

Chapter 12 | Study Guide

Disclaimer: *As of June 16, 2009, CBC leadership has agreed to keep silent on this topic because it has stirred up some controversy. We, as leaders, have been asked not to teach on this particular doctrine for the time being. The reason why I wanted to provide this study guide is because it is still my job to train and equip the saints. Even though, we are not touching this issue now...you will have to teach this and understanding this doctrine for yourselves in the future. This topic is not easy and requires a huge amount of humility when approaching this area. My person opinion and study on this topic is different than that of CBC's, but I will try to stay unbiased to the best of my ability when presenting the material.*

From CBC Articles of Faith (1979) "Of the Freeness of Salvation. We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, patient and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own determined depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation."

From BFM 2000 "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. 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".

From Grudem: Election = "Election 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".

New Testament Teaching on Election:

1. Acts 13:48 "And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of God; and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed" – It is quite clear that God ordained beforehand those who would be saved.
2. Ephesians 1:4-6 "God 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 through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace"
3. 2 Tim. 1:9 God is the one "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"
4. Rev. 17:8 Those whose names are written in the book of life – was determined "from the foundation of the world"

What This Means:

It is important to note that theses NT authors often present the doctrine of election as a comfort to all who believe in Jesus (Rom. 8:28).

Golden Chain of Salvation: Rom. 8:28-30

Question: Who is responsible for salvation? (Eph. 1:12; 1 Thess. 2-4; 2:13; Eph. 2:8-9). *This is where a lot of the interpretations come up in reference salvation.

Traditional Arguments on Election¹:

Arminianism

Arguments for:

1. God desires all persons to be saved and does not desire the death of the wicked (Ezek.33:11; 1 Tim. 2:3-4; 2 Peter 3:9)
2. The universal character of God's commands and exhortations reveal his desire to save all people (John 3:3, 5-7; 1 Peter 1:16). Also God issues a universal invitation for all to come to Christ (Isa. 55:1; Matt. 11:28; John 9:37-39).
3. All people are able to believe and be saved, because God has issued a universal call to salvation and because God has given all people prevenient grace to counteract sin and to render everyone able to respond to the gospel. There is no need for special grace from God for salvation.
4. It would be unjust of God to hold people responsible for what they are unable to do.
5. God does choose some to salvation and pass over others, because he has foreseen who will accept the offer of salvation in Christ. Foreknowledge is God's knowing beforehand who will receive salvation and is closely tied with election (Rom. 8:29; 1 Peter 1:1-2)

Calvinism

Arguments for:

1. The whole human race is lost in sin, and each individual is totally corrupted in intellect, will, and emotions by sin. Man is unable to respond to God's offer of salvation because he is spiritually dead (Jer. 17:9; John 6:44; Rom. 3:1-23; 2 Cor. 3-4; Eph. 2:1-3)
2. God is sovereign in all he does, and he does all according to his good will and pleasure. He is not answerable to man, because he is the Creator and can choose whomever he wills to save (Rom. 9:20-21; Eph. 1:5; Phil 2:13; Rev. 4:11)
3. God has chosen certain people for his special grace, irrespective of their physical descent, character, or good deeds. Specifically in salvation, he has chosen to save certain people through faith in Christ (John 6:37, 44, 65; 15:16; Acts 13:48; Rom. 9:6-24; Eph. 1:4-5)
4. Election is an expression of God's sovereign will and is the cause of faith (Eph. 2:8-10)
5. Election is certainly effective for the salvation of all the elect. Those whom God chooses will certainly come to faith in Christ (Rom.8:29-30)
6. Election is from all eternity and is immutable (Eph. 1:4, 9-11)

¹ House, Wayne. *Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine*.