

Two Reasons Why The Doctrine of Election is Practical

Many believe the Doctrine of Election is a theological, scholastic, non-practical issue. It is said to be hotly disputed and not worth the conflict it usually brings. We're splitting hairs right? I will hopefully humbly offer an argument that this doctrine is absolutely foundational and intensely practical to our Christian walk.

To briefly summarize, the two views of election are monergism and synergism. Monergism teaches God is solely responsible for bringing any sinner to His Son. He grants faith and repentance to those He has chosen to in eternity past. Everyone can and should repent and believe but **never will** because of the love for sin. He changes that desire effectively and independently is His elect. Synergism teaches God gives equal opportunity to all and the decisive factor in salvation is the sinner. Either with or without "prevenient grace", God only does so much and the sinner, by his own will, has to cooperate to be saved. I believe the Bible teaches monergism.

Reason #1- Spiritual Pride

If you believe God did the exact same thing for you as a person who didn't believe, then you have a reason to boast. You can legitimately look at that person and say, "If you would have done what I did, you would be headed to heaven and not hell." I know any true born-again would resist this notion, but if you take any form of synergism to its logical conclusion, you would have to go there. Even if you say God does 99% and you 1%, the decisive factor is *you* (you don't get God's 99% without your 1%, so it's really ultimately 100% of the sinner in this system). So no matter how hard you try, if you truly believe the reason you received Christ was your will, then you will struggle with spiritual pride. How could you not?

Reason #2- Gospel Purity

If you believe there is something in the fallen sinner that, in and of himself, is willing to turn from sin to Christ, then you will be tempted to adjust the gospel message or the proper simple declarative method the Bible commands. You likely would be tempted to stress the love of God and leave out the wrath part. But any gospel presentation that leaves out God's wrath (that is what you are saved FROM: Romans 5:9), is a partial gospel that *cannot* save & free a person from their sins. Or you might try to cater your gospel conversation to a sinner's felt need. That is, you stress there is no need that Jesus can't meet for you. Although true, that is a *benefit* of salvation, not the proper biblical motivation for it. **Salvation is about forgiveness of sins** period. A sinner might want help in quitting a particular sin that is damaging their life: but just to avoid or reduce the consequences of that sin, not the necessary hatred of the sin (repentance) required for salvation. If a person "comes to Jesus" for the wrong reason, not only did they not truly get saved, but have been "inoculated" to future true gospel proclamation: one of the many reasons why the "Word Faith" Prosperity stuff is such an abomination. Or you might just try to stimulate them emotionally to encourage a "decision" for Christ because you think "it's in there somewhere". Emotionalism can bring a reaction, but often, it's just that: an emotional response that quickly fades away. All of these message alterations or method manipulations will just lead to two things: **false conversions & apostates**. And, as I said, not only are they not saved, but have been either self-deceived into thinking they are Christians or that they have "tried" Christianity: making them immune to any true gospel message. If you trust the truth that God saves and our job is to faithfully and accurately declare the full gospel message to sinners, you will not be tempted to adjust the message or the method (1 Corinthians 3:6-7).

I have other essays that deal with the issue of election and the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation that go into more detail about this issue I would encourage you to look into. But for now, I hope I have shown why whether you believe God saves or makes people "savable" is incredibly important and not just an academic issue.

