

BRIEFLY CORRECTING ERRANT VIEWS ON DIVINE ELECTION

I. Critiquing The Major Views On Divine Election

(Matthew 5:18)

I. Introduction

- A. Many believers struggle to understand and/or to accept the teachings they hear or read about divine election.
- B. Actually, much error exists on the doctrine, so it needs to be explained in a brief but thorough, Biblical way.
- C. We thus offer a seven-lesson series on election, starting with a critique of the major theological views on it:

II. Critiquing The Major Views On Divine Election, Matthew 5:18.

- A. One major view on divine election is the Arminian (and Amyraldian) view, but it makes election unnecessary:
 - 1. Arminians (and Amyraldians who believe that the Holy Spirit mediates faith) claim that God chose to justify those He knew from eternity past would believe in Christ. (Williston Walker, A Hist. of the Christ. Chch., 1959, p. 399-400; C. Gordon Olson, "Beyond Calvinism and Arminianism . . ." a paper presented to the Evangelical Theological Society Annual Meeting, Toronto, December 29, 1981)
 - 2. Yet, this view makes election useless, for God could save men by faith without choosing them to that end.
- B. Another major view on divine election is the Calvinistic view, but it makes faith unnecessary:
 - 1. Calvinists claim that God in eternity past chose who would trust in Christ and then that He gives the elect the gift of faith to believe in Christ when they hear the gospel. (John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book Third, chapter XI, 1. [translated by Henry Beveridge])
 - 2. Yet, this view makes faith needless, for God could save men because He chose them apart from faith.
- C. Another major view on divine election is the Moderate Calvinistic view, but it also makes faith unnecessary:
 - 1. Moderate Calvinists claim that God in eternity past chose the current plan of history out of an infinite variety of possible plans. God is thus said to be sovereign over the outcome of the plan chosen where man is responsible to trust in Christ in that plan. God is thus sovereign while man is said to be "coextensively" free to trust in Christ. (Lewis S. Chafer, Major Bible Themes, rev. John F. Walvoord, 1974 ed. p. 232-233)
 - 2. Yet, this view also makes faith unnecessary, for once God were to choose the plan of history He desired, exactly all those people who would be justified in that plan would be predestined to be justified by God's choice of the plan itself, what would leave man's faith expressions in history to the same end unnecessary.
- D. Consequently, each of these major views on divine election conflict with the inerrancy of the Bible:
 - 1. Since each of these major views contain an unnecessary component in them, they are illogical views, for Webster's Third New International Dictionary, s. v. "logic," claims that logic requires " . . . the interrelation or connection or sequence (as of facts or events) especially when seen by rational analysis as inevitable, **necessary** or predictable." (emphasis ours)
 - 2. However, an illogical statement or view is also an errant one: Clark H. Pinnock's work, A Defense Of Biblical Infallibility that was recommended by the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, claims that all assertions, including those in Scripture that utilize human language to communicate to man, must be "cognitive and rational," that is, knowable and **logical**, if they are to be **true** assertions. (Ibid., Pinnock, p. 16-17 as promoted in James M. Boice's work, Does Inerrancy Matter? [Published by the ICBI, 1979, Oakland, CA.), p. 29, "A Select Bibliography")
 - 3. Similarly, Jesus in Matthew 5:18 claimed that every word and every letter that affects the meaning of each word in Scripture is essential in communicating God's message to us.
 - 4. Thus, since Arminians (with Amyraldians), Calvinists and Moderate Calvinists make either election or faith in Scripture to be unnecessary, they present the Bible's teaching on election as being illogical, and that in turn leaves them treating the Bible's teaching on divine election as errant!

***Lesson:* The major theological views on divine election of Arminianism (with Amyraldianism), Calvinism and Moderate Calvinism make either divine election or faith logically unnecessary in God's plan to justify man! These views then fail to present the Bible's teaching on divine election as being inerrant!**

***Application:* (1) In defense of the inerrancy of Scripture, we must not hold to any of the major views on divine election of Arminianism (with Amyraldianism), Calvinism and Moderate Calvinism! (2) However, we can use our realization that these major views are in error to guide us away from adopting any interpretation of any Scripture passage that we study in this series on election that reflects any of these errant views! (3) Also, if in our study of Scripture on election we discern only one permissible interpretation of a passage, we will know it to be the truth!**