

God's Election

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: Romans 8:29-33

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All right. Open your Bibles now to Romans chapter eight, Romans the eighth chapter.

Last Wednesday night, many of you were here, I brought a message on the subject: "How to meet, How to Deal with the Doctrine of Election." That message is on cassette tape. You can get it from the tape director, brother Trabant.

As I was talking to many of the people after the service they said to me, "We wish you had not left out the middle point in that message." The message was entirely too long and I had to leave out the middle section of the message, the title of which was: "The Doctrine of Election Accurately Stated."

Well, I had so many comments on the message and orders for the message and a desire to hear more about the message that I am preaching this morning on the subject: God's Election, God's Election. And I am reading from Romans eight, Romans chapter eight, the subject: God's Election.

And Romans chapter eight, I'll begin reading with verse 28. I want you to notice one thing in particular while I am reading these verses. The most significant fact in these verses of Scriptures is that all things are of God. That is the most significant thing in these verses here. All things are of God. It is his purpose. You notice that as we read it. It is his purpose, called according to his purpose. It is God who knew us, who loved us, not we who loved God.

All right, notice it. Verse 28:

"And we know." This we know, "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow." That word is "foreordained." God knows something because God is able to bring it to pass. That's how he knows it because he purposes it and plans it and decrees it. That's how he knows it.

"For whom he did foreknow." You know he said at the judgment, in Matthew seven, to those who pleaded their works he said, "I never knew you, I never knew you."

All right.

“Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.” That’s the final goal of predestination, to be conformed to the image of his Son.

I said the other night some people say, “Well, I don’t believe in predestination.”

You say, “Well, what is it?”

I say, “Well, God predestinated some to heaven and some to hell.”

That’s not what it is at all. Predestination has nothing to do with hell. Predestination has to do with only one thing. And it has to do with this: That God almighty is going to make a people like Christ and he has ordained and predetermined all the means that will be used to make them like Christ. That’s predestination. It’s used four times in the Bible. Every time it refers to we’re predestinated to be like Christ.

He predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son that Christ might be the first born among many brethren, many brethren, from every tribe, kindred, nation, tongue under heaven, a number that no man can number, as the sands of the seashore and as the stars of the sky, many brethren. Not a...

Somebody said, “Well, it’s just a handful.”

Yeah, but whose hand? “No man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.” He holds the nations as a drop in the bucket, the dust in the balance. He holds the nations in his hands. There will be more people in heaven than there will be in hell. You can write that down. Many brethren, they are all going to love the same things he loves and want the same things he wants and delights in the same things he delights in. Many brethren that he might be the first born. But he is the first born. He is the first begotten of the dead. He is the first born of many brethren.

All right. Read on. “Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. Now what shall we say to these things?” What’s your remark? Well, there are a lot of bad remarks have been made. What’s your judgment? What’s your remark? What’s your conclusion? What do you have to say?

Well. Paul answers. He said, “I’ll tell you this is what I’ve got to say. If God be for me, if God be for me, if God be for me, if God be for me in his purpose, in his foreordination, in his predestinating decrees, in his divine calling, in his complete justification and in his glorification who on earth, heaven or hell can be against me? What can man do to me?”

Robert Haldane had this to say. He is one of the best writers on the book of Romans, dead many years. Robert Haldane said, “In looking at this Scripture I observed this: That man acts no part at all. It says, ‘whom he foreknew he predestinated. Whom he predestinated

he called. Whom he, called he justified. Whom he justified, he glorified.’ All of that is done by God. He did it.”

Men are elected, predestinated, called, justified and glorified by God. God has purposed. God has undertaken for us. And there is no room for chance. There is no room for change.

Turn with me to Romans chapter 11, just over a few pages in your Bibles, Romans 11, verse 29, Romans 11:29. Paul said this: “For the gifts...” What are the gifts of God? Eternal life is the gift of God. Christ is the unspeakable gift of God. “For the gifts and calling...” What is the calling of God? That holy calling, that calling you just read about in Romans eight, that’s God’s calling. Whom he called he justified. “The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” What is repentance? Change. There is no change. There is no alteration. It’s immutable.

In Malachi he said this: “I am the Lord. I change not. Therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed.”

God will fulfill his purpose in Christ toward his elect and this is the foundation of our confidence and our assurance and our comfort that God doesn’t change, that his purposes do not change, that his gifts and calling are without change.

Another significant thing that I notice about these verses, the first of which is this: That this all things are of God. Man has no part in it. Man would mess it up somewhere so he has no part in it. The second thing is this. I notice the manner in which these mercies follow one another, how they follow one another, how one leads to another, how one prepares the way for another.

Look back at the text again, verse 29. God’s purpose leads the way. “For whom he did foreknow.” That’s his purpose, his election. That leads the way. That comes first. The cause of all things is found in God. “Every good gift and perfect gift is from God. A man can receive nothing except it be given him from above.” Is that not correct? So it all starts with God. It starts with his purpose, with his calling, with his decree, with his election. And it is followed by predestination charting the path.

God’s goal is to have Joseph on the throne in Egypt. Is that correct? That’s God’s objective. That’s God’s goal. Well, here Joseph is much beloved son in his father’s house, but he has 11 brothers, 10 of which despise him. And Joseph is given by his father a very beautiful, multi colored coat. And he goes out to where his brothers are working in the field and he is standing there in his fancy coat and his brothers are looking at him despising him. And he adds to their wrath by telling them he had a dream that all of them someday would worship him or pay honor and tribute to him. And that just put the fat in the fire and they got madder and so one of them said, “Let’s kill him. Let’s kill the little so and so.”

And so they were going to kill him and one of his brothers said, “Don’t kill him. Don’t kill him. You’ll bring our father’s gray hairs down to the grave. Don’t kill him.” He pled for him.

So they cast him in a pit. They tried to decide what they were going to do with him and by chance, accidentally, some Egyptians came that way. And the brothers said, “Well, let’s sell him to the Egyptians into slavery.” And so they sold him into slavery and bid him good bye, see him no more.

So they took his coat and they tore it to shreds and they killed a lamb. They put blood all over his coat and they went back to the house and they said, “Here is Joseph’s coat. He must be dead.”

And the father just grieved and he thought he was dead. He didn’t see him for many, many years. He thought he was dead.

And he...and Joseph went down into Egypt into slavery and he worked for a fellow and he got in trouble there and they put him in jail. And while he is in jail he ran into the baker and the butcher from the king’s palace who had a dream.

All of these things happened and Joseph wound up on the throne. And when his brethren came and Joseph revealed himself to his brethren after all these years, this is the way he summed up the whole thing: All of the hatred and all of the misunderstandings and all of the slavery and all of the prison time and all of this plotting and planting and all that men dispose to do, Joseph summed it up this way: “You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.”

And God predestinated all these things that took place in the life of Joseph to bring him to the throne. And that’s what this is saying here. God’s decree leads the way. God’s purpose leads the way and God’s predestination follows and says, “I’ll chart the course. I’ll chart the path. I’ll predetermine everything that is going to happen in that sinner’s life so that he will be like Christ and reign with him forever.”

And I don’t know what it would be. Maybe you are moving to Ashville or moving somewhere else or losing your job or losing a child or something. Whatever God accomplishes in a man or woman’s life. It may be a divorce. It may be a death in the family. I don’t know what it will be. But somehow, like Joseph of old, when all of this disappointment and some happiness and some mountains and some valleys and some struggles and some successes and some failures and all these things was to accomplish God’s purpose in putting him on the throne...and whatever happens in your...if you are one of God’s elect, if you are one of God’s people, if you are one of his own, somehow, somewhere, someway through some man, you are going to hear the true gospel of Jesus Christ. And whatever way that God has determined for you to hear it is up to him. But you are going to hear it. You are not going to hear it with these ears only, but with a heart. You are going to hear it with a heart. You are going to believe it. You are going to receive it. You are going to love it. You are going to embrace it. You are going to

identify with it. You are going to walk in it. And you are going to wind up with Christ on the throne in glory.

I don't know the path he has charted for you. I don't even know the one he has charted for me, but I know who charted it.

[gap in recording]

...the one on the throne was holding the book and that book is the decrees and the purposes and the will from all eternity of a covenant God. And he said, "Who is able to open the book?" And no one was found able to open the book. And one was found. He's the Lamb slain. He is the Lord Jesus Christ. And he walked right up and took the book out of the hand of him on the throne and opened it and fulfilled every jot and tittle in it and redeemed his people.

I don't know how you are going to hear the gospel, but you are going to hear it. I don't know when you are going to hear it, but you are going to hear it if you are one of his own because he has charted the path. He has predestinated you to be like Christ and you are going to be like Christ. And you are going to be like Christ willingly and lovingly and obediently. And you are going to want to be like Christ more than you want to live, more than you want anything under God's shining sun. You want to be like Christ.

And he did that.

So you notice this procession. Here comes God's purpose. Here comes God's election. Here comes God's predestination. And here comes God's call. He calls you. He said, "My sheep will hear my voice."

They said, "Well, if you be the Christ tell us plainly."

He said, "I told you and you didn't believe me because you are not my sheep. My sheep will hear my voice. And I know them and they will follow me."

That's right. Here comes divine call. Here comes the miraculous effectual call of the Holy Spirit calling out his people and all whom he calls out here comes justification to wash them and cleanse them and purify them and reconcile them and sanctify them and redeem us. Here comes justification. Nobody walking in this procession accept those washed in the blood.

That's right. Redeemed by Christ, sanctified, perfectly holy, perfectly holy.

And then, completing the procession: glorification. When this old flesh and this...these old infirmities and these old weaknesses and all of this thing regarding this body of death shall be laid aside and triumphantly God's purpose is accomplished. God's decree is fulfilled. God's predestination is revealed. And every one of us are made like Christ.

And you notice something. None of these things...it says, "Whom he foreknew he predestinated; whom he predestinated, he called; whom he called, he justified; whom he justified, he glorified." Paul is not apologizing for one of these.

It will be this grand, triumphant, victorious procession. None of them come along apologetically, you know, sneaking around the building, sneaking around the tree, limping around, doubtful, don't know whether it is going to show up or not. No, sir. Each one comes victorious.

Whom he foreknew, he predestinated. Whom he predestinated, he called. Whom he called, he justified. Whom he justified, he glorified.

What are you going to say to that?

Well, I say, "If God be for me, who can be against me?" I like it. I rejoice in it. I preach it. I believe it. It's the ground of my confidence.

If my glorification depends in any measure, shape, form or fashion in any point of time, I'm a goner if it depends on me. And you are, too. You are, too.

You can't snore me. You may yourself, but I know you. You're a goner because to fail in one point of God's requirement is to destroy the whole thing.

I'll tell you another thing about this as I read this. There are no "ifs."

"Whom he foreknew, he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son if they believe." There are no ifs in there, no buts, no perhaps, no maybes, no force in heaven, earth or hell can change his decrees. If God be for us who can be against us? Having purposed, he predestinated. Having predestinated, he called. Having called, he justified. Having justified, he glorified. No ifs, ands, buts or maybes. It shall be done.

Oh, I like that.

Turn to Isaiah 46. This is the God of the Bible I'm preaching this morning. This is not the God of present day religion. This is not that poor little pitiful God that wants to and can't, desires to and men won't let him. This is not a defeated frustrated God who is standing off somewhere wondering if men will let him have his way. This is the God of Isaiah.

Verse nine, chapter 46, listen to it, Isaiah 9:46: "Remember the former things of old. I'm God. There is none else. I'm God."

Can you understand that?

"There's none like me. I declare the end from the beginning. I declare from ancient times the things that are not yet done saying, 'My counsel will stand. I will do all my

pleasure calling a ravenous bird from the east, a man that executeth my counsel from a far country, even a Pharaoh, I'll raise him up to accomplish my purpose. Yea, I have spoken it. I bring it to pass. I purpose it. I do it. I do it."

Is that your God?

They said to David, "Where is your God?"

I like that Psalm 115. Turn over there and let's listen to David, Psalm 115. They said, "We know where our gods are. We know where our gods are. They are where we let them be. They are doing what we let them do. They are where we put them."

Psalm 115, verse four: "Their gods are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they don't speak. Eyes have they, but they don't see." Only eyes God's got your eyes. That's what they tell me, the God of present day religion. He's got know eyes.

"They have ears, but they don't hear. Noses, but they don't smell. They have hands, but they handle not. Feet they have, but they walk not. Neither speak they through their throats and those that make them are like to them, so is everyone that trusteth in these false gods."

Now, look back at verse one.

"Not unto us, oh Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory for thy mercy and thy truth's sake. Wherefore should the heathen say, 'Where is your God? Where is now their God?'"

And David answers, "Our God is in the heavens. He hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."

That's our God. The pleasure of the Lord is accomplished.

You know, men, being what they are, men being what they are we can anticipate many objections when we announce that we are going to preach on God's Election. I have heard them all through the years. I don't think anybody here could offer me one objection to a message on election that I haven't heard. I've heard about all of them.

Somebody says this, "Well, why preach on such a profound controversial subject as election?"

Well, I'll answer that very simply: Because it is in God's Word. We have orders from headquarters to preach the Word. The apostle Paul, speaking to the elders at Ephesus, said, "I kept back nothing profitable unto you. I've not shunned to declare unto you all the council of God."

I preach the doctrine because it is the Word of God. I dare not do otherwise. I preach it because my Savior preached it, because his apostles preached it; divine election.

Get your concordance and find out how many times it is in the Bible: elect, election and elected, many, many times; more than the new birth.

I tell you. Here is another objection. “Well, all right, preacher. Granted. Granted, this is in the Bible. Election, predestination is in the Bible. But shouldn’t you keep back these deep theological truths from the common people and let you preachers and theologians settle these issues?”

That sounds real humble, but that is one of the grossest errors that have ever laid hold on anybody’s thinking. This is popish doctrine. This is what the Catholic Church used for hundreds of years in the dark medieval ages and kept the people in religious slavery. “Don’t teach the Word to the people. Keep it up in the monastery and let the theologians decide about it and let them throw you a bunch of garbage.”

This is religious slavery. I’ll tell you what I intend to do. This is a free pulpit. By God’s grace, Bruce Crabtree, this is a free pulpit. It’s not bound by any denomination. It is not bound by any federation, by any association. It is not bound by any identification with any group, organization or cause. This is a free pulpit to preach the Word of the living God. It is not controlled by any force in any other city or by any force in the pew out there either. This is a free pulpit. And we have gone verse by verse through this entire New Testament, word for word and verse by verse. Isn’t that right, Cecil?

Free. Absolutely free. It is absolutely free to preach the glory of God almighty in the person and work of Jesus Christ. We are not on any crusade or campaign to appease anyone or win anybody’s applause or support or friendship. We are here to glorify God almighty by his grace. And that is the reason God has blessed it. And God will bless it.

Preach the Word and religious slavery is to keep back any thing that is in the Word of God from the people.

“Yeah, but preacher, thirdly, aren’t some doctrines dangerous?”

My friends, truth is never dangerous. And anything that gives God the glory, all the glory, is not dangerous. Do you know what is dangerous? Error, manipulation, conniving, conformity, that’s dangerous. The truth is not dangerous.

“Well, but preacher,” and here is another one they throw, “Do not some men misuse the doctrines of grace and abuse the doctrines of grace and confuse the doctrines of grace and use it for the wrong purposes?”

Of course they do. Of course they do. This has always been the case in religion. Religious leaders and preachers will take the things of God and use them for their own

purposes and gain. Did you know that? Turn on your television and you will see it today.

But I'm not going to stop preaching the truth because some man abuses it or misuses it or uses it for his own glory and gain. I'm going to continue to tell what the Word of God says. If that were the case we would have to do away with all ropes because some fool hanged himself. You wouldn't be able to carry a pocket knife because somebody stabbed somebody. Or you would have to tear down all the bridges because somebody jumped off of it. Or you couldn't have fire in your home because somebody's home was burned down.

Sinful men have always misused the truth of God. Did you know that?

"Yeah, but preacher, I've heard this. I've heard that some men and women use the doctrines of grace as an excuse for sin. Some people fall into fatalism and they become indifferent to holiness."

Of course they do. But I have found this to be true in 37 years of trying to preach the gospel: Religious people are always looking for an excuse to sin. Did you know that? Not God's people, now. Not God's people. But religious people are always looking for something to justify their sins. That's right.

But I'll tell you this: Charles Spurgeon said one time, "The Sun, oh that magnificent gift of God. The S-U-N, the sun that shines in the heavens, that same sun will ripen a luscious, delicious tomato that graces your table. That same sun will ripen and cause to grow a dirty, smelling, stinking weed. But the fault is not with the sun. It is the nature of the plant."

And this gospel of Jesus Christ properly preached, this gospel of God's purpose and grace and God's redemption in Christ Jesus will ripen and bless and call and redeem and sanctify a child of God, a Son of Adam and at the same time a man over here will misuse it and abuse it, claim to be a believer and live in an obnoxious way, a stinking way. But the fault is not in the gospel. It is in the nature. This man has been given God's nature and that man has got his old Adamic nature. Isn't that right?

"Yeah, but preacher, don't you think you can preach election too much?"

Now, you just tell me how many sermons of election you have ever heard, especially you visitors. Can you think of one you have heard this year? I don't think anybody is over preaching it.

I went up to...I was at a Bible conference one time. A young man was there from somewhere and I said, "Where do you live?" And he told me. I said, "Where do you attend church?" And he told me. I said, "Does your preacher preach the gospel of grace?"

He said, “Yeah, but he don’t harp on it.”

I knew immediately what he meant. He never preaches it.

Yes, sir. You can take any doctrine, I don’t care what it is, exclusively and distort it.

Proportion is beauty. Did you know that? Proportion, that’s beautiful. The prettiest face in the world will become ugly if he is all nose. But you’ve got to have a nose. Isn’t that right? The prettiest face in the world would be ugly if it was all mouth, but you’ve got to have a mouth. And I’ll tell you this: You’ve got to have that message that gives God the glory, his elective grace. Got to have it. You can’t form the beautiful scheme and plan of redemption without God. That’s right.

We preach it. God reveals it.

We preach it. God gives understanding.

We preach it. God calls his people.

Now, let me show you something. Turn to Matthew 11. You see, the doctrine of election accurately stated—now, listen to me—the doctrine of election accurately stated has to do with four things. It has to do with four things. Now let me tell you this just quite frankly and plainly: No one, no one, no one here, no one here is going to understand in any measure what we call election, God’s purposes in salvation, you’re not going to rejoice in it, you’re not going to find joy in it unless you understand four things, four things. Election accurately stated has to do with four things. And our Lord dealt with them here in Matthew 11.

And here are the four things. Number one, the character of God, the character of God. God is sovereign, almighty. We say “Almighty God,” Don’t we? Almighty God. Almighty God. Sovereign God. Got to understand the character of God. Holy God. Just God.

All right, secondly, we’re going to have to understand the character of men: dead, sinful, depraved, unable. As God is absolutely almighty with all power, man spiritually has no power. That’s what Christ said to Pilate. “You have no power over me, no power.”

That’s what he said to the Pharisees. “No man can come to me. No man has the power.”

That’s what he said in John one: “To as many as received him to them gave he the power.”

Do you see what I’m saying? God, all powerful. Man, no power. Spiritually, a dead man has no power, not even to breathe.

Thirdly, to understand election you have got to deal with this: the person and work of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ...Jesus Christ is not an emergency measure. Jesus Christ is not something God came up with when a situation arose. Now, listen to me here. Help listen. You preachers, listen. Jesus Christ is not something God came up with when man fell. The mediatorial kingdom of Jesus Christ, the redeemed kingdom of Jesus Christ, the mediatorial reign of Jesus Christ, the covenant of grace and mercy made with Jesus Christ was made in detail, was made in its decree and declaration and purpose and finality before this world was ever formed or fashioned or made, before man was ever created or ever fell.

That's right. His person, the design of his work, the ones for whom he had died and fulfilled all righteousness was given him by the Father to accomplish before the world ever began. The creation of the world and the fall of man and sin coming into this world was all part of that scheme and that covenant. That's what this book says, all part of it, all permitted by God to accomplish that redemptive work.

He was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Adam's fall did not catch God by surprise. It may have caught your god by surprise because he is one of the lesser gods, but not the all mighty, all knowing God who declares the end from the beginning. The fall was no surprise. It was in his purpose.

Is that right?

Well, it has to be. You've got to give up God if you give up that. If you give up his omniscience, his omnipotence and his omnipresence you've got to surrender your God.

Now, this is just plain...this is not on Scripture, it's common sense. God says, "I believe I'll make a world and hope it stays holy."

Are you kidding? God made the world with the full intention of letting it fall. Now, you've got to say that or give up God. Let's go home. And this eternal mediatorial kingdom was decreed and put into the hands of Christ who was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. And everything God does in time. There is no time with God. God is eternal, everlasting, no beginning, no end. Time is something to do with creatures.

With God 1000 years is a day and a day is 100 years. This world, when it came into being, and this 24 hour day in this sort of thing is something that God made and put into existence and put into being to fulfill that timeless day out yonder called eternity when we will reign with Christ and then time will be no more.

Everything in here that has anything to do with time or days or hours or events or people or creatures or anything God made is to accomplish this kingdom, this mediatorial kingdom that was purposed here and will be enjoyed here, that was decreed here and will be fulfilled here. All of this is just a part of that scheme and plan that God devised. And turn it all over to Christ. And you watch this through the Word. From the time man fell

and he said the seed of the woman, he announced the mediatorial kingdom, the seed of the woman. And all the way through this Bible, the ark floating up there on that judgment on that water, flood water, that's Christ. That passover lamb, the blood on the doors, God passed over at midnight, that's Christ. That lamb lifted up, that's Christ. That brazen serpent, that atonement, everything is Christ all the way through. That King David sitting on the throne is a picture of Christ on his everlasting throne.

I'm telling you the truth. The character of God, the person and work of Christ...what's the fourth thing this election has to do with? It has to do with the regeneration of the Holy Spirit.

Now, look at Matthew 11 and let me show you this. And preachers, today's religious preachers make God sound like one of them. They let on...this character named the pope is over here now with...claims he is the vicar of God.

Do you know what a vicar is? Substitute. Vicarious, substitutionary death. The vicar, in the place of. He is a fraud, a phony, a child of hell. That's exactly right.

And preachers let folks think that they've got all the answers. They don't even know the questions. They are preaching some little silly sentimental emotional God that neither knows what he is doing or he decides what he is doing, just hoping somebody will let him do what he wants to do. But I'm preaching an omnipotent, omniscient almighty God.

And he'll do with you what he wants to. But I'll tell you what you ought to do. You ought to do like the thief on the cross and say, "Lord, when you come into your kingdom, when you come into that everlasting kingdom, when that eternal purpose is accomplished, when your eternal will is fulfilled, when every decree handed down by God from all eternity is done, remember me. I'd sure like to have a part in it. And, Lord, I'll praise you forever if you'll give me a part. Make me one of your own."

Is that what it is all about? No, we are going to decide to let God save us. We're going to walk down the aisle and say we believe six and seven the Baptist preacher, the Methodist preacher. We're going to do our little good deeds and we'll go to heaven when we die.

That's what you think.

God has set out to glorify one person and that is Christ and everybody in him. I'm telling the truth. God has set out to exalt one person, to give one person the preeminence, the glory and the eternal praise. And that's his Son. And we're joint heirs with Christ if we are heirs at all. That's right.

Matthew 11, listen, verse 25. This whole elective purpose and scheme is right here. "At that time Jesus answered and said, 'I thank you, my Father, Lord of heaven and earth, sovereign Lord of heaven and earth.'" There you...there's his character. " 'Because you have hid these things from the smart alecks and the wise and prudent of this world, those

who think they know and don't know. And you have revealed it to babes who don't know and know they don't know.”

There is man.

See that, Rodney?

My Lord rejoices in that day. And he said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth. According to your wise decrees you have hid these things to some and revealed it to others.”

Who did? God did. Is that right? God did it and God revealed it. But the people from whom he hid it and the people to whom he revealed it are people with a problem and that's us. The wise and prudent don't know. But they think they do. And the babes don't know and they know they don't know. But nobody knows. It has to be revealed. Revelation. It has to be revealed.

All right, read on. Matthew 11, read on, verse 26. “Even so, Father, it seemed good in your sight.” To God be the glory. Let him do with his own what he will.

“Hath not the potter power over the clay to make of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?”

“Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated.”

Same lump, same father, same mother, same womb, same time of birth, one lump unto honor, another to dishonor.

Huh? Does he have that right?

This God does.

“Even so, Father, it seemed good in thy sight.” Read verse 27. Now, here is the third...the person and work. “All things, all things in heaven, earth and hell, all things, past present and future, all things spiritual and natural, all things in all kingdoms of all races, all generations and all nations, all people, all things are delivered unto me of my Father.”

When?

“Before the world began. And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father.”

You don't know Christ. “Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son.”

Watch it now. Here it is, “And he to whom the Son will reveal it.”

And do you know what that man will do? Look at next verse. “He will come unto me.”

If the Father ever reveals Christ you will come to him because you are laboring and are heavy laden and weak and weary and worn and sore. You’ll come to Christ. And you know what Christ will give him? Rest. He’ll come.

That’s what I’m talking about. I’m talking about election. If there is no election, there is no salvation. If God is not pleased to reveal it we’ll never come. We’ll never come. God is sovereign. Man is sinful and incapable. Christ is sufficient. And the Holy Spirit will make his people willing. There will be a divine effectual call and it will be through the gospel.

What are the evidences of this election? Turn with me to 1 Thessalonians chapter one.

“How do you know if you are one of the elect, preacher?”

Well, there are several ways. How do you know you are alive?

That’s right. [?] silly. How do I know I’m alive? Give me a straight pin. I can let you know pretty quickly.

How do you know we’re one of the elect? All right, listen to this. 1 Thessalonians 1:4...verse four, “Knowing brethren beloved, brethren beloved of God, your election of God.” How do you know it? Because our gospel, this gospel of truth, not the Baptist gospel or the Methodist gospel, God’s gospel. The gospel of grace and...

“Our gospel didn’t come to you in word only,” arguments and logic and human reasoning and religion and theology and denominational dogma. “Our gospel came to you in power, in the Holy Ghost, in much assurance. You know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.” And verse six, “And you became,” or you came to be, “followers of us and of the Lord having received the Word in much affliction, but with joy of the Holy Ghost.”

And verse seven, “And you were examples,” ensamples is examples. Your life became a life as an example. You began to walk straight and talk straight and live straight. You began to walk with God and live for God. Your life became an example to other believers in your home where you worked, where you shop, where you trade, where you play.

And verse eight, “And from you sounded out the Word of the Lord.” You became a witness. You couldn’t keep this good news in your heart. You had to tell somebody. You became a witness. You just couldn’t keep it.

“Not only where you live in Macedonia, but in every place your faith to God is spread abroad.”

Verse nine: “They themselves show us what manner of entering in we had to you and how you turned from your idols to serve the living God.”

Now, listen to me. Now, I’m not talking about idols like these stone things. I’m talking about this so-called impotent God being preached today. That’s an idol. That’s an idol. You can’t associate with people who do not preach the truth. You can’t worship with them because they are not worshipping the same God you are worshipping. That’s exactly right.

If I come to know the living God I’ll quit going to the temple of Baal. Is that right, darling? That’s exactly right. If I come to know and worship the living God I’ll quit being identified with this weak, spineless, powerless, impotent God being preached today and anybody associated with him. You turn from your idols.

People have got an idea of God that they concocted in these stupid minds. You know that? They didn’t get their knowledge of God from the Word. They got it from “I think, I suppose, I believe.”

Let God be God. Let God speak for himself. God, speak and I will listen. God, speak and I will bow. God, speak and I will obey.

That’s right. “Turn from your idols,” and watch this, “to serve the living and true God.”

There’s just one living God, true God. Our Lord Jesus said that’s what eternal life is: To know the living God. And that’s what David said, “As the deer panteth for the water brooks my soul panteth for thee, the living God.”

I’m tired and weary of a powerless, spineless God. Aren’t you? I’m tired of hearing about him. Our whole country is sold out to it, the worship of a powerless God. But you serve the living God.

Now, last and I’ll close. What are the effects of election? You want me to tell you the effects of this doctrine, this glorious purpose of God? I’ll tell you this: It will bring joy to your heart. It will bring joy to your heart. Yes, it will. My Lord Jesus rejoiced and said, “I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things and revealed them.”

Paul said, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ according as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world.”

Bless God. Bless God. No election, no door for me, no salvation for me. If he had not called me I would have never called on him. If he had not loved me I would have never loved him. If he had not sought me I would have never sought him. Would you? No.

I'll tell you something else. It promotes humility. Why me?

David sat and said, "Lord, who am I and what is my house?"

What do you have that you didn't receive? Paul said that he was the chief of sinners and God saved the chief of sinners.

I'll tell you something else. He gives comfort in real trial. Some of you have had some real trial. Where did you find your comfort? At that trial was according to the will of God for the purpose of God and would bring forth your eternal good. That's where you found your comfort, right? That's right.

You came in and found your wife, first wife dead on the floor from work one day, didn't you? That's pretty tough. That's a tough experience. Just opened the door and walked in and there she lay. How do you take something like that, Jim?

He's on the throne. No accidents with God. No accidents with God.

When you've got to bow to accidents you are in trouble. What if? What if? What if I had done this? What if I had done that? What...

No, sir. And go back to predestination. All of that brought you here to the happiness you now enjoy, to the knowledge of him that you have experienced. Don't question the providence of God. This is the only place you're going to find any comfort is the fact that he did it and he did it right and he did it well and he did it for his glory and he did it for our good. Right?

You better bow to that and quit playing church. I'm tired of people playing church. I'm telling you I played it long enough to recognize every symptom.

There is something else. It gives assurance, Paul said, "Who can condemn me? Christ died. Who is he that condemneth? Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justified me. The preacher didn't do it."

"Well, we had such a lovely service. They baby was lying on a silk pillow and the preacher stood there in that confusing looking robe, you know, and had a red thing hanging off his Bible and he got some water and mumbled some crazy words and sprinkled it and that poor baby's face and called it a covenant."

"Oh, how I spew that out of my mouth." That's what God says. That's organized heathenism. Is that correct? And that's what we need to say about it.

"Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" The preacher didn't bless me. The pope didn't bless me. God blessed me in Christ on purpose.

Is this too hard? I said this is a free pulpit.

You say, "You might get fired, preacher."

Not unless God fires me. Isn't that right? Is that right, Richard? Is that right, Paul?

Just take God. That's two of the oldest ones here. They said, "All right." I know the young ones will say, "All right."

I'll tell you this about this election: It gives God the glory. That's what we are here for, to give God all the glory. You can't give God too much glory.

Now, let me close with this. Believing in election sovereignty will promote prayer. Did you know that? Prayer.

I sat there before I got up here to preach and I realized how helpless and hopeless and unable I am.

I wrote down here, "Lord, help me. The well is empty, but your well is full. Let them drink from your well."

The power is his. And I'll tell you this. You might preach, "Sinner, save yourself." But you can't pray that way. Isn't that right? You've got to pray, "Lord, help him."

You might preach man's will, but when you get on your knees you better say, "God's will be done." Is that right? You can't pray that way. You can preach man's will, but you can't pray that way. You can preach the dignity of man. But you can't pray that way. You've got to say, "Father, forgive me."

Huh?

You can exalt yourself from the pulpit, but you can't from the prayer closet.

So what? Are we different up here and different out there? Are we different before men and different before God? We are hypocrites if we are. Isn't that right? You can't pray that way. You can't exalt yourself before God. Why do you do it before men? You can preach the kingdom is up to us, but you've got to pray, "Lord, send laborers into the field. You are the Lord of the harvest."

You might preach before men what they have done for God. "Oh, we're just so proud of what you have done for God." But in glory it's unto him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his blood, to him be the glory and the praise forever and forever."

"What are you preaching, brother Mahan?"

I'm preaching this: That the whole of the work of salvation from beginning to end, from alpha to omega in recovering a son of Adam from the pit, from the dung hill and mire and

clay of wickedness and sin and translating him into the kingdom of light, in the kingdom of glory and the kingdom of God's dear Son in making him like Christ, the whole of the work from beginning to end is of God and of God only. And when we wind up there in his image we are going to say, "Unto him be the glory."

John, is that right?

To him be the praise both now and forever. Amen.

That's got some teeth in it. And I'll tell you what that will do. That will make disciples. That will give men backbones and courage. To God the glory. Bring men to worship and bring me to believe.