

ELECTION

"He is Lord of lords and King of Kings, and those who are with Him are the **called** and chosen and faithful, Revelation 17:14.

America will elect a new president this year. A Republican or a Democrat will sit in the Oval Office in 2009 and make decisions for people of the greatest nation on earth. How America votes will be very interesting.

I'm not apolitical. I exercise my right to vote in all major elections. But, in the *GoodNews Letter*, we look at spiritual matters that are based on the Bible. And, from that standpoint, is there a more interesting subject than election?

Every Bible student desires to write the perfect answer on **ELECTION**; one that settles all disputes between a "Predestination" view and the "Free Will" thought. I would love to dissolve this controversy. However, that task has been attempted by greater thinkers than I.

Yet, the approach to the subject of **ELECTION** is very important, I think. How we view it may very well form our Theology. If we join with John Calvin's approach on the doctrine of "election," we will think that God chooses - before the world began, only certain ones to be saved. The rest are sent to an eternal hell, having no choice nor escape.

While, most Calvinists are dedicated ("DUH, YA THINK"), they are not in total harmony. And, as it is in nearly every other Biblical case, the Lord's Church must come to the rescue by drawing the dividing line in the sand.

We are not trying to unite nor divide Calvinists, here. Our approach is whether or not "**election**" is true, no matter who's teaching it is. In my thinking, there will always be confusion on this subject of election, unless we have knowledge of what it means to be a member of New Covenant Church.

First off, our approach isn't about God's Sovereignty. Without His grace, man is doomed. But, we don't subscribe to the "**dead fish**" idea of man floating down the river, belly up, until God quickens him, either.

Further, we are not attempting to explain God's will nor man's acceptance of His will. Our approach is: "**What does the Bible say in light of the Lord's Church?**"

To the Roman Church, Paul writes a most complicated passage. "**For whom He did foreknew, He also predestinated to become conformed to the image of His Son,**" Chapter 11:29.

To Romans, we must harmonize Revelation 7:14: "...He is Lord of Lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are called and chosen and faithful."

Bringing these two verses together informs us of three things: 1. We have predestinated beings; 2. They are conformed to the image of Jesus; 3. And, they are faithful.

These words: **predestinated, conformed and faithful**, all fit nicely into the Doctrine of Election. Certainly, we expect God to **work** within man, **conforming** him to Jesus. But, we have to ask about man's **faithfulness**; what part, good or bad, does it play in the doctrine of election?

On this point, we have to remove our thinking from the Spiritual flow of the three words of predestinated, conformed and faithful - which, we attribute (as a whole) to those in the church. Then, we must focus on the many verses that teach about saved men **not being faithful**. There are many such verses; thus, are the non-faithful, **elected**?

One verse that must be viewed is 2 Peter 1:9. After listing many Christian virtues (5-8), Peter says clearly, "...he who lacks these qualities is blind and short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins."

Harmonize Peter's words with Jesus' teaching on Church discipline in Mt 18:15-20; then, add that to what Paul taught in I Corinthians 3:15, "If any man's work be burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire," and our question: **are the non-faithful elected**, is a valid one.

There is a basic Bible analysis truth that says, "**Know who is writing and to whom it is written.**" The New Testament letters are written to churches or, members of churches; such as, Timothy, Philemon.

With an analytical Bible mind, we can go back to Romans 8:29, and see a little more light on election, perhaps. God's "**foreknowledge** - that which He experiences within His own people presently, was what He eternally envisioned them to be in His Son (in eternity).

These, God's own possession, are **patiently "dealt with"** and **"put up with,"** while God foreordains them to that purpose of His Son that He had before laying down the foundation of the world. It is God, in the Person of the Holy Spirit, operating the Laws of the New Economy which Jesus enacted.

Thus, the latter part of verse 29 **conforms** us to the image of God's Son, in order that, "**He** (that which God envisioned) **might be the first born among many brethren.**" Conforming takes place now and, in future. Living for Jesus in His body, presently, brings the fulfillment of election at the resurrection.

Paul instructs us that we all shall stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ and receive what was sown - good or bad. But, the "**called, chosen and faithful**"

experience the joy of election when the kingdom is set up. It is at time when, "...children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ," are manifested. Paul, quickly adds, "if indeed we suffer with Him that we also be glorified with Him," Ro 8:17.

Therefore, I find that nearly all of the Bible can be harmonized by applying it to the Church and Her ordinances. To the churches in Revelation, Christ warned that some will not walk in white.

Paul wrote that some church members will not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal 5). There is, without doubt, a Bride that will reign with Christ and, some that will not reign; having loved the present world, as Demas (2Tim 4:10).

As a close on Election, let me cite a political person, whose name I can't recall. On election, he said: "**If nominated, I will not run, if elected, I will not serve.**" Concerning, God's election, it sure sounds like that's the mind set of most of the world.

What profit is there if man gains the whole world and loses his own soul (life)? God has so much; especially, for His own, now and in the coming age. This is what Paul's gracious words are trying to convey. "**God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.**" 1st Corinthians I:9.