

Sovereign Election (Part 2)

The pain, suffering, and agony Jesus experienced during His Passion defy conceptualization. Sometimes, as Christians, we ask in our hearts, “How did He bear such a burden?” The short answer, the answer that causes tears to well up in our eyes and our hearts to swell, is love. On His way to Calvary, Jesus maintained His path and persevered on the ascent out of love for His Father and love for the ones for whom He came to die. Far from an impersonal act of selflessness, the incarnated Son of God knew each and every individual for whom He offered His body as a sacrifice. Sovereign election finds its root and meaning in this personal, amazing love.

I. God’s Distinguishing Choice

a. John 13:18: Jesus specifically singles out eleven of the apostles as chosen for salvation (with Judas excluded).

i. The word “chosen” refers to a choice with many possibilities

ii. This same word for “chosen” occurs when David chooses five stones from the brook before he faces Goliath, signifying a choice among many options.

iii. The word “chosen” occurs in a middle voice, signifying the activity on the part of the subject for the benefit of the subject.

b. God’s foreknowledge results from His foreordination.

i. God does not exert His will on account of his knowledge of future events.

ii. God’s eternal decree and foreordination necessitates and fosters His foreknowledge.

iii. God does not base His choice on any future sight but out of love for Himself, His Son, and His elect (Rom. 8:29).

II. God’s Purposeful Choice

a. John 15:16: Jesus asserts straightforwardly that the choice of salvation rests in Him alone.

i. This election does not refer to office but every Christian’s salvation.

ii. Election, originating in God, liberates the individual and motivates him/her to serve the Lord in passionate service to His kingdom.

b. John 15:19: Two classifications of people exist in the world.

i. The first classification was of the world, but Jesus plucked the individual out of the world to enter into a loving relationship with Him.

ii. The second classification remains in the world, and for this reason lies under the tyranny of Satan and hates Christ and the truth He manifests.

iii. This revelation should breed thankfulness and humility in the heart of the believer, for all mankind deserves death, and no one merits the free gift of grace.

III. Sovereign Election in the High Priestly Prayer

a. John 17:2: Jesus possesses authority over *all* flesh and *all* whom the Father has given Him.

i. The first reference describes all of humanity.

ii. The second reference describes the elect, further emphasizing the sovereign choice by God in salvation and eternal life.

b. John 17:6, 9: Jesus intercedes and goes to the cross not for the sake of the world but for those who God has called out of the world.

c. John 17:24: Jesus beseeches His Father on behalf of His elect and requests that the Father might preserve them so that they might see His glory and worship Him in heaven for all eternity.

i. The purpose of sovereign election is for the glory of God and the exaltation of the Son, who the elected saints will worship for all eternity.

ii. This should instill joy in the heart of the believer, for nothing can compete with the privilege of worshipping our Savior in heaven for all eternity.

SCRIPTURE READINGS: Jeremiah 1:5; John 1:1–18; 6:37–39; 10:1–21; 13:18; 15:16, 19; 17; Romans 9:1–27; 11:36; 1 Thessalonians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Titus 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1; 2 Peter 1:10