**Biblical Foundations – The Doctrine of Election and Reprobation (Pt.2)**

**When and why did God choose us? Are others not chosen?**

**Election in the New Testament**- Several passages in the New Testament seem to affirm quite clearly that God ordained beforehand those who would be saved. (Acts 13:48, Romans 8:28-30, Romans 9:11-13) Regarding the fact that some of the people of Israel were saved, but others were not, Paul indicates two distinct groups within the people of Israel. Those who were ***“the elect”*** obtained the salvation that they sought, while those who were not the elect simply ***“were hardened.”*** (Romans 11:7-8)

Paul speaks explicitly about God’s choice of believers before the foundation of the world at the beginning of Ephesians. (Ephesians 1:4-6) In Thessalonians, Paul says the fact that the Thessalonians believed the gospel when he preached it (because the gospel came with power and full conviction) is the reason he knows that God chose them. (1 Thessalonians 1:4-5) As soon as they came to faith, Paul concluded that long ago God had chosen them, and therefore they had believed when he preached.

When Paul talks about the reason why God saved us and called us to himself, he explicitly denies that it was because of our works but rather points to God’s purpose and his unmerited grace in eternity past. (2 Timothy 1:9)

**Election presented in the New Testament**:

**As a Comfort**- The New Testament authors often present the doctrine of election as a comfort to believers. In Romans, when Paul assures the believers that things will turn out favorable, he gives God’s work of predestination as a reason why we can be assured of this truth. (Romans 8:28-30) Paul’s point is that God has ***ALWAYS*** acted for the good of those whom he called to himself. Paul reasons, that if God has always acted for the good of those he called and predestined and God does not change- then you can be sure God will always act for the good of the elect.

**As a reason to praise God**- Paul tells the believers at Ephesus that God’s grace is to be praise for predestining us for adoption. (Ephesians 1:5-6) Paul also tells the believers at Thessalonica that he thanks God for their salvation because he knows God is ultimately responsible in the fact that he chose them to be saved. (1 Thessalonians 1:2, 4) This is made even clearer in (2 Thessalonians 2:13) where Paul felt obligated to give thanks to God for the Thessalonians, rather than praising them for their own saving faith. Understood in this way, the doctrine of election does increase praise given to God for our salvation and seriously diminishes any pride that we might feel if we thought that our salvation was due to something good in us or something for which we should receive credit.

**As an encouragement to evangelism**- Election is Paul’s guarantee that there will be some success for his evangelism, for he knows that some of the people he speaks to will be the elect, and they will believe the gospel and be saved. (2 Timothy 2:10)