

Elect

HAVE I BEEN CHOSEN

Self-examination:
Elect: Have I Been Chosen

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*Wherefore the rather, brethren,
give diligence to make your calling and election sure:
for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:*

2 Peter 1:10

Elect

HAVE I BEEN CHOSEN

Introduction

I once heard this story of a lost man: When asked why he was not saved, he responded by saying he must not be one of the Elect.

I do not remember ever hearing this type of response from anyone before, but surely, this could not be the only individual to use or ponder such a thought. Can (or how can) a person know if they are of the Elect?

Consider the question this way:

Have I been chosen?

On the surface, this would seem to be a fair question. Think of two team captains, given the task to fill their teams. How many of us have secretly thought, “I hope I don’t get picked last”? Perhaps we have even considered, “What will happen if the teams are even and I am left? I wonder if I will be picked at all.” How embarrassing, how hurtful this can be. Perhaps some reading this have experienced feeling unwanted.

Would you want to know if you were not of the Elect? How would it govern the way you lived your life thereafter? Do you imagine that you would sink into depression, scream out in rage, despise those who are of the Elect, or desperately seek for the reason why you are not and beg for entrance? Maybe you would hate the Elector and determine that you could do a much better job. Perhaps it would mean little to you, changing only slightly or not at all the way you live your life.

Now, whether you would pick a tulip to wear with admiration or would cut it down as a troublesome weed, I hope you will stroll with me for a while. Let us talk as friends and see what we can glean from the Word of God together.

Election

Let us begin with the term mentioned, the Elect. According to Scripture, who or what are the Elect? This should help us determine whether there is any true merit to the question. If there is no such thing as the Elect or it is not associated with any inherit benefit to us, it will negate any necessity to look further into the subject at all. It would be meaningless, a waste of your time and mine. However, if it does prove to be of importance, of great value, it would behoove us to seek diligently into finding a proper and worthy response. Both for the one who has asked such a question and for our own advantage as well.

Elect:

In theology, to designate, choose or select as an object of mercy or favor.

[Webster 1828]

In the Old Testament, we find the nation of Israel chosen (Elected). Deuteronomy 7:8 declares, “thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.” Deuteronomy also states that the Levites (of the tribes of Israel) were chosen “out of all [the] tribes, to stand to minister to the name of the LORD, him and his sons for ever.” We find in 1 Samuel that God chose David rather than Saul, the king chosen by the people. We also find God choosing servants to come forth as prophets, along with men and women to fulfill his purposes throughout the Old Testament.

We can learn from these examples. Whether corporately or individually, the purpose of their Election was for them to be set apart as holy, obedient servants of God. Sadly, we find that was not always the case. Many chose to disregard or even rebel against the Almighty and his promises. Punishment followed. A reflection of God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility.

In this study, we will primarily consider the Elect in relation to salvation. God determines Election and it can be for different reasons. We see this throughout scripture, even by Christ. However, whether or not we are in Christ is of the upmost importance. What would it benefit us if we were called, elected, or chosen to this great thing or that mighty work, then cast into outer darkness for all eternity? The Israelites forsook God, Judas betrayed Christ. Many who once professed love for God or faith in Christ have also become castaways [1 Corinthians 9:27] or even antichrists [1 John 2:18 – 19]. Will you do likewise? Will I?

So, who or what are the Elect? By definition, they are *those chosen by God as an object of his mercy or favor*. Grace and mercy, unmerited favor, from a holy God to a sinful soul.

Let us give a few examples:

Matthew 24 speaks concerning the end times. [vs. 21] tells of the “great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” The suffering will be so great, Jesus tells his disciples, “except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.” [vs. 22] Not for the world's sake, but for those of the Elect, God will shorten the time of trouble. [vs. 24] the signs and wonders of the false Christs and false prophets will be able to deceive all but the Elect.

See also Mark 13: [vs. 20] declares that the Elect are those “whom he [the Lord] hath chosen.” [vs. 27] states that he will “send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.”

Luke 18:7 promises that “God [will] avenge his own elect” and “that he will avenge them speedily.” [vs. 8]

Romans 8 is a chapter of security “to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” [vs. 28]

[vs. 29 – 30] For whom he did foreknow:

- He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. [Jesus Christ]
- Them he also called.
- Them he also justified.
- Them he also glorified.

The security is in two parts. (1) There is no interruption in the process, and (2) every act is said to be performed by “he” (God).

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

[Philippians 1:6]

GOD did Foreknow > GOD did Predestinate >

GOD Called > GOD Justified > GOD Glorified

The chapter ends with, “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” [vs. 38 – 39]

Peter speaks of the “strangers” in 1 Peter 1 as “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” [vs. 2] He tells us of the “chief corner stone [of Sion], elect, precious.” [Jesus Christ, 1 Peter 2:6] He warns us to examine ourselves, to make our “calling and election sure.” [2 Peter 1:10]

Within these examples, it should prove that scripture indeed teaches (at the very least) that there is a group of individuals considered by God to be his Elect. However, we cannot simply say that God (only) loves them corporately or collectively. He very much loves them individually, just as he calls, justifies, glorifies, and works in each of them independently.

Consider these truths just from the examples given:

Matthew 24:

It could be said that the time of the tribulation will be shortened for the sake of the Elect corporately; however, no individual of the Elect will be left or deceived.

Mark 13:

It may be that the Elect were chosen by God collectively; yet, would they not be gathered separately by the angels?

Luke 18:

States that God will avenge all of his Elect; although, is not the necessity that each case be independent of the rest?

Romans 8:

Promises all things (not that all things are good) will work out for the good of those who [Group 1] love God and [Group 1 or Group 2] those called according to his purpose; but, is not the good worked out in the life of each person of the Elect and not simply to all jointly? Is not the call, the justification, the glorification performed (even if simultaneously within thousands at once) necessarily personal in nature to every one of the Elect (singularly)?

1 Peter 1:

God may foreknow all of the Elect in a single moment, but does not every soul need to be sanctified by the Spirit and sprinkled by the blood of Jesus Christ (in their own time)?

1 Peter 2:

Jesus Christ is declared Elect, no doubt singular; not to be included in the Elect spoken of previously, who need the sanctification of the Spirit and sprinkling of (his own) blood.

2 Peter1:

Finally, we (that is you, me, etc.) are admonished to examine ourselves in light of scripture to ensure that we are in fact one of the Elect. Even if a revival happens collectively in a church, in a town, it must take place separately in each heart.

Now that we have proven (1) that Election and the Elect are factually taught in Scripture and (2) it can be corporately but also individual in nature, we can now look to determine if we find it important (in our best interest and in our ability) to become part of the Elect.

Benefit

We have learned that Election, the Elect, can speak collectively as to a group of persons, but ultimately (perhaps most importantly) comes down to each individual as well. So, what (if any) is the benefit of becoming a part of the Elect? Is it just another card that we can flash to show how important we are, or is there something more to it that deserves our time and attention?

In the previous scriptures, we find these benefits to being numbered among the Elect:

Matthew 24; Mark 13:

If we find ourselves in the tribulation, we cannot be deceived by the false Christs and false prophets of that day. The days will be shortened for our sake, and ultimately the angels will gather us together (to finally be with the Lord Jesus Christ).

Luke 18:

There is no reason to avenge (retaliate, return evil for evil) ourselves when we are hated, mistreated, and the like, for God will take care of it himself.

Romans 8:

When we walk through the bad days, the tough times, we can know that God will work it out to somehow be for our good. Even if we do not fully understand while we are going through it, this truth should give us hope. He promises both to justify and glorify us, because his love will never change and cannot be taken away.

1 Peter; 2 Peter:

We will be sanctified (made holy) by his Spirit and sprinkled by the blood of Christ, and he has given us the Holy Bible and the Holy Spirit to know for sure if we are one of the Elect or not.

There are other benefits to being of the Elect as well:

The Elect have God as a Father.

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

[Romans 8:15 – 16]

The Elect have the ear of God.

In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.

[Psalm 18:6]

The Elect are sealed, indwelt, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

[John 14:16 – 18]

Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

[2 Corinthians 1:21 – 22]

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but

the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

[Romans 8:26]

The Elect are enabled with the wisdom to understand scripture.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

[1 Corinthians 2:12 – 13]

The Elect have been chosen to receive salvation.

But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[2 Thessalonians 13 – 14]

The Elect shall be victorious, as the army of the Lamb.

These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

[Revelation 17:14]

The above show just some of the benefits of being the Elect of God; however, there is another that many know of and desire.

The Elect will have eternal life.

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

[John 17:1 – 2]

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

[1 John 5:11]

Who doesn't desire eternal life? To live forever in the new Jerusalem, where "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." [Revelation 21]

Do any of these appeal to you, dear reader? Can you not find something of benefit in these truths mentioned here? Is this why you may be pondering the thought:

Have I been chosen?

Necessity

With benefit comes necessity. A prerequisite is required. In fact, this may be where your whole inquiry arises. “Yes, I want the benefits of being part of the Elect,” one might say. “How do I become one of the Elect?” Ah, with this one question comes a multitude of “answers”. Maybe this is where you find yourself today. You have heard the call of the Evangelist, the preaching of the Pastor, the doctrine of the –ism, the thoughts of a friend; yet, you still long to know the truth, to take hold of it, to claim it for your own.

Back to our original statement:

I once heard this story of a lost man: When asked why he was not saved, he responded by saying he must not be one of the Elect.

What is it that most (if not all) persons desire to be saved from? Put another way: What is it that most (if not all) persons desire to gain? From the tree of life, to the holy grail, to the fountain of youth, to being cryogenically-frozen (in the hopes of one day being revived), to the modern day sci-fi of putting one’s essence into the binary code of a machine—What is it that we are searching for or hope to obtain?

Eternal Life

Genesis 3:22 tells us that eating of the “tree of life” would enable one to “live for ever.” However, we find, because of sin (disobedience and rebellion), God “drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” [vs. 24] The Cherub is an interesting creature, one not many men (if any) would likely be willing to face off against. [Ezekiel 1, 10]

So, the first book of the Bible mentions the tree of life and that man has been banished from it because of his disobedience. Interestingly, we find it again in the last book of the Bible.

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

[Revelation 22:14]

Now, this makes sense. Adam and Eve had access to the tree of life until they disobeyed God. Here we see the way for one to gain access to the tree of life is to “do his commandments.” The “he” spoken of here is God. So, if we want to “have right” to the tree of life, we must be willing to obey God’s commandments. This is verified in the following account (A1):

Behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

[Luke 10:25 – 37]

Clearly checking to see if the man is a good lawyer, Jesus asked, “What is written in the law? how readest thou?”

The lawyer declares:

1. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind;
2. And thy neighbour as thyself.

This was correct. Notice Jesus with another lawyer (A2):

Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

[Matthew 22:36 – 40]

Note that Jesus states: “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” Notice these are the *positive* “thou shalt” view of the *negative* “thou shalt not” of the ten commandments. [Exodus 20:1 – 17] The Bible is not just full of “Don’t do this.” God wants us *to do* some things also.

In Matthew 19, we have yet another account [A3]:

Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

[Matthew 19:16 – 22]

[see also Mark 10:17 – 22; Luke 18:18 – 23]

Jesus replied, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” Okay, what commandments? The same ones as mentioned previously?

Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, honour thy father and thy mother: and, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

If Jesus tells the lawyer in Matthew 22 [A2] that he is correct when he mentions only two commandments, why does he give the man in Matthew 19 [A3] six to follow? This is important. Jesus didn’t just make things up as he went along. He was/is the Word. [John 1] Remember, Jesus stated “all the law” was contained in those two commandments. Comparing the three accounts, we can understand how (Commandment 1) was all about loving God and (Commandment 2) was all about loving our neighbour (fellow men and women).

Notice the positive and negative aspects of the law again:

Thou shalt not:

- Murder
- Commit adultery
- Steal
- Bear false witness

Thou shalt:

- Honour thy father and thy mother
- Love thy neighbor as thyself

The man [A3] answered, “Master, all these have I observed from my youth.” What do you think? Jesus is telling the man what is necessary to “enter into life.” Do you believe the man (1) had kept the commandments as he said, (2) believed he had kept the commandments, or (3) knew he was lying when he said it?

Jesus did not call him a liar, but rather Mark 10:21 says, “Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.”

So, in truth, one could say that Jesus gave the man eleven commands or works:

1. Do not murder.
2. Do not commit adultery.
3. Do not steal.
4. Do not bear false witness.
5. Honour thy father and thy mother.
6. Love thy neighbour as thyself.

The man claims to have kept (1) thru (6). Then Jesus adds another five, or at least two if you put (7 – 8) together and (9 – 11) together.

7. Sell whatsoever thou hast.
8. Give (the money) to the poor.
9. Come to me (that is Jesus).
10. Take up the cross.
11. Follow me (that is Jesus).

So, he was given at least eight commands by Jesus. What did the man say or do in response to the additional requirements to receive eternal life? “He was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.”

Wait, what? The man asked, “What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” Jesus tells him what he must do. Then the guy just walks away sad? He decided to keep his earthly treasure, when Jesus promised him eternal life and “treasure in heaven.” Wow! Who would do such a thing? The opportunity for eternal life was right there in front of him and he simply turned his back on it (him).

Look again at the [A1] account in Luke 10. Jesus tells him, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.” The man responds, “And who is my neighbour?”

Who is my neighbor? There can only be two reasons why someone would ask such a question in this context:

1. They genuinely desire to know, because they understand that if one must love their neighbor as themselves to gain eternal life, they must know who their neighbor is.

2. They ask because there is a person or group of persons (for whatever reason) who they do not want to love. Just as the account records, he merely asked “to justify himself.”

Jesus proceeds to tell them a story of “a certain man [who] went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.” There was “a certain priest” who passed him by on the other side. There was “a Levite” who likewise avoided him by crossing over to the other side. However, there was “a certain Samaritan” who “had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.” This Samaritan (who the Jews would have looked down upon) obeyed the commandment to “love thy neighbour as thyself” without even knowing the individual. The lawyer acknowledges this when asked. Then Jesus says, “Go, and do thou likewise.”

This reminds me of when Jesus was talking to the disciples about forgiveness. [Matthew 18:21 – 22] Peter asked Christ if one was to forgive another seven times. Jesus replied, “I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.”

Why is it that we stand always ready to receive, while scarcely are prepared to give? We desire to be loved by God, but cannot love him with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. We expect to be loved by our neighbor, while we try to define who we should acknowledge (do unto and love) as *our* neighbor. We wish to be forgiven by saying, “I’m sorry”, yet want those who have offended us to be punished or required to pay penance.

It is not easy to obey the law of God. Adam and Eve failed with one “thou shalt not” and we likewise fail with any number of the “thou shalt” and “thou shalt not” commands in scripture.

Short

Let us look back at our text in Revelation:

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

[Revelation 22:14]

By reading this passage, one should understand that we must do the commandments of God to have rights to the tree of life, which (according to Genesis) gives eternal life. However, the questions must be asked: What if we do not do the commandments of God? Does it mean we have to do his commandments all the time? If that is the case, then we will surely come up short. I know I have not done all of what God has said to do since the day I was born. What about the commands I have not done? Will my obedience (good works) outweigh my disobedience (bad works)?

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

[James 2:10 – 11]

Wait, what? “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” So, by breaking any of the commands of God makes us guilty of the whole law? If honest, we can understand this, even if we don’t like it. Clearly, if we disobey in only one point, we are not performing the two commandments that Jesus claimed were the consolidation of “all the law and the prophets”; namely, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and our neighbor as our self. To not love God or man is to be found guilty of breaking the law.

We are commanded to be perfect and holy, just as God is. We may want to believe, “God knows I am human, that I am not perfect,” but that does not change the standard (requirements).

Be ye holy; for I am holy.

[1 Peter 1:16]

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

[Matthew 5:48]

This is a pretty (no, very) high standard. Wouldn't you agree? Some define perfect here to mean “mature.” Even if that is the case, we are being told to be “mature, even as your Father is mature.” Equally, how one may wish to define the holiness of God will (1) give account to their understanding of scripture, (2) share their view of God, and (3) expose just how short they fall from meeting that standard. We all do.

Remember our [A3] account in Matthew 19? “Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be **perfect**, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.” Sadly, the man went away sorrowfully, when he could have been full of life; for Jesus said, “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” [John 10:10]

The end of Revelation 22:14 states that one must “enter in through the gates into the city” to access the tree of life. Many have searched for a city or hiding place for the means to eternal life, but scripture tells us exactly where it is.

Revelation 20 ends with the defeat of Satan and 2 Peter 3:10 tells us “the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” This will be the end.

However, Revelation 21 – 22 share the beginning of a “new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.” John records that he “saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven.” In this city, “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”

Although, John warns, “the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars” will not be there. He further announces that “there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.” These “shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

We find like warnings in the writings of Paul:

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

[1 Corinthians 6:9 – 10]

So, who may enter? “They which are written in the Lamb's book of life.” “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.”

This should cause one great concern (or fear). If one is outside of the Elect, not only are they refused entrance into the new Jerusalem and access to the tree of life, but are promised what looks to be the declaration of Genesis 3, “Ye shall surely die.”

Scripture tells us, “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” [Romans 3:23] Each one of us find this to be true, if we would only be honest with ourselves. Else, “if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” [1 John 1:8]

Let’s look again at some of the commands that the man [A3] who spoke with Jesus claimed to obey:

- Do not murder.
- Do not commit adultery.
- Love thy neighbour as thyself.

The first two were mentioned in James 2:10 – 11, in relation to keeping the whole law or being found guilty of all. In the sermon on the mount, Jesus expounds on the commandments of God. Let’s take a look at murder and adultery.

Adultery (lust, covet):

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time,
Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you,
That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her
hath committed adultery with her already in his
heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out,
and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that
one of thy members should perish, and not that thy
whole body should be cast into hell.

[Matthew 5:27 – 29]

Lust is sin and falls under the law’s definition of adultery (fornication), which leads to hell (“everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels”). [Matthew 24: 51] Ladies, this includes you as well. One may say, men are more prone to (sensual) lust than women, but female teachers are seducing their students and women are likewise buying and partaking in pornography.

Murder (anger, hate):

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

[Matthew 5:21 – 22]

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

[Matthew 5:43 – 45]

Anger (misplaced) and hate are contrary to the law of God. We are murdering that person in our mind, our heart. We are a murderer in the eyes of the law. Just as we found in Jesus' story of the Samaritan in Luke 10, everyone is our neighbour. Thus, to hate our enemy is to hate our neighbour; therefore, breaking the law.

Our flesh is an enemy of the law:

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.

[Galatians 5:19 – 21a]

In the life of Saul, we find, “rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.” [1 Samuel 15:23] By the law, both a witch and idolater were worthy of death. [Exodus 22:18; Deuteronomy 17:2 – 5] The prophet Samuel tells Saul, “thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.” [1 Samuel 15:26]

We may state:

Why am I not saved? I must not be one of the Elect.

We may ask:

Have I been chosen?

However, in reality, the truth is quite obvious, if we would only acknowledge it. Today, at this very moment, if we are questioning if we are part of the Elect, it is because we are (or have been) rejecting the word of the LORD. One might say, “I have not rejected the Bible!” Of course, you have. We all have.

[We are] lovers of [our] own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

[2 Timothy 3:2 – 4]

Let us read that again: We are “lovers of pleasures [lovers of self] more than lovers of God.” Do you deny this?

Read the words of another Saul (namely Paul):

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

[Romans 7:18 – 19]

How many of us could repeat these very words? How often have you thought about doing the right thing, desired to stop doing the wrong thing, yet ended up doing the very thing you promised you would never do (again)?

Why? Why does man sin?

We are born dead, spiritually dead, “in trespasses and sins.” [Ephesians 2:1 – 2] Given a sin nature by our father, Adam. In addition, we choose to sin. Therefore, it is written:

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

[Romans 3:23]

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

[Isaiah 64:6]

Why do we reject the word of the LORD? Why do we question if we are of the Elect? Do you really want to know why? Are you truly searching with your whole heart? [Jeremiah 29:13]

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him:

neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

[1 Corinthians 2:14]

Scripture says, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth,” [John 4:24] but we are spiritually dead and cannot know or receive the things of God.

We are carnal, worldly minded:

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

[Romans 8:5 – 8]

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

[James 4:4]

Remember, “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” [1 John 2:16]

One is not merely a non-Elect of God, but rather an enemy of God. Notice it does not say one is an enemy of God by what God has predestined, but rather by what the individual is (currently and has been) doing; namely, indulging in the flesh and the world, following the words of “that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world.” [Revelation 12:9]

Remedy

To state that we are not saved because (apparently) we have not been chosen (Elected) is to speak to something we have no knowledge of.

In Matthew 13:24 – 30, Jesus tells a parable: “The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field.” He goes on to explain that an enemy has likewise sown tares in the same field. “The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?” Pay attention to the man’s answer: “Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.”

Take heed to Matthew 13:36 – 43 to understand the parable:

- He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man. (Christ)
- The field is the world.
- The good seed are the children of the kingdom. (Saved)
- The tares are the children of the wicked one. (Lost)
- The enemy that sowed them is the devil. (Wicked One)
- The harvest is the end of the world.
- The reapers are the angels.

- The tares (lost) shall [be] cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.
- The righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. (God)

Here are two points where a person may know if they are of the Elect or not. The first is at the moment they repent and put faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour (New Birth). The last is at the moment they leave this life, departing into “a furnace of fire” (the Second Death, with their father the devil) or to “shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father” (Almighty God).

Therefore, the question should not be, “Have I been chosen?” but rather the same as the keeper of the prison in Acts 16: “What must I do to be saved?”

One may ask, “Saved from what?” Have you been reading? Sin.

- Sin has made us an enemy of God.
- Sin hinders us from understanding the things of God.
- Sin bars us from entrance into the new Jerusalem.
- Sin keeps us from eternal life (the tree of life).

And, worst of all, sin leads us to death (and the second death, “the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone”):

Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

[James 1:14 – 15]

So, before we can concern ourselves with whether or not we are of the Elect or how we may obtain access to the tree of life (to have eternal life), we must first deal with our sin problem. For that is what is keeping us from these things. All throughout scripture, all throughout human history, mankind has chosen to embrace the offerings of the world and the words of the serpent, instead of cleaving to and obeying the God who made us. We have no right to be an Elect of God, nor the right to blame (or begrudge) him if we are not.

Remember, we are commanded: “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” We have an example: “God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” [Romans 5:8] While we were enemies (haters of God), Christ died for us.

While reading this, maybe you are thinking to yourself, “Yes, I know this already. Jesus Christ died on the cross so that we can be saved...” Okay. Stop right there. Let’s walk through this.

You have most likely heard of the ABC’s of Salvation:

- Admit to God that you are a sinner.
- Believe in Jesus Christ as God’s Son and receive Jesus’ gift of forgiveness from sin.
- Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord to others.

[Lifeway | The ABCs of Salvation]

By now, I would expect that you know that you are a sinner, just as everyone who has ever been born is/was indeed a sinner. However, don’t put a check mark by the (A) just yet. There is more to it than just agreeing that you make (or have made) mistakes, aren’t perfect, and could do better.

On the other hand, if you do not consider yourself a sinner, read 1 John 1:10: “If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” If you think you are “not that bad,” read Mark 2:17: “They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” If you find yourself believing one of these—Stop! You cannot think that way while claiming to (honestly) ask if you have been chosen by God; for you are (freely) deciding to reject God and the gospel at this point.

For those of you who do Admit that you are a sinner: What does that mean to you? Can you see the gap between a holy God and a wicked (enemy of God) sinner? There is no reason to ponder who we think is the worst sinner, the vilest person of all time. In the light of Jesus Christ, WE are the vilest of the vile. Until we can see how bad our sin is, how can we truly grasp hold of the

mercy and grace (freely given, not deserved) found in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour? We can't.

One must also Believe the gospel:

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

[1 Corinthians 15:1 – 4]

It is possible that you cannot remember a time when you did not believe it, but only now has it become real (personal) to you. You truly desire, not only to be forgiven, but to be cleansed of sin.

Maybe you are remembering that you were once told, "To be saved, just ask Jesus into your heart." What does that mean? What is it that you want Jesus to do when he gets into your heart? James 17:9 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Do you really want "the Holy One of God" in your wicked heart? What do you expect him to do there? To dwell in your sin or to cleanse your heart and make you whole?

Perhaps you are waiting to the end of this writing to see if there is a prayer for you to repeat. Why would you put any trust in a "saving prayer" of any man? You should test every word of man against the Bible to see if it is indeed biblical. [Acts 17:11] Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." [John 5:39] You do

not need another man's words to pray your way into the kingdom of God. You can do as "the father of the child [who] cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." [Mark 9:24] The Holy Spirit will help you call on Christ if you ask. [Romans 8:26]

So, you are willing to Admit that you are a sinner. You Believe wholeheartedly John 3:16:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Maybe you are even ready to Confess your belief in Jesus Christ to others. Are you still plagued with these questions?

1. What must I do:
 - a. To be saved?
 - b. To inherit eternal life?
2. Have I been chosen:
 - a. Or is there really no reason to try?

Let's cover the first question(s):

You, me—No one can *do* anything to be saved or to inherit eternal life. We cannot work to earn salvation or access to heaven. Remember Isaiah 64:6, "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags"?

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

[Galatians 2:16]

Now, you might be thinking of the examples where Jesus told those who came to him—inquiring into how to obtain eternal life—to follow the law. How do we reconcile this?

The Jews were given the law of God through Moses and expounded (making law upon law) on it greatly. Reading the Bible (or through the life of Jesus) exposes the self-righteousness of the (religious) Jews, believing their works would be counted as their righteousness before God. Jesus used his teachings and example to lead them (or those that had ears) to understand that “the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” [Galatians 3:24 – 25] We are not saved by works of the flesh, nor can we be. If it were possible to save ourselves, then why did Christ have to die? The question is rhetorical. Christ had to die. “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” [1 Corinthians 15:22]

This does not mean the law is non-important, as some might wish to believe. Claiming “Once Saved, Always Saved” is not a license for one to “come to Christ” only to remain the same wretched sinner that we were before (clearly *not*) making him LORD of our life. Jesus made it clear in Matthew 5 that the law is still important:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and

Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

[Matthew 5:17 – 19]

The law declares the holy, perfect standard of God, while exposing mankind's inability to obey it holy and perfectly. Jesus Christ is the only One born without the sin nature given us by Adam, and who obeyed the law (in spirit and by letter) completely. This is why our works cannot save us. We cannot obtain righteousness in and of ourselves.

Example:

Let's say a person has stolen something of yours. They get caught and imprisoned. The judge examines the evidence and finds them guilty of theft. They go to jail for the allotted time and are then freed back into society. Are they still a thief? Yes. They may never steal again and they may have paid their time, but neither of those voids or erases their conviction of being a thief.

The same holds true for each one of us who have broken the law. Read 1 Corinthians 6:9 – 10:

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, **Nor thieves**, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, **shall inherit the kingdom of God.**

We do not cease to be a thief (or any other sin listed here or elsewhere in scripture) simply because we Admit we are a thief (or sinner) and Believe that Jesus Christ died so that we can go to heaven and receive eternal life. So, we still have a problem.

The problem is, (remember) if we have offended in one point of the law, we are guilty of all. Whereas man's standard of justice is different than God's. With man, the thief is required to pay the price (whether time, money, etc.), yet never walks out innocent or forgiven. They simply "paid their debt to society," but remain a convicted felon, etc. With God, the sinner is cast into hell, then hell into the lake of fire (the second death). No man will ever escape or leave this lake of fire, because they are not Elect, having not their name written in the Lamb's book of life. [Revelation 21:27] They have rejected Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is "*the way, the truth, and **the life***." Jesus Christ is the life, and "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have **eternal life**." [John 3:15] Our sin gives us wages of death, "but the gift of God is **eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord." [Romans 6:23] We must look unto, pursue, and cleave to no other than Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Maybe, at this point, you are saying you completely agree with everything that has been written, but still you are concerned with whether or not God has predestined you, before the world began, to be part of his Elect. (Our second question.)

Let me give you a section of scripture that I believe can force one to examine the issue from man's responsibility, instead of by God's sovereignty.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he

hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

[John 6:35 – 39]

When you read this, what do you see? Not what you have been told or read about elsewhere, but what does the Spirit show you from the text?

Maybe you see God picking the Elect:

- All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.
- And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

This seems to validate the question: **Have I been chosen?**

However, let's take another look at the same verses:

- I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.
- Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.
- And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Now, you have a choice to make. You can continue to ponder (or even agonize over) whether or not the Father has given you to Jesus, or you can do what he says to do: Come and Believe. If you are looking for something to *do*, here it is: Come to Jesus Christ. Believe on Jesus Christ. Don't simply ask Jesus to come into your heart or repeat a prayer someone else has prayed or written, come bearing "fruits worthy of repentance." [Luke 3:8]

Jesus Christ preached, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” [Luke 13] From the beginning of his ministry, he declared, “Repent ye, and believe the gospel.” [Matthew 4; Mark 1]

Do you desire to be saved from the world, the flesh, and the devil? Do you long to be cleansed of sin, indwelt by the Spirit, and in fellowship with the Father? Are you ready to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour of your life?

He is already LORD [John 1:3; Philippians 2:5 – 11]. The question is, are you willing to repent of (turn away from) your sin (*the works of the flesh*; Galatians 5:19 – 21 — *all that is in the world*; 1 John 2:16) and put faith in “Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God”? [Hebrews 12:1 – 2]

Hope

Our hope is in the righteousness of Christ. [Matthew 6:33]

Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

[Romans 3:22 – 27]

Salvation is by grace, through faith, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ; the holy, spotless, “Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” [John 1:29]

The question should not be: **Have I been chosen?** Rather, it should be: Do I acknowledge my wretchedness before a holy, righteous God, and am I willing to repent of my sinfulness and put my complete faith in Jesus Christ, desiring that he wash me clean, white as snow? [Psalm 15:7; Isaiah 1:18]

I will end with one final story, giving the reader a picture of what my mindset has been throughout this writing. In Matthew 15, Jesus comes upon “a woman of Canaan.”

Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto

him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

[Matthew 15:21 – 28]

The woman cries out: “Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.” Notice it was not just once, but she kept crying after him, even when Jesus “answered her not a word.”

Finally, Jesus “answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Maybe this is how you feel (or felt) about the Elect of God. That some are of the Elect, but you are (were) without.

Still, the woman “worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.” Even with what Jesus said, she worshipped him and continued to plead with him. Are you willing to worship and plead to Jesus?

Then Jesus “answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.” Just as we are sinners, unworthy of the mercy and grace, forgiveness and salvation of God through Jesus Christ.

Still she pleads, “Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall

from their masters' table." Are you willing to see yourself as God sees you, in comparison to the perfect, holy Lamb of God?

At any point, she could have walked away. She could have called him unloving when he refused to acknowledge her cries. She could have felt rejected by his declaration of being sent only to the Jews. She could have been offended by his assessment of her unworthiness to ask anything of him. Instead, she persisted.

"Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Her faith was in knowing what Jesus Christ could do, not worrying about what he might not do. She did not say, "I am not a Jew, I cannot ask."

This is how we must come to Jesus Christ. He is LORD, not us. He is righteous, not us. He is the only means whereby we may be cleansed of sin and have fellowship with his Father (and our Father). We must worship him, for he is worthy to be worshiped, whether he answers our pleas or not. We must put complete faith in him, for there is no other hope but in and through him.

Some might see this story and wonder why Jesus didn't answer the woman right away. Doesn't it seem like he was being rather hard on a desperate woman, whose was pleading with him to help her daughter who was vexed with a devil? Surely, he already knew her heart, why did he have to act like he didn't care or wasn't going to help her?

None of us know what was in the mind of Christ at that moment, or why he did and said what is recorded. However, I don't see the story in a *negative* way. I see a Saviour who was trying a woman's faith, "knowing this, that the trying of [our] faith worketh patience." [James 1:3] How much do you think it meant to the woman to hear, "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt," after worshiping, pleading, and trusting in Jesus for his mercy and power to answer her petition? Do you think she soon forgot it?

Naaman was wroth when he was told to wash in the Jordan seven times to be cleansed of leprosy. [2 Kings 5] Of the ten cleansed lepers in Luke 17, only one returned to give glory to God. Will we be as one of these: To demand (or expect) salvation on our terms, or to merely take it for granted? Would that not further prove our sinfulness?

Will we come to Christ asking (or telling) him to save us (so that we can have the benefits of salvation, of being one of the Elect), while we have no true desire to acknowledge, have godly sorrow toward, or turn away from our sin (and the lusts thereof)? Once we have asked him into our hearts or repeated a prayer (and “really meant it”), shall we scarcely find reason “to be conformed to the image of his Son;” even though that is the whole purpose of why Christ “was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification”? [Romans 4]

God will not be fooled, if we do as the Jews did:

Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

[Matthew 15:7 – 8]

Come

It is my hope that I have presented an argument to compel you to come to Christ. This has not been meant to be a defense of an –ism nor a rebuttal of one, but rather a pointing of the reader to the only means of salvation we have: Repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

To ponder or try to determine if one is of the Elect is to be done *after* one professes to be a child (Elect) of God, *after* conversion (the new birth). This is why Peter wrote, “*Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.*” [2 Peter 2:10]

He says, *Brethren*: Those who claim to have repented and put faith in Jesus Christ. No one can tell a lost person if they have been (or will be) chosen, Elected, by God to salvation. They can only say, to be the Elect, one must be sanctified by the Spirit and sprinkled by the blood of Christ. [1 Peter 1:2] Such surety cannot happen until one comes to Christ: *The way, the truth, the life.*

The Spirit and the bride [the Church] say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

[Revelation 22:17]

Whosoever will. Are you willing to trust in the Son of God and turn away from your sin? Will you be as the woman who worshipped him, had faith in him, and pled with him, to do what only he could do, knowing she deserved neither mercy nor grace? Are you willing to submit to Christ as Lord of your life, laying all that you are and all that you have at his feet?

Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

[Romans 10:13]

Scripture declares:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

[Ephesians 2:8-10]

When we turn from sin to Christ (the new birth), we are God's workmanship, and he immediately begins to conform us into the image of his Son. That image is a man (or woman) walking (daily) in good works, produced by the fruit of the indwelling Spirit of God. [Galatians 5:22 – 24] Such fruit "is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." [Ephesians 5:9] Our new life should be completely different than our old life [2 Corinthians 5:17], as we "walk in the Spirit" and strive (with the Spirit's help) to "not fulfil the lust of the flesh." [Galatians 5:16 – 26]

Jesus warned of false conversion, false profession:

Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

[Matthew 7:17 – 20]

You want proof that you are of the Elect? Repent, put faith in Jesus Christ, and do the works of God. Submit unto the LORD. Else, you may believe a lie with eternal consequences.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth

the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

[Matthew 7:21 – 23]

The Psalmist writes:

Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

[Psalm 26:2]

Paul admonishes:

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

[2 Corinthians 3:5]

You want a place to start? Try Psalm 139:23 – 24:

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Through Christ, we can be cleansed from sin. We can have a relationship with our heavenly Father. We can display the fruit of the Spirit, which dwelleth in us. We can inherit eternal life.

The gospel has been presented. What will you now do with it?

The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

[Romans 10:8 – 11]

Do you really want to be the Elect of God, or has the statement (or question) concerning your Election been merely a reason (or excuse) to basically (or covertly) blame God rather than yourself for not having already repented of sin and put faith in Jesus Christ?

What you do next will prove to yourself and God which it is. I pray it is the former, giving you “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, [that] shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” [Philippians 4:7]

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

[Paul, Philippians 4:8 – 9]

Paul tells us “that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” [1 Timothy 1:15] He ends the verse with, “of whom I am chief.” You think you are too bad, too lost for God to save? Paul already claimed that position: Chief among sinners. You may be second worst (if you wish), but take a look at what Jesus said when his disciples asked, “Who then can be saved?”

But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, **With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.**

[Matthew 19:26; Mark 10:27; Luke 18:27]

John writes, “as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” [John 1:12 – 13]

Our blood cannot write us into the Lamb’s book of life. [Revelation 21:27] Our flesh cannot earn us entrance into heaven. [Romans 3:20; Romans 7:8; Galatians 2:16] Our will cannot demand of God nor create our own means to eternal life. [Romans 9:16; 1 Peter 1:21]

We must receive the Word of God, the Light of God: Jesus Christ. To be born of God, [John 3] we must come through Jesus Christ in repentance [Matthew 9:13; 2 Peter 3:9] and faith. [John 6:47; Romans 1:16 – 17]

I will leave you with the words of Jesus:

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

[Matthew 11:28]

Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

[John 6:37b]