

The Church of the Servant King **Soteriology Series**

SO_6_Predestination & Election – Part 10 – Introduction to the Doctrine of Election

The subject of election and predestination are perhaps two of the more hotly debated topics in Christian theology. It seems as if all that is needed to test whether a fellow believer is spiritual or not is to throw the terms predestination and election into the air and stand by to watch the sparks fly. (In more devious moments, I've tried it at seminary just to see what would happen). Believe me, if you attempt to broach this subject in most settings, you will almost start a "religious" war. That's really tragic. No doctrine that we study should cause self-righteousness. Nevertheless, we must attempt to deal with the subject matter and have some opinion that reconciles and synthesizes with other Biblical doctrines we hold. Our position must be Biblically supportable and consistent. So here we go.

In this lesson, we will just introduce the doctrine in bullet point fashion. I'll focus upon election as it applies to the Church Age believer in this lesson. In future lessons, we'll look at what some other theologians have to say and either reconcile or contrast their views with the view that I am presenting in this series. I certainly reserve the privilege of refining this material as I find ways to present the information more clearly or state points more succinctly.

Definition – Election, as applied to the believer of the Church Age, is God's sovereign choice in eternity past to place into the Body of Christ all those who place their trust in His Son for eternal life based upon His foreknowledge of who would believe.¹

What Election of the Church Age Believer Is –

- Election is for believers only.
- A synonym for "election" is the term "chosen" or "called"
- Believers are elected "in Him [Christ]" – Ephesians 1:4
- Election is declared as a result of God's foreknowledge (1 Pe 1:1-2 cf. Ro 8:28-29)
- Election is related to predestination. God's decision to include within His decree from eternity past that Church Age believers be conformed to the image of Christ (Ro 8:29-30), i.e. predestination, required the *election* of those who would believe as a component of the decree of God.
- We will fulfill the potential to which we were elected either in time (Phase 2) or eternity (Phase 3). See Romans 8:28-29 cf. 1 Peter 1:2.
- Election occurred in eternity past.
- The election of believers of the Church Age is consistent with the purposes of God in human history to include the free will of man in the resolution of the Angelic Conflict.

What Election of the Church Age Believer Is Not –

- It is not arbitrary or capricious, but according to God's eternal purpose and foreknowledge (Ro 8:28-29; 9:11; Eph 1:4-11; 1 Pe 1:2).
- It is not an act to choose some to be lost or a decree of reprobation. It is to salvation, not to condemnation (1 Thess 1:4; 2 Thess 2:13)
- It is not man's choosing of himself. It is God's choice of who will be saved, i.e. those who God foreknows will believe.
- Election is not based upon any merit in the man who is elected. Man merely accepts the gift of salvation by faith – a non-meritorious act.
- Election is not unconditional, i.e. God did not elect (choose) one person to be saved as a result of a sovereign decision regarding that individual alone. God in His sovereignty

¹ See previous lesson.

corporately elects those whom He foreknew would believe in His son (Eph 1:4). This does not diminish God's omniscient knowledge of each individual who would believe. Rather, it enhances our understanding of the purpose of God in human history.