

Peter's Gospel of Christ (Part 2)

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[0 : 00] At the very outset of Peter's work in 1 Peter, we come face to face with some very powerful words.

! We read this last time. We're going to read it again tonight.! Chapter 1 of 1 Peter, verses 1 and 2, To those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Calicia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, and the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ, and for sprinkling with His blood.

May grace and peace be multiplied to you. So at the very outset, Peter begins employing a word that has regrettably become one of the most hated words in the Bible.

He refers to the recipients of this letter as the elect. In other translations, they are called the chosen. Same Greek word, electos. A great many people do not like this idea, but the truth is that God's people are those that have been chosen by God.

[1 : 46] In fact, we can say that this concept was central to the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. These are some of the passages, and we're going to be reading a lot of passages tonight.

This is what our Lord says in John chapter 6. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day.

Later, in the upper room discourse, the Lord had this to say in John 13 and 18, I'm not speaking of all of you.

I know whom I have chosen, but the Scriptures will be fulfilled. He who ate my bread has lifted up his heel against me.

Speaking, of course, of Judas Iscariot. The Lord makes a strong reference to election in the Olivet Discourse.

[3 : 06] Matthew 24, 22. And if those days had not been cut short, no human would be saved.

I think he's talking about the days we're in, quite frankly. But for the sake of the elect, those days will be cut short. The Lord has chosen people out of the world to belong to Him.

In our day, those people can be found in the church. And I'm not talking about a building of brick and mortar.

I'm talking about the church, meaning the called out ones, or the set apart ones. Ecclesia. This concept, rejected by many today, is crucial to our understanding of the work of God for His church. Let's listen again to the words of Jesus in one of my favorite chapters in the Bible, John 6. all that the Father gives me will come to me and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.

[4 : 45] For I've come down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of Him who sent me. And this is the will of Him who sent me that I should lose nothing of all that He has given me but raise it up on the last day.

For this is the will of my Father that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life and I will raise Him up on the last day.

So the Jews grumbled about Him because He said I am the bread that came down from heaven in another part of chapter 6.

And the Jews said is this not Jesus the son of Joseph whose father and mother we know how does He now say I've come down from heaven?

And of course Jesus omnipotent God knows what they're saying or thinking and He says don't grumble among yourselves.

[6 : 06] That's pretty pointed. God no one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him and I will raise him up on the last day.

It is written in the prophets and they will all be taught by God. Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.

And we also hear these powerful words in the high priestly prayer of John chapter 17. I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world.

Jesus is interceding and talking to the Father. Yours they were and you gave them to me and they have kept your word.

While I was with them I kept them in your name which you have given me. I have guarded them and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

[7 : 24] Father I desire that they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

The chosen is an expression concerning the individuals that the Father in love has given to his son. all whom the Father gives will be received by the Son and kept by the Son unto eternal life.

The Lord makes another great statement in the upper room in John 15-16 You did not choose me but I chose you.

and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give it to you.

Dr. Luke gave us a description of God's sovereign election of the church when he was in Antioch. This was during Paul's first missionary journey.

[8 : 52] You might recall Dr. Luke traveled with Paul. And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly saying it was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you but since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life behold we and that's the missionary group are turning to the Gentiles that would be earth shattering for so the Lord has commanded us saying I have made you a light for the Gentiles that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth and when the Gentiles heard this they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord and listen to these words guys as many as were appointed to eternal life believed and the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region so make no mistake both Peter and Paul wrote clearly that election is based solely on the sovereign and completely on the purpose and grace of God as verification consider this passage in 2nd Timothy chapter 1 verses 8 to 9 therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord nor of me his prisoner but share in the suffering for the gospel by the power of God who saved us and called us to a holy calling not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began and then perhaps we have the definitive passage in Paul's letter to the Romans the very famous chapter 8 verses 28 and following and we know

I love the way that starts we don't speculate we don't guess and we know for those who love God all things work together for good didn't say all things are good they work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose for those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and those whom he predestined he also called and those whom he called he also justified and those whom he justified he also glorified in these passages and there's a lot more we skipped over a bunch of them the Lord mentions the great doctrine of election but this begs a question that Peter is going to answer for us what is our source of election and he provides the answer in verse 2 of 1st Peter it is according to the foreknowledge of God the Father and this concept of foreknowledge as the basis of our election has been greatly misunderstood over the centuries and the sad news is that by and large the church in our day many of them have a faulty view of foreknowledge people like to describe it as foresight or some type of supernatural knowledge of the future and the story often goes something like this God is able to look down the corridors of time and he sees people praying the sinner's prayer because they want to get saved God concludes those people are believers and therefore he chooses them based on their choice of him and he rewards them with eternal life and heaven and the future and they base it all upon

God's ability to know who genuinely prays the correct prayer to be saved well this scenario is incorrect and I would suggest even impossible first problem we have is it makes man sovereign when it comes to his salvation salvation it puts man sovereign over their own salvation he chooses God and not the other way around and second man receives all the credit for his own salvation and that gives the individual person room to share in the glory that should rightfully belong to God alone never forget the

Old Testament passage never touched the glory of God ever dr. Criswell used to have the college of the prophets at first baptist dallas and when ed saucier our former pastor went through that they took q a and one of them said dr.

[15 : 30] criswell as we're parting now is there any one thing you could tell us that we could stay with us the rest of our preaching time the rest of our lives as ministers and dr.

Criswell said never touch the glory of god that was his advice to him it's god's glory but people want to describe it as foresight or the supernatural knowledge and then they come up with this well god looked down the corridors of time and he knew he was going to get saved so he elected them second man receives all the credit for his salvation to share in the glory that rightfully belongs to god alone but another major problem is the belief that man has the ability to seek after god when the word of god teaches that it is god who seeks after man romans 3 verses 10 and 11 none is righteous no not one no one understands no one seeks for god well how's that possible how did man get into this condition and again we appeal to paul in romans chapter 3 verse 18 which really explains the problem there is no fear of god before their eyes they don't fear god now there's another aspect of sovereign election that peter talks about and that is sanctification and peter even tells us that election is made possible by this by sanctification he describes it as the sanctification of the spirit and the sanctification spoken of here begins in eternity past and encompasses all that the spirit of god produces in the salvation of every individual the spirit produces faith a lot of people say why

I got enough faith to be saved but wait a minute god produced your faith the spirit of god the spirit produces repentance the spirit produces regeneration the spirit produces adoption all of our salvation is carried out by the spirit of god this is what the spirit through the apostle peter refers to as the sanctifying work that term refers to separation consecration and holiness we're going to be looking at a great expression of this when we get to 1st peter chapter 2 but let me kind of go forward a little bit and offer a passage now and you will be very familiar with us a lot of you but you are a chosen race a royal priesthood a holy nation a people for his own possession that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light once you were not a people but now you are

God's people once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy this truth was graphically portrayed at the Jerusalem council you can read about that in the book of Acts and Peter got up and made the following statement in Acts chapter 15 verse 7 to 9 this is at the Jerusalem council and after there had been much debate Peter stood up and said to them brothers you know that in the early days God made a choice among you that by my mouth a Gentile should hear the word of the gospel and believe and God who knows the heart bore witness to them by giving them the

Holy Spirit just as he did to us and he made no distinction between us and them having cleansed their hearts by faith these Gentile converts had their hearts cleansed by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit they did not cleanse their own heart if I had to clean up my own heart I'm in deep trouble we don't possess that power only the Holy Spirit can separate believers from sin we had a dear brother fall last week into sin didn't lose their salvation not here in Texas but these guys could not cleanse their own heart because they're powerless to do so only the

[22 : 42] Holy Spirit can separate believers from sin and he does that by increasing our holiness and by the way without holiness we won't see the Lord but this is a lifelong process it's not a moment in time it begins at salvation and it is completed at glorification when we see the Lord as he is and we'll be like him well what is the effect of election to obey Jesus Christ it motivates us to live a life of obedience to Jesus Christ 1 Peter 1 2 obey

Jesus obedience to Christ is the great byproduct of election Ephesians 2 10 for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them in Romans Paul called this the obedience of faith in this life that we're living now it's not perfect obedience we fail now I personally have not failed at least the last three minutes but we fail but it should be the direction that we're heading

Paul gives a great statement on this in 1 Thessalonians chapter 1 2-10 we give thanks to God always for all of you constantly mentioning you in our prayers remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ for we know brothers loved by God that he has chosen you because our gospel came to you not only in word but in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction you know what kind of men we prove to be among you for your sake and you became imitators of us and of the Lord for you received the word in much affliction with the joy of the Holy

Spirit so that you became an example to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia for not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere so that we need not say anything for they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception you had among yourselves and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for his son from heaven whom he raised from the dead Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come come quickly Lord Jesus another question how are we made secure in election well we're made secure because we are sprinkled with his blood and really to get a grasp of that we go all the way back almost to the beginning in the book of Exodus we are made secure because in salvation we are sprinkled with his blood Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord remember he'd been up on the mountain he told the people all the words of the Lord and all the rules and all the people answered with one voice and said all the words that the Lord has spoken we will do well that's rather bold wouldn't you say you ever said that anybody all the words that the Lord has spoken we will do and Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord he rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of

[28 : 36] Israel and he sent young men of the people of Israel who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord and Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins and half of the blood he threw against the altar then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of people and they said all that the Lord has spoken we will do we will be obedient if you ever hear me say that do something we will be obedient and Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said behold the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with these words we have a bloody religion

Judaism and Christianity because it points to Christ who shed his blood by being sprinkled with blood the blood of Christ we entered into a covenant of obedience God gave us the Holy Spirit so we would be able to obey this obedience is not yet unto perfection but it is to be the direction of our life elsewhere!

You can read in the Old Testament books of Moses including Exodus the Hebrew the Jewish people saying all that you give us we will do so Moses goes up on the mountain to talk to God and receive the Ten Commandments and while he was gone they were down at the base of the mountain making a golden calf and bowing down to it and committing all kinds of heinous acts with women and prostitutes on that golden calf!

Well the last thing we'll mention tonight is what are the advantages of election?

Listen to these words may grace and peace be multiplied to you 1st Peter 1 2 here Peter wishes on his readers the gifts of grace and peace and that should be familiar to all of us because it is a New Testament wish Paul used it six times John used it once in the book of Revelation and now Peter uses it in 1st Peter wishing us grace and peace he wishes his readers grace and when you truly have grace brothers and it's applied to your life that always results in peace our peace comes from the grace of

[32 : 24] God he is wanting God to grant them his very best blessing and the best blessing he can give us is grace and peace one of the greatest expressions of this is found in the opening part of Paul's letter to the Ephesians this will be our closing prayer I'm going to read it we'll consider this our closing prayer you're familiar with this Ephesians 1 3 to 14 must be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before him in love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through

Jesus Christ according to the purpose of his will to the praise of his glorious grace with which he has blessed us in the beloved in him we have redemption through his blood and forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him things in heaven and things on earth in him we have obtained an inheritance having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will so that we who are the first to hope in

Christ might be to the praise of his glory in him you also when you heard the word of truth the gospel of your salvation and believed in him were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit who is the guarantee of our inheritance Until we acquire possession of it to the praise of his glory!