

## THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

### Chapter 3-Of God's Eternal Decree.

IV. These Angels and men thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain, and definite, that it cannot be either increased, or diminished.<sup>1</sup>

---

Question 1—*Is the election of certain men to salvation constant and immutable?*

*Answer*—Yes, the orthodox confess and acknowledge one complete and decisive election; not indefinite (of men believing and persevering), but definite of a certain number of men destined to obtain salvation by and on account of Christ, 2 Tim. 2:19.

Question 2—*Is the decree of election so sure and immutable that the elect must necessarily and infallibly be brought to salvation at last?*

*Answer*—Yes. The reasons are: 1.) There is the same reason of the decree of election as of the other decrees of God, which are immutable, Ps. 33:11; Num. 23:19; Mal. 3:6; Jas. 1:17. “My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure,” Isa. 46:10—where with immutability of decree is noted the infallibility of the event. Hence Scripture attributes to election “immutability of counsel,” Heb. 6:17, and “the purpose which stands,” Rom. 9:11. Elsewhere it testifies that “the gifts and callings of God are without repentance,” Rom. 11:29. If, in truth, the gifts and callings which flow from election are without repentance, why should not election itself (the cause) also be without repentance? Here belongs that passage in 2 Tim. 2:19. 2.) The elect cannot be seduced, Matt. 24:24. That is to say that “if it were possible,” if any power could prevail against election, 1 Pet. 1:5; John 10:28, 29. 3.) There is an inseparable chain between election and glory, so that as many as are elected will also be glorified, Rom. 8:29, 30. Note that the order begins with election flows through the individual gifts and graces, and proceeds to eternal salvation—from eternity to eternity. This is confirmed by Paul, in Rom. 11:7. It is salvation which they obtained, Acts 13:48. 4.) The names of the elect are written in heaven, in the book of life, from which they cannot be erased, Phil. 4:3; Rev. 13:8; Heb. 12:23. Therefore, it is that Christ orders his disciples not to rejoice that spirits were subject to them but that their names were written in heaven, Luke 10:20.

Question 3—*Does the certainty of election take away the need for threatens and warnings in Scripture?*

*Answer*—No. Since the certainty of an end does not exclude the necessity of means (but supposes it), the doctrine of the immutability of election is falsely said to take away the utility of warnings and threatenings (which are the means instituted by God for the execution of the decree) and to foster carnal security, Heb. 10:26, 27. Hence, the same saints who most certainly assure themselves of constancy in life and the enjoyment of heaven, do not cease to strive to “work out” their salvation because they know that “without holiness, no man shall see heaven,” Phil. 2:12. “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself,” 1 John 3:3; *cf.* 1 Cor. 9:26; Phil. 3:14; Heb. 12:14. Thus appears

---

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. 2:19; John 13:18.

the wickedness of those who reason from the certainty of election that they may live how they will, 2 Pet. 1:10.

Question 4—*Can the believer be certain of his own election with a certainty not only conjectural and moral, but infallible and of faith?*

*Answer*—Yes. 1.) Believers can know they are the sons of God and believe; therefore, they can know that they are elected because adoption and faith are infallible fruits of election, Rom. 8:15, 16; *cf.* 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 John 2:3. 2.) As from eternity, God inscribed the names of the elect in the “book of life;” as in “the book of the Scriptures,” he records his promises to confirm our faith; so, in “the book of conscience,” and in the tables of the heart, by his Spirit, 2 Cor. 3:3; Jer. 31:33, he copies the transcript of our election. 3.) It is confirmed by the “sealing of the Holy Spirit,” Rom. 8:16; Eph. 4:30; *cf.* 1 Cor. 2:12. 4.) The examples of the saints, Rom. 4:18, 19, 21; Ps. 16:8; 23:6; Rom. 8:38, 39.