wanted to print the Bible. They tore up their printing presses and burned their copies of God's Word. And this is what led to the false doctrines invented by popes and priests such as purgatory, immaculate conception, the ascension of Mary and so forth. They kept back the Word from the people and the priest and pope decided what they would let the people have. That is popish doctrine. You don't keep back anything that is in this book from the people.

The third objection: “There are some doctrines dangerous.”

My friend, truth is never dangerous. Truth is never dangerous. If it is properly preached and properly taught for the glory of God in the power and strength of the Holy Spirit, truth can never be dangerous. If it is so it is not dangerous. Error is dangerous. To teach a falsehood is dangerous, but truth is never dangerous. It doesn't matter what the truth is. It cannot be dangerous.

The fourth objection: “But do not some men abuse the doctrine of election? Do not some men misuse the doctrine of election?”

They certainly do. But if we destroy all the things that men abuse and all the things that men misuse we wouldn't have anything left. For example, we would have no ropes because some men hang themselves with ropes, so you would have to do away with all ropes. We would have no knives because men cut themselves. We wouldn't even have any water because men drown themselves. And you wouldn't have any medicine because men become drug addicts to medicine.

So if you destroy everything that men abuse you wouldn't have anything left. Of course men abuse the doctrine of election. They abuse every doctrine in God's Word. But we do not keep back the truth of God's Word because fools misuse it and abuse it.

The next objection: “But some men have taken the doctrine of election and become indifferent to holiness. They have become careless in their daily lives and they use the doctrine of election for an excuse and they become Antinomian.”

Men have always found an excuse for their sin. It doesn't matter under what dispensation. Adam blamed his sins on Eve. Eve blamed her sins on the serpent. Aaron blamed his sins on the fire. Just come down through the Scriptures and you will find not only in the Scripture, but in our own experience we always have been able to justify ourselves and find some excuse for sin. And if a man didn't find the doctrine of election as an excuse for his sin, he would find something else.

One old man said, “The sun will ripen a smelly weed just as well as it will ripen an apple tree. But the fault is not in the sun. It is in the nature of the weed.” When the sun shines and that old smelly weed, obnoxious weed grows and flourishes, well so does the apple tree. It is the same sun that produces fruit and produces a terrible odor. But the fault is not in the sun. It is in the weed. It is of a different nature.

And men certainly they have taken the doctrine of election, the doctrine of preservation, the security of a believer, they take a lot of these doctrines and they use them to become careless and indifferent to holiness and righteousness. But that is not the fault of the doctrine. That is the nature of the sinner.

Sixthly: “But I have heard it said that believing in election will dampen your missionary zeal and kill evangelism.”

Nobody taught election more strongly than our Lord. He said, “All that my Father giveth me shall come to me and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

In John 17:9 he said, “I pray not for the world. I pray for them which thou hast given me.”

He said to the Pharisees, “You are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give them eternal life.”

But our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners. He loved sinners. He came to save sinners. He believed in election. He said, “Father, I thank thee, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and thou hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, it seemed good in thy sight.” And he turned to the sinners and said, “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden. I will give you rest.”

The apostle Paul taught election. 2 Thessalonians 2:13 he said, “We are bound to give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.”

Romans 8:29 and 30 he says, “Whom he foreknew he predestinated. Whom he predestinated he called. Whom he called he justified. Whom he justified he glorified.” And yet Paul was the first great missionary to the Gentiles. He spent his very life preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. He was put in prison. He was stoned. He was beaten. He was shipwrecked. He finally was beheaded preaching the gospel to sinners.

And time would not permit me to name the Luthers and the Calvins and the Spurgeons and the Whitefields and the Careys and the Judsons and every great preacher whom God who has ever used believed the doctrine of election. But it did not make them less missionary and less evangelistic. It made them more evangelistic. It gave them a greater burden to say with the apostle Paul, “I endure all things for the elect’s sake that they might come to know the Lord who chose them in his own good pleasure and purpose.”

Seventh, in the seventh place: “But can we not preach election too much?”

We certain can. We certainly can. Take any doctrine and preach it exclusively and you distort it. The prettiest face in the world would become ugly if you enlarge the nose or enlarge the mouth or enlarge the ears. Proportionate beauty. And we preach every truth in fair proportion, keeping back nothing nor exaggerating any is to preach the beauty of truth. We preach election. We preach responsibility. We preach sovereignty. We preach accountability. We preach God’s purpose in grace. We preach man’s responsibility to obey God.

We do not apologize for telling men the truth. Yes, you preach any doctrine exclusively and you distort it. You make it ugly. You get it out of proportion from the rest of the Word of God.

I have a four fold outline tonight. I am going to answer four questions that I think will be helpful to you on this subject, election: its defenses, its evidences and its effect. First of all, I am going to answer this question: What is the doctrine of election? Then, secondly, I am going to answer this. What are the defenses, the hedge built around the doctrine of the election? In the third place, what are the evidences that a man is elect? Are there some evidences that we are elect? The Bible tells us some. And then in the fourth place what are the effects of the doctrine of election.

Now, first of all, what is the doctrine of election? We hear of the doctrine of election. I believe it. Most of you believe it. The Bible teaches it. Our forefathers preached it. It is in our catechism and our creeds and our confessions of faith. What is the doctrine of election?

Paul said here, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God."

First of all the cause of election or the motive of election is found in God, not in man. The cause of election is found in God. God said, "I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious," Exodus 33:18 and 19. The cause or motive in election is found in God. God is plenteous in mercy. God delights to show mercy. God is love. The call to salvation, the motive for salvation is not found in man. It is found entirely and wholly and completely in God. Salvation began with God. Salvation was purposed by God. Salvation comes from God. Salvation is ours because God was pleased to give it. You cannot find in man any cause of election, any motive for election. God loved the unlovable. God forgave sinners. God loved it when we were dead in trespasses and sins. The whole and complete cause and motive and reason for election is found in God.

Now watch this second one. This is important. The necessity of election. The necessity for an election is found in man. The cause of it is in God. The reason, the motive is in God. But why must there be an election? Why is election necessary? If God is going to have a people he has to elect a people. Why? Here are some reasons. "You will not come to me that you might have life." That is what Christ said. "You will not come to me."

Our Lord said, "How often would I have gathered you unto myself as a hen doth gather her brood, but you would not."

Scripture says, "He came unto his own and his own received him not."

The Scripture says, "This is condemnation. Men love darkness rather than light. Their deeds are evil."

The Scripture says, "The natural mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can be."

"The preaching of the cross is foolishness to them that perish."

Man is a sinful creature. He is an evil creature. He is bound by sin and bound by evil and bound by darkness and bound by death. He does not know God and he does not want to know God, not by nature.

Now he has a god and he is a religious creature, but he does not want to know the God of the Bible. He does not want to know the living God. He does not have the will or the desire to know the living God. That is why election is necessary. "You will not come to me. If we are ever brought together I am going to have to come to you."

Christ said to his disciples, "You did not choose me. I chose you. You do not love me. I must love you. You will not call. I must call you. You will not seek. I must seek you."

Herein is love not that we loved God. He loved us. We love ourselves. We love our sin. We love our sin. We love our evil, a particular kind of evil whether it be pride or selfishness or covetousness or lust or whatever it might be. We love our particular brand of evil. We love ourselves. And when the will of God crosses our will, that is when our real natures are unveiled and revealed.

Now get this right here and listen carefully. Man is a free agent. He does not have a free will. Now I am going to illustrate that. I have had many of you ask me about that. You read it in some of the old writers. You have heard read how that we do not deny the free agency of men, but we deny the free will of men. I am going to help you understand that tonight. I am going to clear that up as clear as I can clear it up for every one of us.

Ed Barrow, stand up, would you? Stand up just a moment. Now be seated. Thank you.

Now I illustrated the free agency of man right there. Ed, without any force or power outside of himself stood up and he sat back down. Agency means force or power of activity. He is an agent. And he is a free agent. Nobody held him down. Nobody pushed him up. He stood up by himself. He had the power to act. He had the power to be seated. He had the power to stand up. He could do just what he wanted to then. When I asked him to stand up he could have remained seated. But he sat there a moment. I can tell you what went through his mind. "I wonder what Henry is going to do? Why did he pick on me?"

But he thought a minute. "Well, it is not going to hurt me to stand up," so he got up and he stood up. He had the power to do it. He had the force to do it. He had the ability to do it. He had the strength to do it.

If we didn't have that we would be...Joe, we would be dead logs. We would be tin cans.

The men who crucified Christ had the power to do it. They had the strength to do it. They had the hammer in their hands and the nails in their hands and they did it. We are free agents. We have the power and the right. You are an agent. Look it up in the dictionary. It is an agency of the activity or action. It is force. It is power. It is movement. And we are free to do that. I am free if I want to jump over this thing right now. I would make a fool out of myself. I would hurt myself, but there is nobody...you are not going to stop me, are you?

And there is no power to hold me back. There is no power to pull me over. I am a free agent. I can stand up here and take off all my clothes in front of all these people. I am a free agent. That's right. I can run out in front of a truck. I am a free agent. That is what we are talking about in free agency. We have no power or force to keep us from acting or speaking or doing what we wish to do.

Now, then, free will. Ed Barrow charges [?]. He has got a pocket knife in his pocket. You borrow it and stab it into him, just cut her throat. Now you are not going to do that, are you? He is not going to do that. He did the first thing I said to do. Why doesn't he do the second thing? He doesn't have the will to do that. That is against his nature. He loves her too much. Now he has the strength to do it. He has the power. He is bigger than she is. He is stronger than she is. He could right now take a knife if he had the will to do it and cut her heart out. But he doesn't have the will to do it.

Now listen to me. Here is the illustration. Sinner, receive Christ. Love Christ. Crown Christ the Lord of your life. Can he do it? He certainly can, if he had the will, Charlie. He doesn't have the will to do it. He doesn't have the will. He doesn't have the desire. He doesn't want to crown Christ. You can say to a believer, like I said to Ed Barrow, "Curse Jesus Christ."

"I will not do it. I will not do it. I do not have the will to. I don't have the heart to. I love Christ."

"Well, praise Christ."

"I'll do that now. I have got that will. Praise the Lord."

All right a lost man, a dead sinner, he is a free agent. He can come to church. He can say just like you the songs that you sing. He can read the Bible as you read it. He can see that the gospel as you see it. He can hear the invitation as you hear it, but there is no way that he can crown Christ and enthrone Christ and receive Christ and believe Christ. Why? He does not have the will. He does not have the desire. He does not have the want to.

Who makes the difference?

Turn to Psalm 110 verse three, Psalm 110 verse three, Psalm 110 verse three. Now listen to this. "Thy people, thy people, people who love God," Psalm 110 verse three, people

who love Christ. People who bow to Christ, people who exalt Christ, people who love his gospel shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the day of thy power.

God has to do an operation in the beauty of holiness from the womb of the... God has to do an operation on these wills of our that are bound in sin. We have a will to do evil, not the will to do good. If God did not choose you, you would never choose him. You don't will to do it. If God did not call you, you would never call on him. You don't have the will to do it. If God almighty did not come to you and woo you and draw you, you would never come to him.

Now that is free agency, free will illustrated. I said to Ed, "Stand up." And he had the strength and the power and the ability to get to his feet and to sit back down. There was no restraining forth. And that is the same way with me and you. We are free agents. We can go out in the cold. We can come into the warmth. We can go to church and stay away from church. We can curse and swear or we can speak plainly or righteously. We can do those things. There is nobody puts words in my mouth and forces me to do these things. I am a free agent. But my will, by nature... When I told him to take the life of his precious daughter, no way, no way. That is not his will. That is not his desire.

And the very demons of hell would have to fill him and twist his mind and change his mind. Think what an operation it would require on him to get him to do a thing like that. It would take the very forces of hell to do it, powerful forces. And that is the same thing that must be done to get a sinner to bow to Christ. It takes the forces of God. It takes the power. It is against our nature. It is against our will to enthrone Christ. We love self. We don't love God. We love darkness. We don't love light. We love evil. We don't love holiness. We love sin. We don't love truth. And that is the reason Christ said to Nicodemus, "You have to be born again." There has to be a complete reversal of your nature. There has to be a new nature and a new will to make you love what you hate and to make you hate what you love.

Does that help you? That is the necessity of election. That is the reason God must choose. And that sinner has as much aversion to crowing Christ as Ed had to killing his daughter. So that is just as much aversion, there is just as much rejection. It would take just...it takes the power of God to make him do what he doesn't like to do.

Some of you can go...I had a young lady write me and she listens to my tapes and she says this. She said, "When you come to the end of a message and you say, 'I must quit.'" She said, "I wish you wouldn't quit." But she said, "I remember the day when I wished the preacher would quit before he got started because I just detested to listen to preaching." The nature is different.

Election is sovereign. God said, "I will have mercy on whom I will. Election is free. Whatever may be God's reason for choosing you it is not found in you. It is found in him. Election is irreversible. The gifts and calling of God are without change." God said, "I am the Lord, therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Election is effectual. He said whom he foreknew he predestinated. Whom he predestinated he called. Whom he called he justified. Whom he justified he glorified. And election is personal, personal. The Lord knoweth them that are his.

All right here is the second point and I have got to move along. What are the defenses of the doctrine of election? Now remember under the first head, what is election, the cause of it, the motive of it, the reason for it is found in God, not in the creature. The necessity for it is found in the creature. While he is a free agent and while he does not have any restraining forces to keep him from acting, he does not have the will to act. He doesn't have the will to act. He loves darkness. And God has to act upon him. He has to change his nature, give him a new nature.

Now what are the defenses of election, that which God did against attacks, against abuse and misuse? Now if you will remember this will help you when you are talking about the doctrine of election to guard against misuse and abuse. First of all, now listen to this. This is true. Election is not a doctrine understood at the beginning of your spiritual life. Election is not a doctrine which is understood at the beginning of your spiritual life, not normally, not usually. You don't teach the child math by beginning with algebra. You don't teach a child math by beginning with trigonometry. You start with one and one are two. Two and two are...that is where you start. And even so you begin at the wrong end when you try to know your election before you know anything about repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now you are starting at the wrong end.

Where a sinner starts is, "Oh, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner." The publican in the temple, what did he know about original sin. What did he know about elective grace? What did he know about persevering power? He knew two things. That he was a sinner and he had sinned against God and he wanted mercy and he cried for mercy. That is where you start. You start with your sin. You start with your need. You start with repentance. You start with faith. You start with the blood of Christ. You start with trusting the redeemer. That's where you start. And it as God the Holy Spirit enables you to study his Word and grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ you come to that place where you give diligence and endeavor to make your calling and election sure.

Well, one of the first things you make sure is your repentance and your faith, your repentance toward God and your faith in Christ. That is the important thing.

Secondly, that hedge is about the doctrines of grace, the doctrine of election. It is not something you teach babes in Christ. It is not something you understand before you understand mercy. You understand mercy before you understand election.

And then, secondly, election is not inconsistent with the promises of mercy and God's Word. The Bible does not say, "Ho, everyone that is elect come ye to the waters." What does it say? It says, "Ho, everyone that is athirst, come to the waters."

The Bible does not say, "Come unto me all ye that are elect and I will give you rest." It says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden." That is where the sinner

starts. He doesn't know anything about the decrees of God. He knows something about God's judgment and God's wrath.

The Bible does not say, "He that is elect hath eternal life." It says, "He that believeth hath everlasting life." You are to be concerned with being thirsty. You are to be concerned with being laboring and heavy laden. You are to be concerned with believing on Christ.

The Bible does not say, "Whosoever is elect and calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." It just says, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." That is what it saves. We have been commanded by our Lord to preach the gospel to every creature. He says, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." And he did not add, "When you find one of the elect he shall be saved and you tell him the good news that he is saved."

No, sir. He says, "You go preach the gospel to every creature and he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. And he that believeth not shall be damned."

That hedges about the doctrine of election and keeps people from abusing it and attacking it and misusing it. You want Christ? Come on. The doctrine of election holds no one back from coming to Christ. It prevents no one from coming to Christ. It enables men to come to Christ. It is not the sinner's enemy. Election is a sinner's best friend.

And then, thirdly...now get this. This is so important. Election does not deliver us—and this is one of the charges brought against it. This is what the enemies of God's grace bring a railing accusation against it on this basis. Election, being one of the elect, does not deliver you from your responsibility to believe on Christ nor does it deliver you from your responsibility to walk in holiness and in obedience to God's Word.

Now here are three important things. My business and your business is not with the decrees and counsel of God, but with the Christ of God. That is who I do business with. This is the work of him that sent me. This is the work of God. They asked Christ. They said, "How shall we work the works of God?"

He said, "This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom God hath sent. That is your first responsibility."

Your first responsibility is not to dig in to the decrees of God and dig into the deep counsels of God and dig into the purposes of God from before the foundation of the world. Your responsibility is to see Christ and to love Christ and to believe on Christ and to worship Christ. That is your responsibility.

Anyway, secondly, we go to Christ first and then to the Father. You can't get to the decrees of God without going to Christ because all of the decrees of God are in Christ. That's right. We go to the cross and then to the decrees. We go to redemption and then to election. We receive Christ and then we receive the rights of sonship.

He said, "To as many as received him, to them gave he the rights to become sons of God." He didn't say, "Those that have the right to become sons of God receive Christ." No, sir. It says, "To as many as received Christ to them gave he the rights of sonship."

You don't start with the decrees. That brings me to the third thing. You don't arrive at Christ through doctrine. You don't learn the doctrines and then come to Christ. This is one of the most deadly, deadly, dangerous things and position a person can get in is to become a Calvinist before he becomes a Christian. You are in trouble. You are in real trouble. When you become a person that has got the answers, you know the decrees, you know the teachings, you know the purposes, you know all those things. Without Christ you have got a wrong Christ on those things because none of the decrees of God or the purposes of God or the counsel of God can be interpreted except in the person of Christ. Now that is so. That sinner is...

"No man knoweth the Father." Watch this, now. And when you talk about understanding election and you are not saved, you don't understand election. You have got a perversion of it.

Well, you say, "I believe in predestination."

"Are you saved? Are you a child of God? Do you love...?"

"Well, no. I have never been converted."

You don't know anything about predestination. You don't know. You are as dumb as dumb can be. You are as perverted in your doctrine as you can be. It is impossible for a man who does not know Christ to understand the counsel and the decrees and purposes of God because they are interpreted in Christ.

I am telling you the truth. "No man knoweth the Father except the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal him." Isn't that what the Scripture says?

All right. The Father, that is his attributes, that's his characteristics, that's his purposes, that's his will, that's his plan. And do you mean to tell me you understand those things and you don't know the Son? Well, you have got a perverted doctrine. You have got a twisted doctrine. That is the reason there are so many of what we call Calvinistic preachers who don't preach the grace of God as the Scripture teaches. They haven't learned Christ yet.

A man cannot learn the decrees until he learns Christ. He cannot learn the counsel of God until he comes to the Christ of God. "No man cometh to the Father but by me," Christ said. "I am the way. I am the truth. I am the life." A man cannot know the truth who does not know Christ. And when you start discussing the purposes of God and the sovereignty of God in election and the decrees of God with an unsaved man, you are in trouble, too, because there is no way that that man can understand those things except as he sees the beauty and the glory of Jesus Christ. That's right. He can't do it. No way.

And that is the reason a lot of times I go somewhere to preach and people want to hear me preach on election and predestination and these things and most of the folks in the congregation are unsaved. They don't need to hear election. They need to hear sin and judgment and wrath and law and Christ and redemption and the cross and the blood. Those are the things that hedge it about.

What are they? Briefly, first of all it is this. Election is not a doctrine understood at the beginning of the spiritual life. Secondly, election is not inconsistent with the promises of God's mercy. And, thirdly, election does not deliver us from our responsibility to believe on Christ and to walk in obedience to God's Word and walk in holiness before the Lord.

Now, thirdly, what are the evidences of election? Well, look at 1 Thessalonians four. Let's look at our text here. What are the evidences? Our text says in verse four, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God." Our text says that the apostle knew the election of these people. He knew they were elect. How did he know it? How did he know that they were elect? The way that the apostle knew their election is the way we can know ours.

All right. Look at verse five. Number, "Our gospel, the gospel of Christ, the gospel of redemption did not come to you in word only." That is the way most people hear the gospel, word, word, word. It is a Bible of words. It is a oratory of words. It is enticing words of men's wisdom, intellectual words. It is argumentative words. It is debatable words. It is just words.

But he said, "You heard the gospel in power, power to convince you of sin and power to break your heart and power to crush your rebellion and power to reveal Christ and power to bring faith and power to rest in Christ with confidence and assurance. You heard the gospel in power. You heard the gospel in the Holy Ghost. You heard the gospel in much assurance, life changing, thought changing, attitude changing."

Do you see that? That is the power of God. That is the way you heard the gospel. Then he said in verse six, "And you became followers of us and of the Lord." You became followers of his Word. You became followers of his ministry. You became followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. "My sheep hear my voice, hear my voice. They don't hear just words. They hear him speak through his words. They hear him speak in power and they become followers." He said, "They hear my word and they follow me. They follow me."

All right, thirdly, verse seven. "So that you were ensamples or examples, you became examples to other people in your conduct and in your conversation, in your attitude, in your behavior. God did something for you and your life was changed. You are not perfect. I am not. Nobody else is on this earth. But you are growing in grace and you are showing forth the love of Christ and the mercy of Christ and you are showing...people can see that you are different. God has done something for you. You became examples.

Verse eight. You became missionary. “Far from you sounded out the Word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia where you live, but also in every place your faith to God is spread abroad.” You became interested in other people. You witnessed to them and played tapes for them. You gave books to them and you told them what God had done for you. You became a witness for Christ.

And then verse nine the last line says, “You turned from your idols. You turned from your idols.” We had our own particular brand of idols. Some of us worship our children. Some worship ourselves and some worship the things of this world and some worship pleasure and entertainment and some worship this that and the other. But you turned from idols to serve the living God. Christ became your Lord and your master and your king. He became more interested in him and his Word and his way than you did anything else in this world.

And, verse 10, you were waiting for the Son of God. You are waiting for him to come or to call you home. You are waiting, waiting.

All right the fourth thing quickly. And I will close with this. What are the effects of the doctrine of election? What are the effects? I will give you five or six. What does election do? First of all it brings joy to the heart. I tell you this. I am glad God chose me. Oh, I tell you. I’m glad he didn’t pass me by. I’m glad he didn’t leave me to myself, to my own choice, to my own way, to my own will. I am glad that he made me willing in the day of his power. I am glad he came to the dungeon and darkness and death of sin and gave me light and life and truth and caused me to want him.

Our Lord Jesus when he mentioned election he said, “You hid these things from the wise and prudent, but you revealed them to babes. I thank you, Father.” Paul said, “We are bound to give thanks that God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation.” It brings joy to the heart.

Secondly, it promotes humility. It promotes humility. The proudest people on this earth are those people who think that God can’t get along without them. The proudest people on this earth are those who think they are doing something for God. They are serving God. They are laboring in the kingdom of God. They are winning souls to Jesus. They are giving their tithe. They are holding out and holding and holding out and being faithful and keeping on keeping on.

“Who makes you to differ?” 1 Corinthians 4:7. “What do you have you didn’t receive? Now if you received it, why do you glory as if you didn’t receive it?”

David said, “Lord, who am I and what is my house that you should show such mercy to us.”

Mephibosheth said, “Oh who am I, King David, that you should show mercy to such a dead dog.”

Election promotes humility. I realize that everything I have, everything I know, everything I am, everything I ever hope to be is by the free grace and mercy of God not because of anything I have ever said, done, given, thought or known or will know. It is by the free gift of God's grace. He did it according to the good pleasure of his will. Not because of anything he will receive in return from me or anything he saw in me.

Thirdly, election gives comfort in hard trials. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." I know that. And if God almighty is pleased to come down tonight and take the dearest thing on this earth away from me, I look up to him and I hope to say with Job, "Though he slay me I will trust him. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Well, brother, we can say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord as long as God is giving." But can you say it when God taketh? "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Not, "The Lord giveth. Blessed be the name of the Lord. The Lord giveth. Blessed be the name of the Lord." "The Lord taketh. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Well, a man who knows that God orders his life and God almighty controls his life and God almighty [?] his life, he can bless the Lord in the hardest trials, in the most severe trials. It brings comfort. It is the only place you can find comfort.

And then, fifthly, it gives God the glory. In the fourth place it gives God the glory. "God hath chosen the foolish things to confound the wise. God hath chosen the things that are nothing to bring to naught the things that are that no flesh should glory in his presence," 1 Corinthians 1:26 through 29.

He called us to the praise of the glory of his grace. I tell you something else it does. Election gives assurance. Because I know this. Do you know who is going to be glorified? Those whom he calls. Do you know who is going to be called? Those whom he justified. Do you know who is going to be justified? Those whom he predestinated. Do you know who he predestinated? Those he knew. That gives me assurance.

If God be for me, who can be against me? "Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Romans 8:29 through 34. "Who is he that he condemneth? God justified me. God chose me. Christ died for me. The Holy Spirit called me. There is not a force or a power on heaven, earth or hell that can catch me if that is true of me. If God foreknew me, predestinated me and justified me and called me. He will glorify me. Not a doubt about it. You can't break that chain. He gives me assurance.

And then it sends a man to the prayer closet. Now men may preach, "Sinner, save thyself." But do you what men must pray? "God, be merciful to me a sinner."

A fellow might rant and rave and stomp and stutter and fume and holler, "Sinner, save thyself," but when he goes to prayer, "God be merciful." A man may preach free will, but he has to pray, "Thy will be done."

A man may preach to try to get witnesses and preachers and soul winners, but when he prays he has to pray that the Lord of the harvest will raise up laborers and send them forth. A man may preach the dignity of men, but when he prays he has to pray, "Forgive my sins." A man may preach the faithfulness of man, but when he prays he has to pray, "Unto him that is able to keep us from falling, unto him be the glory."

And then what will election do? In the last place it will make a man endeavor to be like Christ. We love him. Why? He first loved us. We are kind. "Be ye kind, one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another." Why? "As God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

We are merciful. Christ said, "Be ye merciful as your Father in heaven is merciful."

We witness and preach. Why? Peter said, "We can't help but tell those things that we have seen and heard."

It has to happen in here. And when it happens in here it begins to show out here.

What are the effects of election? It is a doctrine for which I give the deepest and the most heartfelt thanks to God. The friend of sinners, the open door to sinners, the mercy of God.

Our Father, we are thankful that you did not leave us to our own wills, but you made us willing. You did not leave us to our own desires, but you gave us desires and a panting after thee. You did not leave us to our own understanding. There is a way that seems right and the end is death and destruction. But you sent your Son to give us an understanding, the true God in eternal life. You chose us and loved us in Christ, predestinated us to be conformed to his image, redeemed us by his precious blood, gave us a perfect holiness and righteousness and called us by your Spirit out of darkness into the light of Christ. And we have the promise and assurance and confidence that all whom you called you will glorify.