**Biblical Foundations – The Doctrine of Election and Reprobation (Pt.4)**

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

**Misunderstandings of the Doctrine of Election**- election ***IS NOT*** based on God’s foreknowledge of our faith.

* **Scripture never speaks of our faith as the reason God chose us.** When we look beyond these specific passages that speak of foreknowledge and look at verses that talk about the reason God chose us, we find that scripture never speaks of our faith or the fact that we would come to believe in Christ as the reason God chose us. In fact, Paul seems to explicitly exclude the consideration of what people would do in life from his understanding of God’s choice of Jacob rather than Esau. (Romans 9:11-13) When discussing the Jewish people who have come to faith in Christ, Paul says they were ***chosen by grace***. (Romans 11:5-6) Similarly, when Paul talks about election in Ephesians, there is no mention of any foreknowledge of the fact that we would believe. (Ephesians 1:4-6)
* **Election based on something good in us (our faith) would be the beginning of salvation by merit.** If the ultimate determining factor in whether we will be saved or not is our decision to accept Christ, then we will be more inclined to think that we deserve some credit for the fact that we are saved: in distinction from other people who continue to reject Christ, we were wise enough or good enough in our moral tendencies or perceptive enough in our spiritual capacities to decide to believe in Christ. In the final analysis, the difference between two views of election can be seen in the way they answer a very simple question. Given the fact that in the final analysis some people will choose to accept Christ and some people will not, the question is, ***“What makes people different?”***
* **Predestination based on foreknowledge of a person’s faith still does not give people free choice.** The idea that God’s predestination of some to believe is based on foreknowledge of their faith encounters still another problem: upon reflection, this system turns out to give no real freedom to man either. For if God can look into the future and see that person A will come to faith in Christ and that person B will not come to faith in Christ, then those factors are already fixed, they are already determined long before these persons were ever born. Therefore, it is fair to say that their destinies are still determined. But by what are those destinies determined? If they are determined by God himself, then we no longer have election based ultimately on foreknowledge of faith but rather on God’s sovereign will. If these destinies are not determined by God, then who or what determines them?

For the above reasons, it seems only logical to reject the idea that election is based on God’s foreknowledge of our faith and to reasonably conclude that the reason for election is simply God’s sovereign choice. (Ephesians 1:4-5) God chose us simply because he decided to bestow his love upon us. It was not because of any foreseen faith or foreseen merit in us. This understanding of election has traditionally been called ***“unconditional election.”*** It is ***“unconditional”*** because it is not conditioned upon anything that God sees in us that makes us worthy of his choosing.