

WHAT WE BELIEVE

God's Purpose of Grace

ARTICLE 5

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

ARTICLE 4

V. God's Purpose of Grace *(continued)*

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

ARTICLE 4

V. God's Purpose of Grace *(continued)*

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

OUR BELIEFS

God's Purpose of Grace - Salvation

We believe that salvation is a free gift of God's grace, received through repentance of sin and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone. Following Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation. We believe that every person who has truly received salvation is eternally secure in the Lord Jesus Christ and will persevere in their salvation until the end of their life.

OUR BELIEFS

God's Purpose of Grace - Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is God's goal for all believers. Sanctification is the experience of being led by the Holy Spirit toward moral and spiritual maturity in Jesus Christ.

THE GOSPEL

- God created us to know him and live for him. We have separated ourselves from him and his purposes through our sin, bringing death and hell upon ourselves. In order to bring us back to himself and rescue us from death and hell, God the Father sends God the Son, Jesus Christ, to live a perfect life in our place, die the death we deserve as a just penalty for our sin, and rise from the dead to bring us life. When we believe that Jesus did this for us, turn from all other ways of living, and follow him as our Savior and King, our relationship with God is restored and we are rescued from sin and death. We become citizens of God's kingdom, meant to live with him and for him in all things.

THE GOSPEL

- John 3:16 - “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND FREE WILL

- Two truths are evident throughout Scripture: God's sovereignty and human freedom and responsibility.
- God saves us by grace, and we respond to him by faith.

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND FREE WILL

- Ephesians 2:8-10 - For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM/ ARMINIANISM

- Calvinism and Arminianism are two Reformed systems of theology that understand the relationship between God's sovereignty and human free will differently.
- These differences are often summarized and reduced to five areas.

FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM/ ARMINIANISM

- Calvinist TULIP: total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, perseverance of the saints.
- Arminian ACURA: all have sinned, conditional election, unlimited atonement, resistible grace, assurance of salvation.

FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM/ ARMINIANISM

- Baptists have historically been both Calvinist and Arminian, and generally somewhere in between.

ELECTION

- The basic idea involved in the doctrine of election is choice - God's choice.
- Israel is God's chosen nation (Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2).
- The church is God's chosen New Testament people (1 Peter 2:9).

ELECTION

- When viewed as a part of the doctrine of salvation, election refers to God's choice of who will be saved. Election is of people, not facts. The Bible always speaks of God's election of people.
- Election to salvation is an act of God before creation in which he chooses some people to be saved, not on account of any foreseen merit in them, but only because of his sovereign good pleasure.

ELECTION

- Acts 13:48 - When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.
- Romans 8:28-30 - And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

ELECTION

- Romans 9:11-13 - for though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to His choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls, it was said to her, "THE OLDER WILL SERVE THE YOUNGER." Just as it is written, "JACOB I LOVED, BUT ESAU I HATED."
- Ephesians 1:4-6 - just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

ELECTION

- 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5 - knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you; for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13 - But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

ELECTION

- Rev 13:7-8 - It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

TWO COMMON VIEWS OF ELECTION

- Conditional Election: God elected in eternity past those persons whom he knew would choose to believe the gospel when they were confronted with it. Union with Christ describes our entire salvation and encompasses every aspect of our salvation.
- Unconditional Election - God elected in eternity past certain persons apart from any merit or action on their part and only according to his own good pleasure and will.

ELECTION

- Election is of specific people, or individuals (John 6:37, 39; 10:16; 17:2, 24; Acts 13:8; Ephesians 1:4-5; Romans 8:28-30)
- John 6:37-39 - “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.”

ELECTION

- John 10:16 - "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.
- Election is to salvation and in Christ (Acts 13:48; Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 1:9; 1 Peter 1:1-2)
- Scripture teaches an asymmetrical relationship between election and reprobation – single predestination (e.g., Romans 6:23)

ELECTION

- Election is meant to be a comfort to believers (Romans 8:28), and a reminder of God's gracious work in salvation.
- Election is a reason to praise God (Ephesians 1:5-6, 12; 1 Thessalonians 1:2, 4). We can have full confidence that God's plan is coming to pass.

ELECTION

- Election is an encouragement to evangelism (2 Timothy 2:10), because it means that God will use the preaching of the gospel to save his people. We do not need to worry that it is our responsibility to save people. God saves people, and we are called to be his witnesses.
- Election ought to make us realize the wonderfulness of God's grace. All of salvation is of his grace. We can do nothing to save ourselves or others, it is God's work.

SANCTIFICATION

- Sanctification is a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our actual lives.
- To sanctify means “to set apart” and in salvation refers to our being set apart to God in holiness.

SANCTIFICATION

- Sanctification is distinct from justification, regeneration, adoption, and conversion in that it is a continual act and something that takes place throughout the Christian's life.
- Romans 6:19 - I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.

SANCTIFICATION

- 2 Corinthians 3:18 - But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

SANCTIFICATION

- We play both a passive role in sanctification as we depend upon God to sanctify us, and an active role as we strive to obey God and increase our sanctification.
- Philippians 2:12-13 - So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERANCE

- Preservation is what God does to keep Christians saved, while perseverance is what God has called Christians to do to ensure their salvation. Assurance of salvation depends on both of these doctrines.
- God secures and guarantees the final salvation of all true believers. Believers do not lose their salvation because God keeps them saved.

PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERANCE

- This is based on the wonderful promises of God (John 6:37-40; 10:27-29; Romans 8:31-39; Philippians 1:6) and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer (2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30)

PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERANCE

- All who are truly saved will remain faithful to God until the end of their lives, and it is only those who have persevered to the end who are truly saved.
- John 8:31-32 – So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERANCE

- Hebrews 3:14 - For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end,
- Those who do not persevere do not lose their salvation, but do demonstrate that they were never saved in the first place (e.g., Matthew 7:21-23; Hebrews 6:4-6).

PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERANCE

- Genuine assurance of salvation is based upon the promises of God, the assurance of the Holy Spirit, one's trust in Christ for salvation, evidence of the Holy Spirit's regenerating work, and a long-term pattern of growth in one's life.

GLORIFICATION

- Glorification is the final step in the application of redemption. It will happen when Christ returns and raises from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died, and reunites them with their souls, and changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive, thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrection bodies like his own.

GLORIFICATION

- The present life of the Christian in salvation is but a foretaste of the glory to come. Those who are called, regenerated, converted, justified, indwelt, filled, baptized, united to Christ, sanctified, adopted, and preserved through perseverance will one day be glorified, as the unbreakable chain of Romans 8:28-30 indicates.
- This is the hope of all Christians (Romans 5:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:14; 1 Peter 5:4). The Holy Spirit guarantees the future glorification of all believers.