

Lecture 12- Election and the Order of Salvation: How should this affect our view of perseverance?

*All Bible references are from NASB unless noted otherwise.

Review of Previous Lectures

Lecture 1- 2 Peter 1:10 (Eph 4:1). Every Bible-believing Christian must affirm predestination and election. It is in the Bible. How they define the doctrine differs between believers and even scholars.

Lecture 2- God is sovereign. He rules from heaven and no one can thwart His rulership. Even man's so-called free will cannot thwart God's supreme rulership as seen in Scripture.

Lecture 3- Free will or free agency in the Bible is evident, but the defining description of this free will is that it is not libertarian free will. It is an enslaved will that needs to be freed. Mankind makes willful choices from the preceding desires of their heart. God is able and does influence mankind's desires to accomplish His purposes. This includes restraining sin (Gen 20:6) or hardening hearts (Rom 9:18; 11:7, 25) amongst many other things as we saw in this lecture.

Lecture 4- Jesus taught clearly that man is unable to come to Him unless the Father draws Him (John 6:44-45, 65). Only those who are given to Jesus by the Father will come and be saved (John 6:37; 17).

Lecture 5- The Bible is replete that mankind is dead, enslaved, by nature children of wrath and do not seek after God out of their own capacities. Some scholars posit that prevenient grace is given as a remedy to neutralize the inability of mankind, but was found to be without explicit Biblical evidence.

Lecture 6- God clearly has a decree/plan and purpose in our world for all things (including salvation). He is not absent and is working all things according to the counsel of His own will (Eph 1:11).

Lecture 7- One of the ways God is keeping His Word to Israel (and humanity) is through the principle of sovereign election which can be defined as God electing and predestining individuals from eternity past based on His choice alone. This choice is not based on the good or evil foreseen by God, nor does this election involve the will or works of man, but of God's choice alone (9:11, 16). This principle was at work in OT times and is currently at work in NT times as God is actively and mercifully saving those whom He has called (the remnant from both Jews and Gentiles) while hardening others according to His own sovereign purpose and for the sake of glorifying His own name. Exposition of Romans 9:1-23.

Lecture 8- The purpose of God's election choices was to promote His own glory. Part of God's ordained means of salvation was through faith alone. Additionally, God has ordained the means of prayer, evangelism, preaching in order to effectualize His plan for the elect/remnant from the Jews and Gentiles. Most of Israel remains in unbelief and disobedience because they sought to establish their own righteousness as by works and not by faith. Exposition of Romans 9:24 – 10:21.

Lecture 9- Election and God's Plan for the Chosen Remnant of Jews and Gentiles; Romans 11:1-36. Paul picked up the theme that he started in Romans 9 by teaching that the doctrine of election/remnant according to God's own purpose was active also in the prophetic ministry of Elijah (1 Kings 19). Therefore, we should not be surprised that the elect has obtained righteousness by faith and the rest were hardened/blinded and that is by grace, not works of any kind (Rom 11:5-7). Exposition of Romans 11:1-36.

Lecture 10- Election and the paradoxical passages Part 1. We saw the thoroughness of the difference between God's elect and non-elect is that of God's choice, calling, mercy, and being chosen according to God's own secret purpose and will. We also observed that the nature of God's love can be described in the Bible in various ways (not types). This topic is not simple, but complex and includes various passages that are paradoxical (seem like contradictions, but are not).

Lecture 11- Election and the paradoxical passages Part 2. We saw the development of a consistent biblical theology which reveals that God's will (from our perspective) is multifaceted. We saw that there were three main ways that God's will is revealed in Scripture. From this understanding we were able to answer the question, "Does God desire all to be saved?" with an affirmative answer, but also realize that this will of benevolent disposition does not contradict or circumvent His desire/will as put forth in His sovereign absolute decrees.

What is coming next:

Lecture 13- Election and the Paradoxical Passages Part 3 – Can a Genuine Believer Become Lost? Warning Passages.

Lecture 14- Election and paradoxical passages Part 4- Understanding *Universal* vs. *Definite* Atonement and Assurance.

We have seen that God's purpose and will/desire cannot be thwarted. What God sovereignly decrees will come to pass according to His overall purpose to bring Glory to His name (see Lecture 6).

- **Psalm 115:1** Not to us, O LORD, not to us, But to **Your name give glory** Because of Your lovingkindness (mercy), because of Your truth.
- **Isaiah 48:11** "For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; For how can **My name be profaned**? And **My glory** I will not give to another. (see 48:9 for more about God's concern for His name)
- **Job 42:2** "I know that You can do all things, And **that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted**.
Isaiah 14:24-27 **The LORD of hosts has sworn saying, "Surely, just as I have intended so it has happened, and just as I have planned so it will stand,** ²⁵ to break Assyria in My land, and I will trample him on My mountains. Then his yoke will be removed from them and his burden removed from their shoulder. ²⁶ "This is the plan devised against the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out against all the nations. ²⁷ "**For the LORD of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate it? And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?"**
- **Daniel 4:35** "All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, **But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, 'What have You done?'**
- **Psalm 33:10-11** The LORD nullifies the counsel of the nations; He frustrates the plans of the peoples. ¹¹ The counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart from generation to generation.

Order of Salvation (*Ordo Salutis*)

Not all scholars agree on every exact step, so there is no reason to be overly dogmatic on this order. It's important to note that theologians see that all of these are set in a theologically logical priority. Some steps have a time priority, but others happen simultaneously. Numbers 4-8a below happen simultaneously.

Romans 8:28-30 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. ²⁹ For those whom He **foreknew**, He also **predestined to become** conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the **firstborn among many brethren**; ³⁰ and these whom He **predestined**, He also called; and these whom He **called**, He also justified; and these whom He **justified**, He also **glorified**.

1. **God's Foreknowing, Election, Choosing-** God's sovereign choosing to have a covenant relationship with an individual before the foundation of the world for His own good pleasure and will/desire and not because of anything foreseen by the sinner- Romans 8:29; 9:11, 16, 18; Ephesians 1:4, 5, 9, 11; 2 Timothy 1:9.
2. **God's Predestination-** Some scholars include this in number 1, but based on certain texts it is logically after election according to certain passages. We are predestined to be conformed to Jesus' image (Rom 8:29) and this comes after being foreknown (Rom 8:30). Additionally, we are predestined to be adopted as God's children (Eph 1:5) and also to receive an eternal inheritance (Eph 1:11; Matt 25:34; 1 Peter 1:4).
3. **God's External Calling-** This is the presentation of the gospel which is heard by the sinner. There are many, many people who are exposed to the gospel message who do not respond. Jesus said, "Many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt 22:14). The external call to respond in faith and repentance to the gospel message is part of the means that God has chosen to save His elect (1 Corinthians 1:18, 21; 2 Tim 2:10). This external calling involves the use of the word of God which prepares the heart for the new birth to come after. Both Peter and James describe the new birth as coming through the living and enduring word of God (1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18).
4. **God's Internal Calling (Regeneration)-** This is also better known as being "born again" or "born from above" (Greek word *anōthen* can mean either one; see John 3:3, 7, 31; 19:11). Later, John labels it as being "born of God" (1 John 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18). Being regenerated is being given a new heart to replace the heart of stone (Ezek 11:19; 36:26; Deut 30:6) and the new power of the Holy Spirit (Jer 32:39-41; Gal 5:16). Paul describes this as being "made

alive” from a state of deadness and by nature being controlled by the world, the flesh, and the devil (Eph 2:1-5; Col 2:13). This regeneration is described as a washing and renewal of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). The new man with the new nature (heart) is now designated an entirely new creature (2 Cor 5:17). Jesus calls this the drawing by the Father who teaches them personally (John 6:44-45; Matthew 13:11; 16:17; Luke 10:21). This new nature longs (slaves) for righteousness and faith (Rom 6:18; 7:22-23; 1 John 3:9-10; 5:18).

5. **Believers’ Conversion-** After hearing the living gospel message and being born from above by God Himself, which includes the imparting of the new nature, the sinner responds out of this new nature with faith and repentance. It is important to note that God doesn’t believe or repent for us. These are the sinner’s response out of their own will and newfound desires/nature. Even in this midst of the process of faith and repentance, God is still given the glory because Paul writes that both faith/belief and repentance are a gift (Philippians 1:29; Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 2:25). It’s important to note genuine faith apart from repentance does not exist. They go hand in hand. James writes that faith without works (repentance is a fruit and work- Matt 3:8) is dead and useless (James 2:20, 26). True Biblical repentance is the genuine sorrow for sin, renouncing it as a sin and an offense against a holy God, turning from it with a commitment to forsake it continually and to diligently pursue walking in obedience. There is a sorrow/remorse that leads to death, but godly sorrow leads to life (2 Cor 7:10). Entrance into the kingdom requires faith and repentance (Matt 3:5-12). We see the consistency throughout the NT. John the Baptist began his ministry preaching repentance (Matt 3:2, 8). Jesus preached a message of repentance in connection with being included in the kingdom (Matt 4:17; Luke 5:32). Further, Jesus taught the necessity of repentance to avoid perishing (Luke 13:3, 5) and to receive forgiveness (Luke 24:47). Peter taught repentance (and belief) as necessary requirements for salvation (Acts 2:38; 3:19); as did Paul (Acts 17:30; 26:20).
6. **God’s Justification-** Once man exhibits faith and repentance, God declares the sinner righteous through imputation (reckoning). This is 100% a forensic righteousness which uses court room language. God is the judge of all the earth (Gen 18:25) who gives His legal verdict that the sinner who has expressed faith is declared (reckoned) not just innocent, but righteous (Gen 15:6; Rom 4:3, 5). This declaration is by grace (Rom 3:24) and through faith (Rom 4:5, 3:26-28; 5:1; Gal 2:16). It is impossible for the verdict of righteous to be overturned and for condemnation to ever take place (Rom 8:1; 33-34). In order for this transaction to take place, Jesus was reckoned as a sinner on our behalf and died specifically as a substitute for our sin (2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13; Rom 5:8). In exchange for our iniquity, Jesus’ perfect righteousness was exchanged and deposited into our spiritual bank account (Phil 3:9). Even the very perfect righteousness of God Himself was given to us a free gift (Rom 3:21-22; 4:5-8; 5:17). This Biblical view of justification contrasts with the Roman Catholic view which teaches that God infuses righteousness into us and it joins with our righteousness to satisfy God’s requirements. This is the contrast between Catholic *infusion* and Protestant *imputation*. Jesus finished paying our FULL debt on the cross (John 19:30) and we receive His perfect righteousness.
7. **God’s Adoption-** This is the act of God that is distinct from justification. Justification deals with our right standing before God, but adoption deals with our relationship with Him. Scholars recognize that God could justify or forgive sinners and yet not adopt them specifically into His family. There is some indication of this with other supernatural beings (angels, cherubim, etc.). We all began this world as children of the devil and by nature were children of wrath (Eph 2:1-3; John 8:41-44; 1 John 3:10). After we express faith, God adopts us into His family (John 1:12; Gal 3:26). We were predestined to adoption through His free grace (Eph 1:5) and have a glorious future as His children (Rom 8:17-23; Revelation 21:7). Our adoption is based on God’s amazing love (1 John 3:1).
8. **God’s and Believers’ Sanctification-** **A**) Theologians note that the process of sanctification has two aspects to it. The first is that of a one-time event in which God sanctifies (sets us apart) as one of His own children. This event coincides with numbers 4-7 above. This act of being washed and sanctified is seen as past tense (1 Cor 6:11; Acts 20:32; 26:18). **B**) The second aspect is known as progressive sanctification. This is a life long process where God, through the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:13) and Word of God (John 17:17) transforms us into the likeness of Jesus from glory to glory (2 Corinthians 3:18). It’s God’s will that we grow in sanctification (1 Thess 4:3), without which we will not be able to see Him (Hebrews 12:14). The Bible teaches that even though God is the one taking the initiative in our sanctification (Phil 2:12-13), we also have a responsibility to grow in

holiness (1 Peter 1:15-16). We are called to cleanse ourselves of wickedness (2 Cor 7:1) and to be diligent to lay aside the sin that ensnares us (Heb 12:1) as we grow in virtues (2 Peter 1:5-9).

9. God's Keeping and Mankind's Perseverance- Jesus said, "The one that endures to the end will be saved" (Matt 10:22; 24:13). Scholars will note that this passage can be looked at through the viewpoint of God or from our vantage point. The grammar doesn't define for us which one is more accurate, but I think it is intentionally a doubly faceted phrase to keep us active in our efforts to endure to the end. We must remember that God ordains the ends and the means and He has predestined us to arrive at glorification (Rom 8:29-30). Therefore, from our perspective those that are diligent in persevering are the ones who are saved. From God's perspective, those that are saved will endure. We will address the so-called "warning passages" later and the responsibility that we have to endure. For now, let's examine the Scriptures that show the tremendous comfort of God's keeping us by His power (1 Peter 1:5). Jesus can't lie, fail, or not complete the Father's tasks (will) for Him. He declared that all people that the Father gave to Him to as a gift, He will raise up on the last day (John 6:40-44). Additionally, Jesus said that of all the people that the Father gave to the Son, He will lose NONE (John 6:37-39; 17:12; 18:9). Both Jesus and the Father (who is greater than all potential threats) have given us eternal life, we will never perish, and no one is able to take us out of their hands (John 10:28-30).

Some think that even though no one else can snatch us out of their hands, they themselves through the power of their own free will can remove themselves from their hands. This is conceptually conceivable, but Biblically absurd. This thinking completely and thoroughly ignores the comprehensive truths of numbers 1-8 above. To keep it simple, rejecting God is sin and to choose to remove ourselves from His hand (even if we could) is willful continuing sin. We see above under internal calling (#4) 1 John 3:9 which reads, "No one who is born of God *continually* practices sin, because His seed abides in him, and he cannot *continually* sin, because he is born of God." If someone who is truly born from above, their new nature would prevent them from sinning in this way because they are now slaves of righteousness and God will keep them fearing Him and from turning away (Jeremiah 32:40). We have great confidence that God who began a good work in us will complete it on the day of redemption (Philippians 1:6).

10. Believers' Death- One of the enigmatic verses in the OT is Psalm 115:16 which reads, "Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of His saints." This could sound distorted, but we get a glimpse of why this is so in the NT teaching. Paul writes that to die is gain because we go and be with Jesus (Phil 1:21-22) and that to be absent from this body is to be present with Jesus (2 Cor 5:8). Even as believers who have escaped the penalty of spiritual death, God has chosen to allow us to go through death in this life. Theologians recognize that this helps us be more like Jesus. If we suffer with and like Him, then we will also be glorified with and like Him (Rom 8:17; Phil 3:10-11). Jesus died and was resurrected and so will we be.

11. Believers' Glorification- Our new nature which longs for righteousness is trapped in this body of sin (Rom 7:18-25). Yet we are destined to be fully and finally conformed to the image of Jesus (Rom 8:29; Phil 3:21; 1 Cor 15:49). We will be resurrected and given new powerful, spiritual, incorruptible bodies (1 Cor 15:35-52). Our future includes the glory of ruling and reigning with Jesus in His kingdom and on thrones of rulership (2 Tim 2:12; Rev 20:4-6; 1 Corinthians 6:2-3; Revelation 3:21). Even though we have suffering in this world, this suffering is "momentary and light" compared to the glory that will be revealed in and through us as God's children (2 Cor 4:17; Rom 8:18; Colossians 3:4; 1 Peter 5:1). The last enemy is death and Jesus will remove all obstacles that seek to overthrow God's sovereign rulership throughout all of His creation (1 Cor 15:24-27; Revelation 21).