

Election - National & Personal

by Rolfe Barnard

Rolfe Barnard's sermon explores the doctrines of national and personal election, emphasizing God's sovereignty and the importance of faith and repentance in the believer's life.

Duration: 1:03:05

Scripture: Matthew 15:22

Topics: "Election", "Sovereignty Of God", "Election and Grace"

Description

Rolfe Barnard emphasizes the doctrines of national and personal election in his sermon, using the story of a Gentile woman from Matthew 15 to illustrate God's sovereign choices. He explains that while Jesus initially appeared to reject her, He was teaching a profound truth about God's grace and mercy, which is not limited by human understanding. Barnard encourages believers to embrace the doctrine of election as a source of hope rather than discouragement, asserting that salvation is found solely in Christ. He warns against the misuse of this doctrine to instill fear or confusion, urging listeners to focus on their relationship with God and the call to repentance. Ultimately, he highlights that God's sovereignty and goodness work together for the salvation of those who believe.

Transcript

In the 15th chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, we have the story of a Gentile woman approaching our Lord, and our Lord deliberately, to us it looks like, was very rude to her. Our Lord answered her request, she comes as recorded in verse 22, and says, Have mercy on me, O Lord. Thou son of David, my daughter Grievous of Ex was a demon.

But he answered her, first of all, not a word. And his disciples came, but saw him saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us. And so he finally spoke to the woman, here she comes now, she's got a daughter in bad shape, and he first doesn't say anything to her, and then when he does say something to her, he brings up the doctrine of national election.

He answered and said, I'm not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. I read a sermon by Mrs. Spurgeon on this text, and Mrs. Spurgeon suggested that perhaps one reason the Lord confronted this woman was a very stern doctrine. And he did it in such a way as to discourage her, it looks like, was that he wanted to get her the truth about the matter before she heard it misrepresented as she later would.

Somebody's bound to tell this seeking woman that our Lord's ministry, when he first came here, was confined exclusively for a while to the Jewish people, and that he wasn't looking for Gentiles. And they were going to tell it in a way to make error out of truth and discourage a woman that didn't need to be discouraged. I wouldn't be surprised if Mrs. Spurgeon hadn't got the truth there.

One of the things that I hear so many times every week, I listen to you as you witness people come to see me, and I go see others, and it seems that religious people, preachers, many of them, people, are making a terrible boogie-boo out of the fact that the little new church that we're trying to start, hope the Lord will plant, that we do believe in the doctrine not only of national election for the Jews, but of personal election for the Christians, for the believers. I hear all manner of things about that terrible truth, and now and then I feel impressed to the spirit, as I have all week, to address myself to any who are present tonight who are in earnest about your soul's relationship to God and to say a helpful word, if I can, to all of you who in this age where we have scouted Bible proof, and where we don't know much about what the scriptures teach us, to encourage you, not to join the ranks of people who are ashamed of what's in the Bible, but also to encourage you to remember that it's not simply this truth, but it's every truth in the Bible, that you must approach it as a little child willing to be taught, and that your conception of any teaching in the word of God will be guided by your conception of the God of the word. If you've got a little God that you can comprehend, that you can understand, then you'll expect to understand his great teaching.

But the Apostle Paul is, of all the writers of the New Testament, the one writer who devotes more time than anybody except our Lord, and there together Paul didn't learn something the Lord didn't know, but he's responsible for what we call the doctrines of grace. And when Paul gets on them, he has a word for us that would be very helpful if we pay attention to. In the 11th chapter of the book of Romans, after Romans chapter 9, where God's sovereignty is certainly taught, chapter 10 and chapter 11, where sovereignty rings in every verse, here is the reaction that the Holy Spirit moved the Apostle Paul to write down as his own reaction, and I trust it will be ours.

Every great truth in the Bible is subject to faith, but none of them to understanding. There is no man living that can explain how God is one and yet three. There is no man living that can explain how the Lord Jesus Christ is one and yet two.

He's God and yet he's man. There is no man living that can understand a single basic teaching of the word of God. And I beg you, if you proclaim to know the Lord Jesus Christ, to exhibit some of the spirit of the Apostle Paul when he's delved into the secrets of God.

His reaction is given in verses 33 through verse 36. This is a good place to camp, and I use this before coming to the text tonight. Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.

They are too deep for you to understand them. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. I like the word of Barnhouse, a good teacher of God's word.

That while we cannot understand, while we wait for more light, we can worship. That sounds like a Christian. That sounds like somebody who's got some conception of the majesty and the glory of God.

For who hath known the mind of the Lord? The Apostle Paul was a graduate of the greatest universities of his day. He was a member as a young man of the Sanhedrin. You had to know something.

He was a student of the greatest teacher of his day. He went to school to Jesus Christ in the spirit in Arabia for three years. It took him that long to show him the gospel.

After he's expounded into all of its richness and fullness, he throws up his hands and worships of God, whose ways are so far above our ways that it behooves us children of the dust to shut our big mouths and quit criticizing God and quit saying we'll believe only what we can understand and quit trying to reason out the great truths of the Bible in such a way as to dishonor God and to make our wisdom equal with his. Who hath known the mind of the Lord? For who hath been his counselor? For who hath first given to him? And it shall be reconvinced unto him again. For of him and through him and to him are all things.

To whom be glory, to whom be glory, to whom be glory forever. Every truth in this Bible is going to bring glory to God. Every truth in this Bible is going to bring glory to God by being a blessing to mankind.

When God says he does all things to promote his glory, he's not pulling his rank like the dead in the ark. He chooses to promote his glory by promoting the good of mankind. Every truth in the Bible is to promote the glory of God and the good of man.

Now, with that word of caution, I want to approach the subject tonight. I want to be a little tedious tonight. Mark a little time tonight.

Maybe come down and be a little more like a teacher tonight. I feel the need of it. There is such a vast ignorance today.

My, how Winston-Salem's been filled with perversion of what the doctrine of election is today. You meet it on your milk route. You meet it on your mail route.

You meet it where you work. You meet it down at Reynolds. You meet it down at Hays.

You meet it on the streets. You meet it everywhere. My God, isn't it awful to take a doctrine, even take it in its truth, and use it to discourage men and women from seeking with their whole heart to know Christ as their Lord and Savior.

I think perhaps our Lord would have us now and then to try to clear some of the smoke that religious people are putting in the way of sinners getting to Christ by their coming and taking great truths in the Bible and trying to reason from them out of their little puny heads and drawing conclusions that will damn every sinner that listens to them and will dishonor God Almighty. The first time the glory of God is mentioned as a truth in the Bible, we find in Exodus chapter 33 that God's going to promote his glory. Moses asked God, I want to see your glory.

Show me thy glory. And God says, the way I'll show my glory, I'll make all my goodness pass before thee. I'll proclaim the name of Jehovah before thee and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

That blessed truth is being used today to discourage people. I've been in hundreds of Baptist churches where the mention of it, and it is so, causes confusion for people who say they know the Lord. They immediately jump up, take the bits in their hands and the reins in their hands and begin to accuse God of being a devil and accuse God of being a monster.

I hear this precious doctrine that is a blessed doctrine in the sight of God that was used by my Lord as a source of encouragement when he faced people and they wouldn't believe, although they saw him, he fell back on the truth that God Almighty had come that would listen to him. This blessed gospel that is for the comfort of every child of God and has a very marvelous effect on everybody who isn't a Christian, if it's gotten right, not from the realm of understanding, but from the realm of revelation, if we'll take what God says instead of what we make God say, if we'll let God jump from place to place instead of us doing the jumping, we wouldn't have all of this confusion. I say to you that the way back to the power of God is not by letting those who forbid truth have all they say, we must come and find the truth.

And tonight I want to assert again that God Almighty is sovereign. He's sovereign in creation. He's sovereign in providence.

He handles the nations that seem as good in his sight. He's sovereign in salvation. He's gracious to whom he will be gracious.

He shows mercy to whom he will show mercy. But I say to you, my friends, that God Almighty has a right to do that very thing, and whether you believe it or not, it's so, and it worries God very little. I'm not here tonight to apologize for the glorious doctrine of the truth that God sovereignly, and without asking anybody, according to his own will, that God Almighty chooses those whom he will save.

I'm not ready to apologize for that. But I do want to say some things tonight, if I may, to show you that that truth, instead of being jeered at, that truth instead of being ignored, that truth instead of being used as a club to discourage people who are seeking the way, that's the grandest truth this side of hell has. I make bold to say that the wisest person in all of creation is Almighty God.

That our little wisdom, all of it, put together is a drop in the bucket to the side of God. And I'm glad that the one in whom all wisdom in its fullness is placed is the one who's running things. Blessed God, I'm glad that God is sovereign.

I tell you right now, if God were not the supreme ruler, the wisest men on the face of the earth tonight would hold a meeting before sunup and elect him to be sovereign. Because if we are not going to have God as sovereign, we've got to have the devil, and I'd rather have God, wouldn't you? God Almighty is perfect in wisdom. Do you believe that? The God of the Bible is perfect in wisdom.

It is a disgrace to call anything he says he does a damnable doctrine when he is full of wisdom. And anybody that talks that way here now is showing that he doesn't know what he's talking about about doctrine. He just ain't acquainted with God.

For anybody that even gets in spitting distance of a saving relationship with the God and Paul of our Lord Jesus Christ will bow and say thou art all wise. Whatever you do, praise God for it. Thank God the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. He is all wise. The God of the Bible is represented as having his name.

His name is holiness. He's perfect in holiness. He's so perfect in wisdom that he cannot do wrong.

He's so perfect in holiness that he will not do wrong. The God of the Bible, the essence of the God of the Bible, God is love. Old time theologians were right.

They say that every attribute of God streams from his love. God is holy, but God almighty is love. Everything that God does has for the base of his doing it L-O-V-E, love.

If he damns a man and sends him to hell, he does it out of the base of love. For there's no such thing as perfect love that just loves everything. You can kid yourself out loving your wife with a perfect love, all you want to, if there's no difference between your love of a pure woman and your hatred of a wicked woman.

There's nothing to your hatred. There's nothing to your love. God has his essence, love, and being love.

Bless God he's fit to do as he pleases. He's sovereign in the dispensation of his grace. Our Lord Jesus Christ tells us in Luke chapter 4 that there were many widows in the time of Elijah the prophet.

But to none of the widows of the Jewish nation was Elijah sent, but instead he was sent to a Gentile. A heathen woman to be succored. Our Lord says that there were many lepers in the time of Elijah the prophet.

But God didn't send Elijah to heal the lepers in Israel of their leprosy. But he went and picked the Hitler of his day. For Naaman was the Hitler, the despot of his day, a Gentile, and sovereignly saved him.

Our Bible is clear about one thing, that the Lord has made sovereign choices between men and angels. The angels that left their first estate. There has never been one move from the heart and will of God from that day until that day to save them or make their salvation possible.

He took not upon himself the seed of angels. He didn't come to identify himself with angels at all. But he took upon himself the seed of Abraham, the father of believers.

You say you don't believe that God is sovereign in his choice? He dead sure is in that he chose for reasons he hadn't explained to us to allow the angels to sin and be cast out. And he has never made one move to affect their salvation. He's sovereign as between the angels and between mankind.

Do you think my friends there's anything in old Zacchaeus? Climbed up there in that sycamore tree. While down at his house his wife and kids took with clubs to guard the money he'd stolen from his Jewish compatriots. And yell that old man's up in a tree to see Christ.

That Christ stopped! You mean tell me saw anything good in old Steeler in the old sea? You mean to tell me there was something about Zacchaeus that appealed to Christ from within Zacchaeus? No! It was the sovereign choice of a sovereign God who acts as he pleases. You mean tell me that as Saul went down the road to Damascus to kill off some old Christians. That God looked down and saw that old Saul was a nice sort of a fella.

And that if he could get him saved he'd do all that for him. That business about doing something for Jesus you know. And he said I'll just save him so he'll curse me.

There was no reason on earth why Paul was arrested there. Except that God almighty set his love upon him. And went and struck him blind and saved him by his wonderful grace.

Go with me on to Jacob's well. And tell me what you see within the life of the heart of that harlot woman. Had five ex-living husbands still living in the city of Sychar.

Living now without the benefit of perjury with the six. And she comes there to draw water at Jacob's well. Tell me! Tell me what my blessed Lord saw inside of that wicked harlot woman.

And I'll tell you you can't do it! You can't do it! I'm telling you now. If anybody gets old Saul saved it'll have to be God. If anybody saves that old harlot woman it'll have to be God.

If anybody saves that old thief like Zacchaeus it'll have to be God. You needn't talk to me about cooperating with God. They were cooperating all right.

Paul was killing Christians. The woman was committing adultery. Zacchaeus was stealing everything and looting both ends.

And yet God in his sovereign mercy arrested them, stopped them, crossed their paths and saved them by his marvelous grace. Now having said that let me say something to you. If I speak to anybody here and you know that if you die tonight you plunge right middle into hell.

Some of you know that. I want to tell you something. Next time anybody professing to be a Christian, listen to me.

Next time anybody that professes to be a Christian, listen to me. Tries to ram any doctrine down you. You get your club telling I gave you the authority and you knock them in the head.

You let Ralph Barnett tell you this. You are to be occupied not with God's secret decrees. You can study from now you're blue in the face.

But I'll tell you right now. You'll never know a thing on earth about God's elective grace as far as you're concerned. It don't come under the head of your business.

And your business is to face your lost and ruined condition and try to look until the crucified risen Christ works through the spirit. A work of grace in your heart enables you to get to Christ and turn to God. That's your job.

That's your job. Oh, the talks about they believe in election. Who in God's name is trying to get any sinner to believe any doctrine.

We're trying to get you to surrender to a glorious person. To a glorious person. Oh, how they've abused you in this country.

How they've abused you. My soul, it's precious. And I propose to show you tonight that your duty is for the reveal will of God.

The Lord told you to repent. That's what you better start facing. The Lord told you to believe.

Your duty is to believe in Christ. Your duty is to repent of your sins and turn towards God. Your duty is that.

That's as plain as anybody. You don't have to have any secret role to see that. And bless God, the reveal will of God is what you are to be concerned with.

No man will ever find out whether he's one of God's elect until after he's saved. The only evidence anybody here has got tonight that you're one of those that God chose before the foundation of the world.

Is that the gospel came and made a change in your life.

It came to you in power. Yes, sir. That's right.

Listen, listen, listen. You just forget God's secret decrees tonight. We'll come back a little bit more.

And just to pay a little attention to what he tells you to do. He commands all men everywhere to repent. As you repentant, he don't tell you to take your time about it.

It's in the imperative mood when the word repent occurs in the New Testament. Oh, in the lips of Christ Jesus or the apostle Paul or Peter or anybody else in the book of Revelation. It's repent right now.

Right now. My God, you need to tell me you're willing to live throughout the rest of this night in open rebellion to God almighty's command. For you to repent towards God.

For you to repent towards God. You need to tell me that you're willing to go home and close your eyes and go to sleep. For only God can wake you up.

And you may wake up in hell without having given your attention to his plainly revealed word. For you to put your faith in Christ and turn to God. That's what you need to see.

That's what you need to see. Hear me. Somebody says, well, I'll stand you up in the election down there.

And I don't know whether I'm one of the elect or not. No, sir. That's right.

And I don't either. But I know God commands you to repent. I know God commands you to believe.

I know he does that. And I know this. I know this.

That you wouldn't act a fool any other way. Brother, if you were sick. If you were sick, you'd say, well, if I call a doctor and he gave me some medicine.

I don't know whether, I don't know whether God blesses or not. If God don't bless the medicine to the doctor, I'll die in hell so I just won't call the doctor. You wouldn't do that.

You wouldn't say, well, I know if I go out and plant my crop, I know it won't make a thing unless God almighty sends the sunshine and the rain and gives the increase. You can't even raise tobacco without the providence of God, can you? You say, well, I don't know whether it's his will for me to have a crop or not. And so I'll just sit around the stove and I won't plow fir and I won't sow a seed.

You wouldn't do that, would you? Would you? Why, of course you wouldn't do that. And I'm telling you right now. You listen to me, brother.

If you can plow through the church members making fun of these great truths, you'll come to this truth. Those church members are trying to disturb you because they're using these great truths as a cloak to hide their unwillingness to come clean with God. That's the only, all this fuss about this damnable doctrine.

It doesn't come from honest hearts. It comes from hearts that are using what they think it teaches as an excuse for their unbelief, their failure to bow to the Lord Jesus Christ. But look how this blessed truth is misrepresented.

Somebody says, Preacher, Preacher, don't you think that if a father had two sons and he was good to one of them and he was mean to the other and he blessed one of them and he just cursed the other, don't you think that'd be terrible? Certainly, certainly. But that isn't the way it is with God and man. That isn't the way it is.

It's not a great, loving, heavenly father being nice to one son and being wicked, mean to another. It's a holy and a just God dealing not with sinners but with criminals who've broken his holy law and subject to nothing but the judgment of a holy God. A man told me this week about talking to a big businessman, the man, he's got it all fixed up and misrepresents a lot of people.

He said, Can't tell me something like that, that God would make a man and then send him to hell. Well, leave out one truth and that man's got it right. Ladies and gentlemen, if God made you in the shape you're in now and then sends you to hell, he is a monster.

And if you could prove to me that God's responsible for that old wicked heart of yours and that old wicked body of yours. And if you could prove to me you are in the shape that God made you and that God made you like you are. You love sin, you drink sin, you drink iniquity like it is water, the Old Testament says.

You're prone to evil, it's hard to do good. If you could prove to me that this world of sinners were made like they are by God. And then prove that God do that and then send folks to hell for action just like their nature claims they ought to.

I'd curse God and die, but God didn't do that. God, the Bible says, made you upright. Made you upright.

The Bible says when God created you, he created you perfect. The Bible says when God created you, he created you in all holiness. That's right.

And by your own sin, you changed the image of God. Now, I think the fellow says in the book you've been reading, the image is mine. And now, God does not deal with men and women as his erring sons.

He deals with men and women as criminals against his holy law. And it behooves this generation ever to be silent in the presence of that. The only claim that any sinner this side of hell, the only right that any sinner this side of hell's got to pop off to God.

I can see where a sinner's got a perfect right to stand up on his hind legs and say, God, I demand what's coming to me. I think a fellow's got a right to fight for what's coming to him. But all on earth any of the sons of Adam have coming to them is exactly what God promised that he'd do.

In the day thou eatest that fruit thine, thou shalt surely die. And the only demand that anybody's got on God is kill me and send me to hell. That's right.

That's right. You're not willing to do that? Oh, my God-blessed man, don't join this gang of unsaved church members telling God how to run his business and refusing to believe anything in the Bible because it's too deep for their puny little minds. This world's a giant prison house full of people not on probation, full of people who've been brought into God's courtroom and have been tried and have been found guilty and have been sentenced to eternal hell.

And unless God shall grant them a pardon, this whole world will go to hell. No, it's everybody else's God ought to do that way. No, all God ought to do is to open up the earth as he did the sons of Cobra and let

you go to hell without time to pack a suitcase.

That's all God ought to do. Hear me? People say, I don't believe God ought to do this to one fellow and not do it to the other fellow. No, God ought to send them both to hell.

But I come tonight to say three things. First, the glorious truth that God, God does the saving. He does it because he purposes to do it.

That truth is precious and it does not oppose any other truth in the word of God. I've heard so much since I've been in this section the last ten years about the goodness of God. They say, Brother Barnett, you folks, the kind of God you preach isn't good.

I believe in a good God. So do I. So do I. God says, I'll show my glory, I'll make all my goodness to pass before you. Oh, you say, Brother Barnett, I believe that God's good to everybody.

I do too. If he hadn't been good to you, you'd have been to hell a long time ago. That's right.

Oh, how good he is, sends rays on the just and the unjust. Oh, how long suffering he is to all mankind. I believe in the virtue of the death of my blessed Lord.

That the throne of God is now a throne of grace and just ministry. And get out on the street tomorrow and open his mouth and with the breath that God gives him, Blaspheme the holy name of God. And the earth won't open and he won't drop into hell.

Why? The goodness of God. Ladies and gentlemen, listen to me. Listen to me.

Winston-Salem's going to hell. Because it will not face one solemn fact. That any man or woman or boy or girl who goes out of this world trusting in the goodness of God to save them apart from him being vitally joined to Christ is wrong.

You go to the hospital tomorrow if you think I'm popping off tonight. You show me some old fellow without dying of cancer. Ask him if he's trusting the Lord.

He'll tell you he will. Yes. Ask him if he believes in Jesus Christ.

He'll tell you he does. Boy, he believes God's good. You go down to the Jewish rabbi tomorrow.

Or to some orthodox Jew on the Jewish tour. And ask him if he doesn't believe in the goodness of God. And he does.

Oh, I believe in the goodness of God. Sending his blessings on all mankind. But brother, you go to hell so fast you kick up dust in the devil's face if you do not find out that the trust in the goodness of God apart from vital connection with Christ means your eternal damnation.

There is no salvation in the fact that God's so good he sends the rain on the just and the unjust. The only salvation is the fact that God is in Christ saving sinners. Oh yes, he's good.

I don't believe God will do that. He's too good. Yes, he's too good to be unjust to anybody.

But brother, he's so holy and he's so just that unless you come to terms with the terms of the gospel unless you come to grips with Christ as he freely offered in the gospel goodness or no goodness you're

going to hell. That's right. And the doctrine of election is simply that.

The doctrine of election just hymns you up, brother, to the fact that salvation's in Christ. Salvation's in Christ. Salvation's not in the fact that God almighty sends the rain on the just and the unjust.

Salvation's not in the fact that God deals in mercy toward all mankind. Salvation's not in the fact that God's long suffering. Salvation's in Jesus Christ, the well-beloved son of the living God.

And goodness or no goodness, there isn't any salvation anywhere else. And the doctrine of election that they make fun of us for believing simply is this, that God does what he does in Christ. In Christ.

In Christ. I'm so glad there are two ways to spell elect. One is E-L-E-C-T, and the other is B-E-L-I-E-V-E.

I'm glad that the gospel is the story of Jesus Christ purchasing the salvation of everybody God chose. I'm further glad that the gospel is the blessed story of Christ hanging on a cross and being raised from a glorious grave that everybody that believes on him shall be saved. You spell the word elect two ways, B-E-L-I-E-V-E.

Everybody that believes on Christ is saved. Everybody God chooses is going to get saved. I'm glad.

I'm glad. But nobody's going to get saved out of Christ. Nobody.

Nobody. Nobody. Nobody ain't going to get saved because God's good sends the rain.

Everybody gets saved. Gets saved if he finally joins Christ. What this town doesn't need to hear is that God's good.

Oh, they're going to hell believing that. They're going to hell talking about that. I never met a fellow hardly that wasn't trusting the goodness of God.

All the church members will tell you about how God do his good. He's too good to do this. He's too good to do that.

The doctrine of election tells us this is how good God is. He's good enough to save every vile son of Adam's race that gets into Christ, gets to Christ, gets to Christ, gets to Christ. Oh, yes.

It's the hopeful doctrine. They say, well, Barney, don't discourage people. Well, thank God, the doctrine of election, how it does give hope.

How it does give hope. Listen. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord.

How many is that? Whosoever. How many? Whosoever. How many? Whosoever.

Mr. Finney was preaching in Spurgeon's Tabernacle. It had four balconies at that time. Mr. Finney got up and gave his text.

Whosoever. Well, let him take the water of life freely. Man, great big old Irishman up in the fourth balcony.

And listen. Mr. Finney cupped his hands to his mouth, and he repeated it, and he emphasized word by word. Whosoever will, let him come and take.

Then he said, whosoever will, let him take. While he was going over that, emphasizing the word, big old Irishman had come down to the lower floor and coming down the middle aisle. Got down halfway to the big pulpit and he lifted his hand.

Mr. Finney stopped. And the old Irishman said, Mr. Finney, does whosoever include me? And Mr. Finney said, yes, my brother. Whosoever surely meaneth you.

And you read that little chorus. Whosoever surely meaneth me, bless God. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Shall be saved. Somebody says, Brother Barnes, Brother Barnes, we believe in prayer. So do I. I don't believe a sinner is saved by doing like the evangelist telling you.

Now, if you walk down this aisle and get down on your knees and pray the sinner's prayer, he'll save you. No, this text takes a little looking into how shall they call on him in whom they've not believed. But it's a precious promise, and I forbid no sinner to pray.

I keep saying go home and get along with God and cry to him for a new heart. I keep saying go home and cry to him to grant you the grace of repentance. I keep saying until you go home and pray, you're not going to hurt anything, brother.

I tell you right now, the Bible doesn't say that God told the sons of Jacob to seek him in vain. And I believe that the man who prays was given a desire to pray and God gave it. And I say pray on sinners and seek on sinners.

And the doctrine of election that sure does not that the content. I believe that God chooses those who are saved. I also believe it's true.

Ask, you shall receive. Seek, and ye shall find. Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

Whoso asketh and seeketh and knocketh. They're both in the Bible. They're both in the Bible.

And I'm just as dead certain, brother, that if you ever start seeking the Lord, it proves what I'm preaching. Before you ever started seeking him, he started seeking you. I try.

Now watch. This blessed doctrine certainly doesn't oppose the indications of the gospel. Oh, my, would it be awful if we couldn't quote, If any man, sir, If any man, Oh, everyone that such doth come.

Come unto me, all ye who weary and heavy laden. What wonderful invitation. As wide as the need of man.

No use to talk about whether folks who are not thirsty are invited. It'd be silly to invite a fellow unless he's thirsty. But I'll tell you how wide the invitation is.

It's as wide as the thirst of mankind. It's as wide as the need of mankind. It's as wide as the guilt of mankind.

Oh, the glory of the gospel invitation. God sends fear. And I believe him.

Oh, I ain't gonna get you to thinking that coming to Christ can be done with your feet. Or your hands. Or your lips.

I ain't gonna let you believe coming to Christ is walking down an aisle. It's not a physical matter, is it? It's a spiritual matter. And all the light you'll ever have is what's revealed in the gospel.

You'll have to come to him believing what the gospel says about him. You're not gonna receive a revelation of some light shining. I believe that Christ must be revealed to your heart.

But he'll be revealed to your heart as you by faith act upon the gospel. That's right. And every invitation, not a one of them, opposes the glorious truth we're preaching.

This blessed gospel does not oppose the terms of the gospel. What is the gospel message then about it? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. He that believeth.

Just as God has said. Just as clear. Just as clear as it can be.

Listen to me. Election or no election. If you can believe on Christ, you'll be saved.

Sovereignty or no sovereignty. If you can lean on Christ with all your strength, you'll be saved. That's right.

We believe it all. We believe it all. This truth I'm preaching tonight.

It's so belabored and made fun of, isn't it? Has a marvelous effect on people who do not know Christ. The old theologians always divided that congregation of sinners into two groups. The awakened sinner.

And the fellow that's still asleep. The awakened sinner is the fellow that says, oh, I wish I could be saved. I wish I could know the Lord.

I wish I could. I wish I could. Some hadn't that fellow.

A year ago he walked the streets and whistled by the cemeteries of his sin. Something happened. Something happened.

He's awakened. He wept. He's afraid.

He's interested. He's meek. He's seeking.

Nobody will ever be saved apart from that. Oh, my soul. Hell's going to be filled up.

Not with sinners that were trying to get saved and couldn't. But with sinners that were sleeping. They're sleeping there.

And to awaken sinners. This blessed truth of God's sovereign election. Has a marvelous, marvelous blessed effect.

In the first place, it's used in the hands of the Holy Spirit. To strike to death all your self-effort. Listen to me, sinner.

If you don't quit listening to the preachers of this day, you're going to go to hell. Working just as hard as you can. To do something yourself to be saved.

The Armenian preacher stirs up your flesh. You do this and you do this. And we come along and say you'll never be saved.

Until you quit doing everything. You're not saved by doing. Why, they say if you'll pray and if you'll do this and if you'll do that and if you'll do the other.

And we come and say no, salvation's of the Lord. What are we trying to do? What are we trying to do? Get you to look to some striving of yourself? No. Get you to look to Him.

Get you to try to repent yourself? No. Get you to look to Him to grant repentance. Get you to think that in your own strength you can get to Christ? No.

Get you to quit in your strength and just fall prostrate in the arms of Him. That's right. We come and tell you if you're ever saved it's because God will save you.

It's because God will save you. All your strivings are no good. Everything you need's in Christ.

Everything's in Christ. God's got nothing for you except in Christ. God's everything for you's in Christ.

You just got one need and that's out of self. Into Christ. Into Christ.

Oh, if I can get a sinner to where he's dead to all self-effort, God him has saved. The battle's almost won. The battle's almost won.

This blessed truth is a very blessed truth because it brings hope to the hopeless. Here's a prison house full of criminals. Somebody says, I tell you if I had a whole lot of money I bet I could bribe the king or the judge.

But I haven't got any money. There's no hope for me. And somebody, if I knew somebody that knew somebody, I might get a pardon.

No hope for you. But the doctrine of election comes along and says there you sit. And if anybody will save you, it must be God.

But oh, that's His business. And just think, without any money, without any price, just think of the folks He saved. Was there ever such a wicked man as Amassiah, the wickedest king of all the Old Testament? And yet God saved him.

Was there ever such a wicked man as Saul of Tarsus, breeding threatens and killing Christians? Yet God saved him. Oh, my. That's hope.

It's hope to the vilest. If He saved people like that, why won't He save me? I tell you what I'm going to do, sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, salvation or damnation, catch myself at the feet of the Lord. Here I am.

Here I am. I'll go to hell. I'll go to hell depending on you.

And if you go to hell that way, you'll be the first one that ever did. Oh, what hope. And then this blessed doctrine brings a wonderful word to a sinner that's interested.

I ain't talking to a fellow if he wants to argue now, but if you're weak under your knees, in the matter of power, you say, Preacher, I wish I could be saved. I've tried this, I've tried that, I've done this, I've done that, I've prayed, I've so-and-so, and I can't get to Christ. I can't get to Christ.

Let me tell you something. This glorious doctrine we preach, the foundation of the gospel, comes and tells you about somebody that will get to you. You can't get to him.

Well, fall where you are, he'll get to you. You can't make it yourself, we'll surrender right there, and his everlasting arms will pick you up. That's right.

Oh, yes, that's right. Bless God, that's right. That's right.

And then this truth has a message for safe sinners. You're just getting along all right. Let me just reason with you a minute.

You say, Preacher, I don't intend to go to hell. Some of these days I'm going to repent, I'm going to get to God. Listen to me.

Listen to me. You're in the prison house. You're in the prison house.

You ain't going to be condemned, been condemned already. You're in the hands of Almighty God. If you get out, he's going to get you out.

You ain't going to do it yourself. You ain't going to do it yourself. You're dead sure not going to do it yourself.

If you get saved, God must do it. Oh, I'm encouraged again. At the vast numbers through the ages, as wicked as I, God met their needs.

I wish I could get you to face this truth. You're in prison. If you get out, God's going to get you out.

That's what election says. And it's telling you the truth. Listen.

You haven't got teeth. You can quit drinking. You can quit cussing.

You can quit doing this. You can quit doing that. But you can't give yourself a new heart.

You can't do it. That's something only God can do. I wish you'd face that.

I wish you'd face that. And I wish you'd do one, two things. Cuss God and go on to hell with both feet straddling down the middle.

Or say, well, if it's up to God to tell you what I'm going to do, I'm going to cast myself on it. I'm going to say, oh, God save me. If I go to hell, I'll go screaming, God have mercy on me.

While the spirit of God walks down the corridors of time and passes by my cell, I'm going to say, oh, thou son of God, have mercy on me. Have mercy. A fellow was telling me today this week about tackling some lost people this week.

And he said, just break your heart. Well, you tackle them and it'll break your heart. Oh, how hard people are.

How full of doubt. Want to argue with God and all of that. Take every place except the sinner's place at the feet of God.

I said, God, I deserve nothing but hell, if you will have mercy on me. Listen. Listen.

Talking. Breathing insults to God. Won't get you anyplace.

The only place I know for a hell-bound sinner is at the foot of the cross, crying, have mercy on me. Have mercy on me. And this fellow talked a little while and I said, When you remember that before God saved you, we were as wicked as anybody ever.

How marvelous to be saved.

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