

# SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY (ORGANIZED BIBLE KNOWLEDGE)

## Part VI: Soteriology (Doctrine Of Salvation)

### C. Divine Election

#### I. Introduction

- A. A debate has existed since the Protestant Reformation on whether man freely chooses to believe in Christ or if he can do so only because God has elected him to believe, and given Him the gift of faith to do so!
- B. This study treats the main views, and offers a conclusion based on Scripture in accord with conscience:

#### II. Divine Election (This lesson is the result of a 36-year personal Bible study pilgrimage)

- A. There are four recognized *major* positions on divine election in Evangelical circles:
  1. The Classic Calvinist view holds God chose certain ones in eternity past to believe in Christ and then gives them the faith in history so they can believe. (Loraine Boettner et al.)
  2. The Moderate Calvinist view asserts Christ died for all, but that He predestined some to salvation by choosing the wholesale plan of history that includes exactly who believes. (Chafer/Walvoord) Passages used to support Calvinism or Moderate Calvinism are: (a) John 6:44: "No man can come to me, except the Father . . . draw him." (b) Acts 13:48: ". . . as many as were ordained to eternal life believed . . ."
  3. The Amyraldian School affirms the many verses appearing to credit faith's authorship to man indeed teach man authors his own faith. Faith is said to be mediated by the Holy Spirit (C. Gordon Olson).
  4. The Arminian School sees God choosing who would be saved based on His awareness beforehand of who would *alone* author their *own* faith to believe to salvation. Passages used to support this view are: (a) Rev. 22:17b ". . . whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely . . ." (b) Luke 7:50: "And he (Jesus) said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee . . ." (emphases ours) (Henry C. Thiessen)

- B. I **personally** differ from these mainline views, holding to another view for the following reasons:

1. My View - I hold these mainline views **all err** in making election result in justification. Rather, I believe God's election results in *post*-justification blessings **only**. (New Tribes Mission/Dave Hunt)
2. The reasons for this position held are briefly stated as follows:
  - a. The mainline views each fail to explain the **logical need** for either faith or election were election to **result in justification**: (a) if God chooses who will believe as Calvinism says, why would He justify men based on faith when He could as well justify them because of election? (b) If God elects those He knows will believe as Arminians and Amyraldians suggest, what need serves election? (c) If as in Moderate Calvinism God saves those whom His wholesale plan determines will be saved, why justify those who believe when the plan itself would serve the need?
  - b. Well, making theology **illogical** is to have **errant** theology, cf. Clark H. Pinnock, A Defense of Biblical Infallibility, p. 17 (Pinnock's work is recommended by the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, cf. James M. Boice, Does Inerrancy Matter?, p. 29, "A Select Bibliography.")
  - c. Besides, an inductive Bible study reveals election results only in post-justification entities. We show this in **brief** fashion: (a) Acts 13:48 can also read: "As many as had marshaled themselves on the side of eternal life believed . . ." since *tetagmenoi* (ordained **or** marshaled themselves) is either passive or middle in the perfect participle form with these respective meanings! (b) John 6:44 was a unique event not duplicated today: the Father was bringing believers in Himself to faith in Jesus as the Son of God (cf. C. Gordon Olson's Dec. 29, 1981 paper at to the Evangelical Theological Society promoting Amyraldianism). Thus, the context deals only with God's work with those who were already believers, not with the unsaved! (c) 2 Thess. 2:13 that says: ". . . God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation . . ." in the context does not make "salvation" = justification, but the rapture. (d) 1 Peter 1:2 where we are elect ". . . unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ . . ." means we are elect unto a holy Christian walk (the context of sprinkling with a lamb's blood in relationship to obedience as used in the Jewish Old Testament context)!
  - d. I believe that in Revelation 3:17-19, Christ predicted and faulted all 5 points of Calvinism and Arminianism respectively while condoning the view I hold as stated above [See following page:]

- C. I hold Christ predicted and faulted all 5 Points of Calvinism and Arminianism respectively, Rev. 3:17-19:

1. "Wretched" critiques Calvinism's view of Total Inability as well as Arminianism's view of depravity:
  - a. This word in the Greek, **talaiporos**, appears only in Revelation 3:17 and Romans 7:24 in the entire Greek New Testament, cf. Moulton & Geden, Conc. to the Grk. Test., p. 932. In Romans 7:24, the word describes the state of one who is trying but failing to keep the Law in the sinful nature, and reveals a conflict between the sinful nature and the will.
  - b. This critiques both the Calvinist's view that the will and nature are a unit anthropologically so that both are depraved, and it critiques the Arminian view that both are united anthropologically so

- that both are partly depraved. The reality is that the nature is totally depraved, but the will is a non-depravable entity as I show in my manuscript on election, "Making Sense of God's Election."
2. "Miserable" critiques Calvinism's and Arminianism's errant views that election results in justification:
    - a. This word in the Greek, *eleeinos*, appears elsewhere in the Greek New Testament only in 1 Cor. 15:19, Ibid., Moulton & Geden, p. 324. In 1 Cor. 15:19, it is used to show the pitiable state of believers were they to hope **only** in *this* life rather than in what follows it!
    - b. This critiques both Calvinistic and Arminian views that election results only in justification rather than in what follows it both in this earthly walk as well as in the rapture and post-rapture blessings! [This emphasis is exactly mirrored in the view I have come to hold in my manuscript on election!]
  3. "Poor" critiques Calvinism's and Arminianism's errant views of faith, and hence also the errant Limited Atonement position of classic Calvinism:
    - a. The word for "poor" is explained in Rev. 3:18 to refer to a poverty of faith opposite what 1 Peter 1:7 shows comes by way of trials of faith. Hence, the Laodicean believers had no credible faith in their walk, indicating Calvinism's teaching on a divine gift of faith is invalid! Since there is no divine gift of faith, man authors his own faith, meaning there has to be an Unlimited Atonement to make room for any man's coming to faith in Christ! Classic Calvinism's view of faith is thus in error, and its position on the Limited Atonement is hence also in error! [I state this in my manuscript also.]
    - b. The word, "poor" critiques the Arminian view of faith, a view that one is saved as long as he exercises faith in Christ as faith is seen itself to contribute to one's salvation! It does so since these Laodiceans had no credible faith and yet were sons of God by way of what Revelation 3:19 says about God's desire to discipline them as true sons (in light of Hebrews 12:7-8)! Hence, man authors his own faith, but faith itself does not save or keep one saved as faith, contrary to Arminianism, is non-meritorious! [I hold the same in my election manuscript.]
  4. "Blind" critiques Calvinism's and Arminianism's errant views on the conviction of the lost as follows:
    - a. The word describes people who are absent God's revealing, convicting illumination described in John 1:7-9, and this counters Calvinism's belief in "efficacious grace." Calvinism holds God effectively awakens the elect to see their need of Christ so that they will believe, but these Laodicean believers were totally "blind," or absent any such illumination! [My manuscript agrees.]
    - b. "Blind" also counters the Arminian belief that one contributes toward acquiring insight to be saved. Since these true believers are still beloved enough for God to want to discipline (Rev. 3:19; Heb. 12:7-8) and yet they were "blind," lacking any spiritual insight, Jesus indicates one's own capacity to have insight is not effective in salvation. The Holy Spirit convicts the world, not the believer himself, cf. John 16:8-11. [I show the same conclusion in my election manuscript.]
  5. "Naked" critiques both Calvinism's and Arminianism's errant views on salvation security as follows:
    - a. This word is clarified in Rev. 3:18 to refer to a state that is rectified by having garments, and the only other Revelation passage with this expressed concern is Revelation 16:15. There, people who refuse Satan's deception to go to Armageddon retain their garments and hide their nakedness, implying that the "naked" state means one has failed to stay faithful to God's assignments! This critiques Calvinism's view that the elect will persevere in good works and thus be saved in the end: these Laodicean believers are "naked," meaning they have totally failed to persevere in good works, undermining the Calvinistic view of salvation security! [My election manuscript concurs.]
    - b. This also critiques the Arminian view of salvation security: since these Laodiceans are true believers via Revelation 3:19 with Hebrews 12:7-8, but are not persevering, one's lack of persevering in godliness does not mean he has lost his salvation. [My election manuscript states the same.]
    - c. The **correct** view of salvation security is that the Holy Spirit seals the believer at justification, and acts as the Earnest of that seal to keep one saved apart from the believer's practical godliness or its lack following his justified status, Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30. [I have a chapter on this in my work.]

***Lesson: In accord with Scripture and reason, I cannot accept the mainline election views, but believe God chose those He foreknew as His own in eternity past to post-justification goals and blessings!***