

The What, Why, and How of Election

1 Peter 1:1-5

[1] Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, [2] according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood:

May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

[3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, [4] to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, [5] who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 PETER 1:1-5 EXPLAINED

[1] Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, **To those who are elect [CHOSEN] exiles** of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

- What we discussed last week. Peter is writing to believers, followers of Jesus and he calls them elect, referring to God's special people that HE chose (not the other way around) and HE chose them not on the basis of merit, size, strength

[WHAT WAS THE BASIS OF GOD'S CHOOSING?] [2] **according to the foreknowledge** of God the Father,

- What does foreknowledge mean? Does it mean that God looked ahead and saw the future and then chose on the basis of something you'd do?
 - Some believe that to be true, but if you look at Israel as an example (as Peter expects us to), then you realize it wasn't based upon merit or choice for them and so it can't be for us
 - Israel didn't choose God and so, therefore, he foreknew their decision and chose them.
 - On the contrary, they did all the wrong stuff and despite that knowledge, God chose them.
- So what does foreknowledge mean? It has more of the connotation of relational affection. Look at some examples of how this word is used elsewhere:
 - Amos 3:2, [2] "You only have I known of all the families of the earth..." Now, is only Israel known by God? No, of course not. He knows ALL, but he says "I have only known you!"

- It conjures up images of intimacy. Indeed the word can be used for intercourse in the OT
 - God speaking to the Prophet Jeremiah, Jeremiah 1:5 “Before I formed you in the womb I [fore]knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”
 - God foreknew Jeremiah by having a plan for him, a purpose for him, and loving him.
- God chose you (and others) out of love. He chose you b/c he loves you. That’s what you need to focus on here.
 - The same way a parent adopts from a far away country b/c of love
 - A child chooses a stuffed animal from a store of options to love it, to play with it, and to enjoy it
 - God’s fore-knowing, his pre-loving, is the basis of his choosing and from that pre-loving he chooses us. But how?

[HOW DID GOD CHOOSE ME?] in the sanctification of the Spirit, [alternative translation:

By the making holy work of the Spirit]

- God pre-loved us and, therefore, chose us. What that choosing looked like was and is the work of the Spirit of God in your life to make you holy
 - Holy DOESN’T mean “better than” → “Holier than thou is a wrong concept’
 - Holy means set apart for a purpose, sanctified is the fancy term
- So God sends his Spirit to set you aside, set you apart
 - He begins drawing you, putting spiritual interest within your heart, giving you eyes to see the way he moves and ears to hear what he is saying
 - He is inviting you, effectively, by his Spirit
- The implication of this is that it is HIS WORK and not yours
 - God loved you by his own decision.
 - God chooses by his own desire.
 - God brings that choice to effect and completion by his Spirit
- But why? For what purpose?

[WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF HIS CHOOSING?] He gives two...

[PURPOSE #1] for obedience to Jesus Christ and

- God chose you so that you would obey Jesus and that falls into two categories of the initial and the continuing
- Obedience of Faith → Jesus said that if we love him we will do his will and what is his will? That we believe and by believing have life.
 - This is what the gospel of John argues and it is what Jesus desires for you → that you would believe in the Son of God, Jesus, and by believing you would have life.
 - Have you done that? Do so today and be set free...
- Obedience of Active Faith

- Jesus isn't a myth to believe, but a king to follow. If you believe the king is real you will follow him, obey him, heed his call
- In your life he is either Lord of all or he isn't Lord at all
- God chose you to obey Jesus!

[PURPOSE #2] for sprinkling with his blood:

- Sounds gross. Harkens back to the cutting of a covenant or making of an unconditional contract and promise. In the OT they would make an agreement and then sprinkle blood to confirm it under threat of death
- God makes a NEW covenant with us by faith. Jesus is the sacrifice that confirms the covenant and it is his blood with which we are sprinkled.
- The sprinkling of blood results in forgiveness of sins and purification, but also the entrance into a NEW COVENANT with God.
- Salvation isn't just an invitation to not go to eternal hell and damnation. It is an invitation to eternal life in the presence of God. The positive of love, joy, peace and blessing should be the focus - not the negative alone.

[TO YOU ELECT PEOPLE...] May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

SUMMARIZED: God chose you so that you would obediently believe in and follow Jesus and join him in a New Covenant relationship. This decision is based upon his love for you before you were even born and made effective by his Spirit in setting you apart for his own enjoyment.

[WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS RELATIONSHIP?]

[3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again

- It is that rebirth, that comes by the Spirit from the work we just unpacked that launches us into praise and worship. He chose us despite our failings (mercy) and gave us amazing blessings (grace). We are now reborn to two things (c.f. to...)

[REBORN...] to a living hope

[HOW?] through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

- Our hope is alive b/c it is a person who is alive. Without the resurrection, we don't unbreakable hope, we have wistful thinking
- Because he lives, we live. Because he came as the first of a new humanity, we can be reborn into that new humanity (his family)
- Our hope is a future resurrection to eternal life → a living hope
- Because Jesus is alive, we will live forever → but what will it be like?

[REBORN] [4] to an inheritance that is

- But there is even more! Mountains of blessings await those who are in Christ Jesus, when we are finally reunited w/ our Creator in his glorious presence

- In the OT, the inheritance was viewed as receiving the Promised Land but our inheritance is so much greater than any earthly territory!

[WHAT'S IT LIKE?] imperishable, → Won't expire
 [WHAT'S IT LIKE?] undefiled, and → Can't mess it up
 [WHAT'S IT LIKE?] unfading, → Won't lose its luster
 [WHERE IS IT?] kept in heaven for you, → Yet to come

- God has good things for you in Christ.

[WHAT IF I MESS IT UP?] [5] who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

- If you are in Jesus, he is guarding you too.

CONCLUSION:

BIG IDEA: We have hope because we have Jesus Christ, who is our Living Hope, and hope is how we get through difficult times.

Do you realize the lengths, dipping back into the ages, that God has gone to in order to love you? Do you realize what he has done for you? Do you taste the beauty of his work? Can you begin to fathom the affection he has for you? For us?

Do you think now, after all of that, he will abandon you? No, even this is born from love and, by faith, it will work out for our hope.

Some of you are here today b/c you were drawn by the Spirit. God is inviting you to surrender to Jesus, believe in the Lord Jesus. Embrace his death for the forgiveness of your sins and his resurrection for the hope of eternal life.

God wants you to believe in the sacrifice he has provided in Jesus, his Son. Will you?

And if you have, remember the hope to which you have been saved. It is imperishable (it won't expire), undefiled (no one can corrupt it), unfading (it will never lose its luster), and it is kept for you → and if you are truly in Christ he won't let you slip either. Stumble and fall? Yes, but he will always chase you down.

Church, remember God's love for you as seen in the gospel. Remember God's purpose for you as seen in the gospel. Remember God's blessing for you as seen in the gospel.

You need these things and so does the world. Share the good news.

TABLE TALK:

“Now we hope for the blessings God has for his children. These blessings are kept for you in heaven. They cannot be destroyed or be spoiled or lose their beauty.” (1 Peter 1:4, ICB)

1. What is hope? (A desire for a certain thing to happen. Looking forward to something good.)
2. Is it our job to make ourselves holy? (No. Peter says it's the Holy Spirit's work.)
3. Something that saves us is called...what? (Our salvation.)
4. When Peter talks about “the end of time,” what does he mean? (The day when God sets everything right.)
5. Name something you remember hoping for that didn't come true. How did that make you feel?

SO WHAT?

For Toddlers: Hug a favorite stuffed animal together. Say “God protects us!” together several times.

For Grade Schoolers: Ask, “What are some things you are hoping for?” Talk about what it means that God has given us a living hope. (He promises good things to us in Christ.)

For You: What are some ways you can keep hope alive in your life? Brainstorm ways you can remind yourself to hope in what Christ has promised us about our future.