

TRINITY REMNANT CHURCH
THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE (FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM)

Unconditional Election

I Peter 1:1-2 “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God’s elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood:”

➤ **INTRODUCTION**

- If the Bible is truly the Word of God, then the people of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia were, like all humanity, in a state of total depravity. None of them was seeking after God. None desired the Lord. The things of God were foolishness to them, and none could come to Christ by their own power unless the Father, who sent the Son to be the Savior, drew them to Him. How, then, could anyone be saved from sin and judgment? How could a single person ever enter heaven? Peter gives the answer in the opening words of his letter. He addresses his readers as "God's elect"—those "who have been chosen" by God.
- Before the foundation of the world, God determined to save a vast multitude of sinners. They are as innumerable as the sand on the seashore, an immeasurable company gathered from every nation, every generation, every language, and every walk of life. God has chosen every one of them. They include young and old, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, extroverts and introverts, respectable citizens and notorious sinners. No class of people is excluded from His saving purpose. God chose them, not because of anything good He foresaw in them, nor because they would one day choose Him, but solely because He loved them with a sovereign and gracious love. Having set His love upon them, He determined that they would become His children forever.
- He purposed to forgive their sins, justify them through Christ, adopt them into His family, sanctify them by His Spirit, and ultimately conform every one of them to the image of His Son. They will inherit the new heavens and the new earth, and throughout eternity they will owe their salvation entirely to the sovereign grace of God. Why God chose to love them rather than leave them in their sin remains a mystery known only to Him. Scripture never attributes His choice to human merit, wisdom, or worthiness. The only explanation the Bible gives is His own gracious purpose and love. It was because He loved them that He chose them.
- Out of the fallen human race, God set His saving affection upon this great multitude and determined to make them the objects of His mercy. This gracious choice was made before the world began. Before God spoke the first words of creation—"Let there be light"—He had already chosen His people in Christ. His

purpose to save them did not arise in time but in eternity. Long before they were born, before they had done either good or evil, God had already determined that they would belong to Him forever.

➤ **UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION: ITS BASIC IDEA.**

- We are all familiar with the idea of an election. Whether in government, organizations, or other settings, an election involves choosing one person or group while others are not chosen. In recent years, President Trump has raised concerns about election fraud in the United States. Whether those accusations were justified is not our concern. The point is that human elections may be imperfect, but God's election is altogether different. There is no injustice, favoritism, or corruption in God's choosing. His decisions are always righteous because He is perfectly holy, wise, and impartial.
- This idea of choosing is illustrated in the account of David and Goliath. Before confronting the giant, David went down to the brook and selected five smooth stones for his sling. Scripture tells us that David chose those stones. Some were picked up, while many others were left behind. There was a deliberate act of selection. That simple picture helps us understand the biblical doctrine of election. At its most basic level, election means choosing. It is God's sovereign selection of certain men and women for salvation. By its very nature, such a choice involves others who are not chosen. Election is a selection from among a larger group.
- We see the same principle in Joshua's challenge to Israel: "Choose this day whom you will serve." The people were surrounded by many false gods competing for their allegiance. Joshua called them to make a deliberate choice. To choose the Lord necessarily meant rejecting every other god. Selection always involves non-selection. The principle is also evident in God's choice of Israel. Out of all the nations of the earth, God chose one people to be His covenant nation. Israel was not selected because of its greatness or superiority, but because of God's sovereign love and purpose. As the Lord declared through the prophet Amos, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." Of all the nations, Israel alone was chosen to enjoy this unique covenant relationship with God. That divine choice necessarily meant that the other nations were, at that time, passed over with respect to those covenant privileges.
- Throughout Scripture, therefore, the same pattern appears repeatedly. David selected five stones from among many. Joshua called Israel to choose the true God rather than idols. God chose Israel from among all the nations of the world. In every case, selection involved passing over other alternatives. If this is the basic meaning of election, the important question is this: How does the New Testament develop and explain God's sovereign choice in the salvation of sinners? That is the question we must now consider.

➤ **UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION IS UNTO THE SPRINKLING OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.**

- Peter tells us that believers are chosen by God to be sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:2). Immediately we see that God's unconditional election is not merely an election to outward privileges. The believers in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia were not simply chosen to hear the gospel, to experience the blessings of common grace, or to listen to the preaching of the apostle Peter. Those were indeed great privileges, but God's purpose went far beyond them. They were chosen to have the blood of Christ applied to them. In other words, they were chosen to receive personally all the saving benefits secured by Christ's death. They were elected not merely to hear about salvation but to experience it. The saving work of Christ, together with all the blessings He has obtained as our Prophet, Priest, and King, was applied to them by God's grace.
- Peter's language deliberately echoes the Old Testament. In Exodus 24, after God established His covenant with Israel, Moses took the blood of the sacrifices and sprinkled half upon the altar and half upon the people. Through that solemn act, Israel was publicly identified as God's covenant people. When Peter says that these Gentile believers were chosen to be sprinkled with blood, he is referring to something far greater. He is speaking of the blood of Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant, whose blood was shed for the forgiveness of sins. By God's sovereign choice, they had been brought personally and experimentally into covenant fellowship with the living God.
- This has profound implications for every Christian. If the blood of Christ has been applied to our souls, cleansing us from all our sins, we owe that entirely to God's sovereign election. If we belong to God's covenant people, it is because He first chose us. If we are citizens of the heavenly Zion, it is not because of anything in ourselves but because of God's sovereign grace. The blood of Christ is the guarantee of every covenant blessing. Through His blood we receive forgiveness of sins, adoption into God's family, peace with God, assurance of His love, freedom from condemnation, the gift of the Holy Spirit, eternal life, and the certain hope of future glorification. Every spiritual blessing we possess flows from the redeeming blood of Christ, and every one of those blessings comes to us according to God's eternal purpose in election.
- Peter therefore teaches that election is specifically God's gracious choice of sinners unto salvation. God chooses particular men and women to be united to Christ, brought into His covenant, cleansed by His blood, adopted as His children, indwelt by His Spirit, and made heirs of eternal glory. We are chosen for redemption, for reconciliation, for sanctification, and ultimately for glorification. Paul expresses the same truth in Galatians 3. Those who belong to Christ become Abraham's offspring and heirs according to the promise, receiving the

promised Holy Spirit through faith. All of these blessings are rooted in God's eternal purpose of grace.

- Unconditional election, therefore, embraces the whole of our salvation. If we have been born again, it is because God chose us. If we have repented and believed, it is because God first loved us. If our sins have been forgiven, it is because He elected us in Christ. If we have been adopted into His family, preserved by His power, and are being sanctified by His Spirit, it is because of His sovereign grace. If one day we shall see Christ face to face, be perfectly conformed to His likeness, and have every tear wiped from our eyes, it will all be the fruit of God's electing mercy. From beginning to end, salvation belongs to the Lord. Election is God's sovereign choice of sinners from the fallen human race to receive every blessing purchased by Christ. As those who have been sprinkled with His precious blood, we are the grateful beneficiaries of God's eternal, unconditional grace.

➤ **UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION IS UNTO OBEDIENCE.**

- One of the first objections people raise against the doctrine of unconditional election is this: "If God has already chosen His people by grace alone, then surely they can live however they please." Again and again we hear the criticism: "Doesn't such a strong emphasis on God's sovereignty and grace encourage carelessness in the Christian life? If people believe they were chosen apart from anything good in themselves, won't that weaken their desire for holiness? Doesn't this doctrine undermine the pursuit of godliness?"
- That objection has been raised for centuries. If someone puts it to me, I readily admit that, from a purely human standpoint, it appears to have force. Human reasoning alone cannot fully explain why the doctrine of sovereign grace does not produce spiritual carelessness. One could argue, as Paul anticipated in Romans 6, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" But Scripture gives us an answer far greater than human logic. It gives us God's answer. The answer is that the very purpose of election is holiness. God's electing grace was never intended to leave sinners as they are. Those whom God has chosen, He has also purposed to transform. As Paul teaches in Romans 8:29, those whom God foreknew He also predestined "to be conformed to the image of his Son."
- Election is not merely God's decision to save a people from judgment; it is His determination to make them like Christ. Think of what this means. A Christian can say, "God did not choose me because He found anything worthy in me. He saw me exactly as I was—a guilty, undeserving sinner. He knew every failure, every weakness, every secret sin, and yet He freely set His love upon me according to His own gracious purpose. Having chosen me, He has committed Himself to making me holy." A person who truly understands this cannot conclude, "Since I am elect, I need not pursue holiness." Such a conclusion completely misunderstands election. If God has chosen me, He has also chosen

to change me. I cannot remain content in sin because God's eternal purpose is to conform every part of my life—my mind, affections, desires, character, and conduct—to the likeness of His Son.

- God's elect cannot live permanently under the dominion of sin. They cannot remain comfortably estranged from Christ or persist in willful rebellion against their Savior. This does not mean believers never fall into sin, but it does mean they cannot continue in it without repentance. God Himself has determined that they will not remain there. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, He continually sanctifies them, disciplines them as His children, and restores them whenever they wander. To be elect, therefore, is to belong to a God who is absolutely committed to our holiness. He has pledged all the resources of His infinite wisdom, power, and grace to complete the work He has begun in us. His purpose is nothing less than to make His people perfectly like Jesus Christ. What an extraordinary privilege this is.
- Just as certainly as God ordained the cross of Calvary before the foundation of the world, He has also ordained the holiness of every believer. Our sanctification is no less certain than our justification because both rest upon the eternal purpose of God. Paul expresses this beautifully in Ephesians 2:10, where he says that we are "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."
- Every day of the Christian life has been planned by our heavenly Father. As we rise each morning, we may ask, "What good works has God prepared for me today?" Every act of love, every opportunity to serve, every word of encouragement, every sacrifice made for Christ has already been included within His gracious purpose for our lives.
If we may say it reverently, each day God has prepared opportunities for His children to glorify Him. He calls us to walk faithfully in the path He has already marked out for us.
- Just as Christ was appointed from eternity to bear the sins of His people, so His people have been chosen from eternity to become like Him. This is God's answer to the charge that election encourages sin. Our confidence against lawlessness does not rest in human reasoning but in God's eternal purpose. Christ "loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing of water with the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless" (Ephesians 5:25–27).
- God's elect are therefore chosen for two inseparable purposes: to be sprinkled with the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and to be transformed by the grace of Christ into a holy and obedient people. Election is not merely unto salvation; it is unto sanctification. Those whom God saves, He also makes holy, until they are perfectly conformed to the image of His beloved Son.

➤ **ELECTION IS ACCORDING TO THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD THE FATHER.**

- The idea of God's foreknowledge in this passage is far more than His omniscience. Peter is not simply saying that God knows everything that will happen in the future. Nor is he teaching that God looked down the corridors of time, saw who would choose Christ by their own free will, and then elected those individuals on that basis. Such a view cannot be reconciled with Scripture's teaching on human depravity. Left to themselves, sinners do not seek God; they continually reject Christ. As Jesus Himself declared, "You refuse to come to me that you may have life" (John 5:40).
- In the Bible, the word "know" often means much more than intellectual awareness. It frequently describes a relationship of love, favor, and intimate commitment. To know someone, in this biblical sense, is to set one's affection upon that person. Consider the words of the prophet Amos: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth" (Amos 3:2). Obviously, this cannot mean that God was ignorant of every other nation. God knows all things. He governs every kingdom, observes every sparrow that falls, and is fully aware of everything that takes place in Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, and every other nation. His knowledge is universal. Rather, God is speaking of a special, covenantal knowledge. Of all the nations, Israel alone was the object of His saving love and covenant favor. They were the people upon whom He had set His affection.
- The same idea appears in the words of Jesus at the final judgment: "I never knew you; depart from me" (Matthew 7:23). Christ certainly possessed perfect knowledge of those whom He judged. He knew every thought, every deed, and every word they had ever spoken. Yet He says, "I never knew you." His meaning is not that He lacked information about them, but that they were never the objects of His saving, covenant love. Though they lived under His general kindness and common grace, they were never united to Him by redeeming grace. The same rich meaning appears in Genesis, where we are told that Adam knew Eve his wife. That knowledge was not merely intellectual. It described the deepest intimacy, affection, and covenant union between husband and wife. It was personal, loving, and committed.
- In this same way, God knows His people. He knows them with a covenant love that is intimate, affectionate, and everlasting. This theme runs throughout Scripture. It is beautifully portrayed in the prophecy of Hosea, where the Lord compares His relationship with His people to that of a faithful husband toward an unfaithful wife. It is also the message of Ephesians 5, where Paul teaches that Christ loves the church as a husband loves his bride, nourishing and cherishing her, having given Himself up for her. When Scripture speaks of God's foreknowledge, therefore, it is describing far more than His awareness of future events. It speaks of His eternal love for His people. Before the foundation of the world, God set His affection upon them. He determined to make them His own.

His love is steadfast, sacrificial, and unwavering. It is the love that did not spare His own Son but delivered Him up for us all. It is the love that brought Christ from heaven to Calvary to redeem His bride.

- God's election, then, does not rest upon anything He foresaw in us. It rests entirely upon His own sovereign, gracious, and eternal love. He did not choose us because we would one day love Him; rather, we love Him because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). His foreknowledge is His foreloving. His election flows out of His eternal affection for His people. He chose them because He freely determined to love them, and having loved them, He will never cease to love them. This is the foundation of God's unconditional election and the unshakable assurance of every believer.

➤ **THE REASON FOR UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION.**

- Why did God choose His people? The answer is both simple and glorious: He chose them because of Himself, not because of anything in them. The initiative was entirely His. He did not find something attractive or worthy in sinners that moved Him to choose them. Rather, He freely and sovereignly set His love upon them. Because He loved them, He chose them. The foundation of God's election is not human merit but divine love. This leads us to another question: Why did God love them? At that point, Scripture brings us to the deepest mystery of all. We can trace election back to God's love, but we cannot trace God's love back to anything beyond itself. There is no deeper explanation. God's love is the ultimate reality. It is the bedrock upon which everything else rests. It is the fountain from which redemption flows. As the river of the water of life proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb, so every blessing of salvation flows from God's sovereign and eternal love.
- Why did God choose to love this countless multitude of sinners? Scripture does not tell us. It never points to anything in them as the cause of His love. We cannot move beyond God's love to a higher or more fundamental reason. His love is the first cause. It is the source, not the result, of His saving purpose. God is love, and there is nothing beyond Him to which His love can be attributed. Outside of God there is no greater explanation. That is why those who reject God ultimately have no solid foundation for hope. What a marvelous truth this is. God has never existed without loving His people. His love is eternal. Just as we cannot conceive of God beginning to exist, or ceasing to be eternal, or ceasing to be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, neither should we think of His love for His people as something that began in time. It is an everlasting love.
- There was never a moment when God looked upon sinners and decided, "Now I will begin to love them." His love did not arise as a new thought or a later decision. From all eternity, God has embraced His people in His gracious purpose. Before they existed, before the world was created, He had already determined that they would belong to Him forever. He purposed to save them, to

conform them to the likeness of His Son, and to bring them at last into His glorious presence. Certainly, God's love is free and sovereign. It is the expression of His own holy will. No one compelled Him to love, and no one deserved His love. It is entirely gracious. Yet while it is the free act of God's will, it is also eternal. This has always been God's disposition toward His people. He has always loved His church. He has always delighted in the bride whom His Son would redeem. From eternity, He has been fully committed to their salvation.

- It is in this eternal love that unconditional election finds its foundation. God did not choose His people because they loved Him; He chose them because He loved them. His electing grace is rooted in His everlasting affection. As the Lord declared through the prophet Jeremiah, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you" (Jeremiah 31:3). The ultimate answer to the question, "Why did God choose His people?" is therefore this: He chose them because He loved them. His sovereign, eternal, and unchanging love is the source of election, the foundation of redemption, and the everlasting security of every believer.

➤ **UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION IS PERSONAL AND INDIVIDUAL.**

- In the Old Testament, God declares, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated" (Malachi 1:2–3; Romans 9:13). There is a distinction, and it is intensely personal. God sets his covenant love upon one while passing by the other, leaving him to the justice he deserves. Likewise, the Lord told Jeremiah, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you" (Jeremiah 1:5). Again, God's knowledge is deeply personal and full of covenant love. In the New Testament, among the first words Paul heard after his conversion were these: "The God of our fathers has chosen you" (Acts 22:14). God's saving work is never impersonal. It is directed toward particular men and women whom he has loved from eternity.
- Surely this is one of the most marvelous aspects of our relationship with God. Consider the minuteness of his care and the tenderness of his concern. Our names are engraved on the palms of his hands. We live in a world where we are increasingly treated as numbers rather than persons. Computers identify us by account numbers and identification codes. Automated voices answer our calls. Many people feel anonymous, insignificant, and forgotten in an immense universe. We are tempted to think that we are nothing more than tiny specks on a small planet in an endless cosmos. But the child of God can say with the psalmist, "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinks upon me" (Psalm 40:17). He can also confess, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Psalm 23:1). Here is where the Christian finds true dignity. Here is where we discover our true identity. We are not nobodies drifting through life unnoticed. We are known, loved, and chosen by the living God.
- Imagine a quiet, overlooked young woman who is astonished when the most respected and admired young man asks her to accompany him to a special

occasion. She does not protest that he should have invited everyone equally. Instead, she is overwhelmed that he would choose her. In a far greater way, every believer stands amazed that the holy God should set his love upon sinners who deserved nothing but judgment. If the God who knows every secret of our hearts, every sin we have committed, and every failure of our lives has nevertheless chosen us in his grace, then we can never say that he is distant or indifferent. He has demonstrated his love beyond all doubt. He did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all. As Paul says, "The Son of God loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

- The wonder of the gospel is that God's eternal love did not remain merely a decree in heaven. It entered history. The eternal Son became man. He suffered. He was crucified. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree. God was in Christ reconciling us to himself. The cross was no impersonal transaction. Christ loved his people personally and gave himself for them personally. That is why the doctrine of election is never intended to produce pride, but worship; never cold speculation, but humble gratitude. Every believer may say with awe and thanksgiving, "The Lord knew me. The Lord loved me. The Lord chose me. Christ died for me. The Holy Spirit called me. By grace alone, I belong to him forever." It is all wonderfully, gloriously, and eternally personal.

➤ **UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION IS OF A VAST NUMBER OF SINNERS.**

- There is not the slightest connection between the doctrine of unconditional election and the idea that only a handful of people will be saved. Sadly, many people still imagine that this is what election means. They hear the word *election* and immediately conclude that God intends to save only a tiny remnant of humanity. But that is not what the Bible teaches. I see no reason in Scripture to conclude that only a few people will ultimately be saved. When God established his covenant with Abraham, he promised that Abraham's offspring would be as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand on the seashore. That promise finds its fulfillment not merely in Abraham's physical descendants but in all who belong to Christ by faith. The same glorious picture appears in Revelation 7, where John beholds "a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages," standing before the throne and before the Lamb. Election does not portray a miserly God reluctantly saving a few. It reveals a gracious God gathering an innumerable company of redeemed sinners from every age and every corner of the earth.
- Our view of unconditional election, therefore, ought to be expansive rather than restrictive. We should expect that God's elect are an immense multitude. Where sin has abounded, grace has abounded much more. The triumph of Christ's redeeming work will far exceed the devastation wrought by Adam's fall. Yet we must not allow this confidence to become complacency. Our Lord himself warned that "the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and

those who enter by it are many," while "the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few" (Matthew 7:13–14). We must hold both truths together without trying to force them into a system of our own making. Scripture teaches both the certainty of a countless redeemed multitude and the solemn reality that many travel the broad road to destruction. We may safely leave the final number of the redeemed in God's hands. That belongs to his secret counsel, not to our speculation. Our concern is to make our own calling and election sure, to walk by faith in Jesus Christ, and to proclaim the gospel freely to every person, knowing that God will certainly gather all whom he has chosen. Let us not speculate about how many will finally be saved. Rather, let us be sure that we ourselves are walking the narrow road that leads to life, and let us invite all people to come to Christ, who has promised, "Whoever comes to me I will never cast out."

➤ **HOW CAN I KNOW IF I AM GOD'S ELECT IN LIGHT OF THIS DOCTRINE?**

- Is it possible to know that I am one of God's chosen people? Can I have assurance that I am among his elect? Peter answers that question, not by pointing believers inward to some secret decree, but by pointing them to Christ. He writes to the elect who were "exiles" or "strangers in the world." They were not a powerful or influential people. They were scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. Many had been rejected by their own families because they had become Christians. They had been disinherited, ostracized, and treated as outsiders. They possessed no earthly security, no lasting citizenship, and often no legal protection. When trouble arose, they were easy targets for blame and persecution. Their daily lives were marked by uncertainty, economic hardship, and emotional distress.
- Yet Peter addresses these suffering believers as God's elect. Though the world regarded them as strangers, God regarded them as his beloved children. Though they had little on earth, they possessed "an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade" (1 Peter 1:4). Their outward circumstances seemed to contradict God's favor, but his electing love remained unchanged. How, then, can we know that we are among God's elect? The answer is wonderfully simple. Do I have Christ? If I belong to Christ, then I belong to God's elect, for all of God's elect are found in him. The question is not whether I have discovered my name written in the secret book of God's eternal decree. The question is whether I have fled to Jesus Christ for refuge. Perhaps someone says, "I am not even sure that I have Christ. But I know this: if only I knew that he was mine, I would be at peace." That longing itself is deeply significant. The unbeliever does not think this way. He imagines that his hope lies elsewhere: "If only I were baptized... If only I joined the church... If only I understood the Bible better... If only I became a better person."

- But the awakened sinner says something entirely different: "I must have Christ. Without him I have no hope. Who else can reconcile me to God? Who else has shed blood to atone for my sins? Who else possesses the perfect righteousness I need? Who else can stand as my Mediator before the Father? I need Christ, and nothing less will do." That is the language of saving faith. True faith is not measured first by its strength but by its object. A Christian may have weak faith, trembling faith, or faith mixed with many fears. He may not possess the bold confidence of Abraham or the unwavering courage of Paul. But if his faith reaches out to Christ, however feebly, it is genuine faith. He longs for Christ because he knows that Christ alone is his hope. Indeed, the weakest hand may receive the greatest gift. It is not the strength of our grasp that saves us, but the strength of the Savior who holds us. If to lose Christ would be utter desolation, if the thought that he was not your Savior would break your heart, if your deepest longing is to know him, trust him, and belong to him forever, then those desires are not the product of the natural heart. They are the evidence of the Holy Spirit's gracious work within you.
- Ultimately, our assurance does not rest upon the intensity of our feelings but upon the faithfulness of Christ. He has promised, "Whoever comes to me I will never cast out" (John 6:37). Again he says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand" (John 10:27–28). Our confidence, therefore, is not that we have held tightly to Christ, but that Christ has laid hold of us and will never let us go. In him we find both the evidence of our election and the assurance of our salvation.

➤ **CONCLUSION: WHAT EFFECTS DOES UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION HAVE ON THE CHRISTIAN?**

i. The doctrine of election is profoundly humbling.

- If I am a Christian today, it is entirely because of the grace of a choosing God. If my sins are forgiven, it is not because I have accumulated a mountain of good works or earned God's favor. My salvation is wholly of grace. Paul himself reflected on this when he considered his own conversion. Once he had been a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an enemy of Christ. How, then, had he become an apostle? His answer was simple: "It pleased God... to set me apart before I was born... and to reveal his Son to me" (Galatians 1:15–16). The initiative was God's. The accomplishment was God's. The preserving grace that kept him throughout his ministry was God's also. Everything the Christian possesses has been received. As Paul asks elsewhere, "What do you have that you did not receive?" We have nothing of which we can boast. God freely gave us his own Son, withholding nothing, and in Christ he has graciously given us every spiritual blessing. We are debtors to his mercy for everything. How humbly, then, we ought to walk before our God.

ii. The doctrine of election is profoundly encouraging.

- God knew everything about us before he chose us. He knew every sin, every failure, every act of hypocrisy, every betrayal, every cold affection, every hidden struggle, every wasted opportunity, and every future weakness. Nothing was concealed from him. Yet he loved us. He determined to make us his own and to conform us to the likeness of his Son. Therefore, the Christian has no reason to despair. The devil delights in driving believers toward hopelessness. He whispers, "God cannot possibly continue to love someone like you." But the believer replies, "God knows my sins far better than you do. I confess them to him, and I find their forgiveness in the blood of Jesus Christ. My hope is not in my worthiness but in his mercy." Since the fall, every human heart is inclined toward sin rather than toward God. Had the Lord not purposed to save an innumerable multitude by his sovereign grace, no one would have been saved. Every Christian is a monument to God's undeserved mercy.

iii. The doctrine of election is a tremendous encouragement to evangelism.

- Far from discouraging gospel witness, election gives us confidence that our labor is never in vain. God has promised that his Word will accomplish the purpose for which he sends it. He has his people throughout the world, and through the preaching of the gospel he calls them to himself. When Paul entered Corinth, the city appeared hard and hostile. Yet the Lord assured him, "I have many people in this city." Paul did not know who they were, so he continued preaching Christ faithfully. In time, God's elect heard the Shepherd's voice and followed him. The same is true today. We do not know whom God has chosen, and therefore we proclaim the gospel to everyone. Those whom God has chosen will reveal themselves by repenting of their sins, trusting in Christ, and persevering in faith. Imagine a friend opening a coffee shop. You visit on the first day and discover dirty cups covering the tables, crumbs scattered across the floor, and your friend standing idly behind the counter. You say, "Let's clean this place up. Customers won't come if it looks like this." But your friend replies, "That doesn't matter. If God wants my business to succeed, it will succeed. If he doesn't, nothing I do will make any difference." We would rightly call that foolishness. God not only ordains the end; he also ordains the means. He has determined to gather his people through the faithful preaching of the gospel, the prayers of his people, and lives that adorn the doctrine of Christ. Divine sovereignty never excuses human laziness. Rather, it inspires faithful service, because we know our labor in the Lord is never wasted. Therefore, make your calling and election sure. Walk by the Spirit. Live a life worthy of the gospel. Be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you for the reason for the hope that is within you. Proclaim Christ faithfully, pray earnestly, love sacrificially, and leave the results confidently in the hands of the sovereign God, whose saving purposes can never fail.