

How to Meet the Doctrine of Election

By Henry Mahan

Henry T. Mahan Tape Library

Zebulon Baptist Church

6088 Zebulon Highway

Pikeville, KY 41501

Website: <http://www.sovereign-grace.com/13thstbap.htm>

Online Sermons: <http://mahan.sermonaudio.com>

Now, don't you turn to these Scriptures. If you are taking notes you can jot them down, but let me for the sake of brevity and for time just read them to you. This is my opening statement: The doctrine of election is scriptural. It is according to the Word of God.

In Romans chapter nine, verse 11 the Scripture says, "The children being not yet born neither having done any good or born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election...that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger."

And then in Romans 11, verse five through seven, listen to these words: "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." According to the election of grace there is a remnant. "And if it is by grace it is not of works, otherwise grace is not grace. But if it be of works it is not of grace otherwise work is not work. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for because they sought it by works, but the election hath obtained it and the rest are blinded."

Now, in Titus chapter one, verse one, the Scripture says this, Titus 1:1: "Paul, a servant of God, an apostle of Jesus Christ according to the faith of God's elect to the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness in hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began." The faith of God's elect.

And then in 1 Peter one this is the way Peter starts the first epistle. He says this: "Peter, an apostle," 1 Peter one, "of Jesus Christ to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia, elect according to the foreordination of God." The cause is the foreordination of God, the means through sanctification of the spirit, the end unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

All right. Let me you read just, oh, two or three more. Matthew chapter 24. Listen to our Lord here, Matthew chapter 24, verse 24. And it says, "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and they will show great signs and wonders insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect."

Now, verse 31: "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

And then you are familiar with Romans chapter eight. I won't read that one, but let's...Romans chapter eight, let's look at 1 Thessalonians 1:4, 1 Thessalonians 1:4; Paul writing to the church at Thessalonica says this, "Brethren, knowing, brethren beloved your election, your election of God."

And then in 2 Peter 1:10 Peter said, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

So election is, without question, a scriptural doctrine. Is that not right? I could go on and read many, many more, but there is one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight scriptural references to election, election.

But the teaching of election has been terribly abused, terribly abused and held up to ridicule, this precious doctrine of election has been held up to ridicule by religious people. And I say this. I say this very candidly. No one that I know, no one that I have ever read after whose writings I have read, ever believed the doctrine of election as I hear it stated today by its enemies. No one ever believed it. I have never heard anyone who preached or taught or believed the doctrine of election as I hear it defined by the enemies of the gospel. I have never met anyone who believed or preached what they say we believe. I have never met anyone that believed what they say we preach and we believe.

I will give you some examples. Here is one charge that comes our way. "You preach and believe that God predestinated some to heaven and some to hell."

Emphatically, God forbid, I say, "no."

Predestination has nothing to do with hell, nothing whatsoever. God elected his people, the Scripture teaches, and he predestinated them to be like Christ. Predestination has nothing to do with judgment. It has nothing to do with hell. It has nothing to do with damnation. Is that not correct? Nothing to do with it whatsoever. Every time the word predestination is used in the Bible—and that's four, possibly five times—that's all it's ever used.

You know, I wish people would buy a commentary...not a commentary, but a concordance and look up these words and read what the Bible says, not what a mob said, what the Bible said. And the word predestinate is used four times, maybe five if you count over in Peter. But every blessed time the word predestination is used in the Bible it has to do with what God's people are going to be. They are going to be conformed to the image of Christ. He predestinated us to be conformed to the image of Christ. That is, God elected his people and he predetermined the means and the way that he would bring them to that final goal, to be like Christ. That's what predestination is.

God predestinated this book right here to be in print. The story I told you a while ago was a long round about story. But this book is in print. And God predestinated every step along the way.

God predestinated, predetermined that Joseph would be king of Egypt. How did he get there? By the means God devised.

You see what I'm saying? By the means...God...He was his father's favorite. He had the coat. He was cast into the pit. He was sold into slavery. He went to Potiphar's house. He seems to be going back two steps and forward one all the time, you know: back in jail, then over here, there, finally on the throne.

But where was God when all this was happening? He told his brothers, "You meant it for evil. God meant it for good."

That's what I'm saying. We don't teach, preach or believe that the death of Christ condemns anyone. He didn't come to condemn the world. The world was already condemned. All that God has to do for man to go to hell is leave him alone. He doesn't have to predestinate anybody to hell, just leave you there. You'll go. Just leave you alone, just keep his hands off of you. You'll go. You are hell bent and hell bound and hell determined by nature, by birth. God doesn't have to do anything for you. Just leave you alone. Isn't that...do you see that?

He said, "I didn't come to condemn the world." The world was already condemned...already.

Or, here is another thing to say. "Well, they say if a man is elected to salvation he will be saved no matter what. Why you preach that if a man is elected he will be saved even if he never hears the gospel, even if he never believes the gospel, even if he never believes on Christ, if he never continues in Christ."

God forbid. That is not so. Our Lord gathered his disciples about him before he ascended back the Father and he said, "You, go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth...he that believeth...he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned."

Now, that's the words of my Lord. If anybody here does not believe on Christ intelligently and willingly and lovingly and continually, he will be damned. That is exactly right, if you do not believe Christ.

And those who do believe him, believe him with the heart. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness. He that believeth on the Son hath life. He that believeth not the Son will never see light."

Election is not salvation, it's unto salvation. Salvation is not in election. It's in Christ. And we've got to be brought to an intelligent, loving, willing relationship by faith with the Son of God from this heart right here.

The Holy Ghost enabled me to believe, but I believe. The Holy Ghost makes me willing to believe, but I believe. The Holy Ghost brings me to Christ, but I come to Christ.

“Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth.”

“The gospel is the power of God unto salvation.” And the Word of God plainly says that we are his if we continue in the faith. And I’ll tell you this: Any man who draws back, God says, “My soul has no pleasure in him,” none whatsoever.

All right. Here is another word they say. “Well, if a man is not elected, if you consider him not elected you preach he couldn’t be saved even if he wanted to.”

Hold on, now. God forbid. I never said any such thing. I say what my Lord said. Listen. That last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood and said, “If any man thirst...if any man thirst let him come to me and drink.”

Is that what he said? And the last...one of the last verses in the Bible says this. “And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let him that heareth say, ‘Come.’ And let him that is thirsty come. And whosoever will let him take that water of life. If he is thirsty.” Come on. And my Lord said, he lifted his eyes to heaven and he said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth that you hid these things from the wise and the prudent. But you have revealed it to babes. Even so, Father, it seemed good in your sight. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden. I will give you rest.”

Does that sound like a man couldn’t be saved if he wanted to? Anyone who wants Christ can have Christ. Anyone who wills, truly wills to come to Christ, it is Christ whom made him willing.

“Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.”

If I thirst, God gave me the thirst. Oh, my, my, my.

Here’s another thing they say. “You preach babies in hell.”

Now, I highly resent that. I highly resent that. I just...somebody said one time, “They preach there is infants in hell a span long.”

No, I never heard anybody preach that. Have you ever heard anybody preach that? I know a lot of grace preachers all over the world. I’ve been here and there and yonder and I have absolutely in all my life never, never, never read or heard from any grace preacher those words right here.

I’ll tell you this. Now you...I’m going to give you three things to think about. Infants, I know some of you here have infants who died. I know two or three of you that babies died in birth or shortly after. Let me ask you three questions. Number one, are those babies sinners? Now, come on. Were they sinners? Let me show you that in the Scripture.

Let's look at it in Romans five, Romans chapter five. Now, are they sinners? Let's see what God's Word says, Romans chapter five, verse 12. Now, listen to this. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin so death passed upon all men," spiritual death, sin and death. "For all have sinned. For until the law sin was in the world."

But, you say, sin is not imputed where there is no law. Sin was in the world from Adam to Moses. To the time Moses received the law in Mount Sinai sin was in the world. But you say, "Sin is not imputed where there is no law."

But there was a law, the law of God. The law wasn't on tablets of stone, but the law was there. The very character of God is his law.

And verse 14: "Nevertheless, even though there was no written law death reigned from Adam to Moses." From the time of Adam to the time of Moses when the law was given on Sinai death reigned over people, didn't it? "Even...even over them that had not sinned openly after the similitude of Adam's transgression."

Do you know who that is? That's the infants. See, you and I have sinned after the similitude of Adam, willingly, openly, publicly, out of our own will and heart. And death reigns over us. But death reigns over infants who have not sinned as Adam sinned openly, willingly against God.

But yet they died. Why did they die? They were sinners. Sin in them. They are conceived in sin, shapen in sin, brought forth speaking iniquity. If there was an age of accountability for sin nobody would die until he reached that age. Do you understand that? That's what Paul was saying here that these infants died even though they had never openly, publicly, willingly, transgressed God's law like Adam. They still died.

Why? They were sinners.

All right. Babies are sinners.

All right. Here's the second question. Will God punish all sin? Now come on. All sin. Will God punish all sin? The Scripture says he will. "He will by no means clear the guilty." God will by no means clear the guilty whether they are adults or infants. God will, in his justice and holiness, by no means clear the guilty.

Do you know that if an infant was taken into heaven unregenerate you would have a devil in heaven? Now, come on. You take...you had a baby die in infancy. Now, suppose God took that infant to heaven, matured it. Do you know what it would be without regeneration? It would be a devil. It would be a lost man or woman.

Do you see what I'm saying?

Well, here is the third question. Then, how are we going to get these infants saved? They can't accept Jesus.

Is that the way a man saved? Is that the way everybody is saved by making a decision, making a profession? Now, they have got to be regenerated. They have got to be converted. They have got to receive a new nature. They have got to receive a new heart. They have got to receive a new life from somebody and it is too late for you to give it to them and impossible for the preacher to give it to him.

There is a little infant comes forth from his mother's womb, a one day or two day or six months old infant. It is a sinner, is it not? It is a daughter or son of Adam, is it not? It is permeated with sin, is it not? If it wasn't, why did it die? And it can't accept Jesus and God can't take it to heaven like it is. It's got to be born again. It's got to be regenerated. It's got to have the life of Christ.

Now, come on. How are we going to get him there? If you are an Arminian every infant is in hell right now. If salvation is by works every one of your babies are in hell.

I'm a Calvinist. I'm a covenant grace and by God's covenant grace every infant was regenerated and saved by the blood of Christ. Now, that's where the infants are. They are with God, but not by a decision of mother and daddy or anybody or the baby, but by God's decision and by God's election. That's what I believe and that's the only way you can get a baby into heaven by sovereign covenant grace through the blood of Christ.

I challenge the world on that, Rod, is that...now, you're a teacher. Does that make sense to you? It makes Bible sense, doesn't it? If God is who he is that baby is what it is. Take it to heaven. You can't do it. And God can't have it. There would be enough babies up there to turn that place into hell. It would be more unregenerate than they are regenerate in heaven, wouldn't it? But I guarantee you everyone that is there is mature, full grown, worshipping Christ and with the Spirit of God and rejoicing in the blood of Christ, everyone of them.

I feel like David. He wrote under divine inspiration. When his baby died he said, "He can't come to me, but I can sure meet him in God's presence," because that's where David figured on being. "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

So these people talk about I preach infants in hell. I don't. They do. I don't. I believe God has a covenant that includes them. And the blood of his son that redeems them.

Here is another thing they charge us with. "Well, if you believe in election you have no interest in preaching to the lost. You have no interest in preaching to sinners."

I'd love to tell this whole country this. Quite the contrary and God forbid. There isn't a church in this area—and I say most of them put together—nor a church anywhere in the world the size of this church that preaches the gospel to more lost people than this church

does. All over the world there are 100,000 [?] and Ron Trabant has sent over 100,000 tapes all over this world and they are being played 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. There are books all over the world. Our television message reaches 120 mile radius. We have a television program in the St. Lucia. We sent, last year, \$70,000...\$68,000 to missionary salaries alone to preach the gospel. We have missionaries all over this world.

And I resent that kind of talk. I...Paul was a missionary and he believed in election. William Carey, Judson, the pioneer missionary David Brainerd. Need I mention Bunyan, Spurgeon, Luther, Knox, Whitfield, Keech, Latimer, Newton, Watts...all of these men believed what we believe and preach and they turned the world upside down.

No, sir. I'll tell you this. Quite the contrary. To know that God has a sheep will send you out looking for them. That's what...that's what makes me preach. I know...I know...It looks like that little church in Indiana where I went over there and had such an unpleasant experience I believe in that place God has some sheep or I wouldn't have been there. And they are going to hear it. They are going to come to hear it.

You see, the doctrine of election is not the sinner's enemy. It's the sinner's friend. And I am going to show you how to meet the doctrine of election. I wanted to...you turn to Matthew 15. I wanted to...to define it, but it is going to take too long. I'll do that maybe Sunday morning. But let's turn to Matthew 15, Matthew 15. How do you meet...how does one meet the doctrine of election? How does one deal with it?

Well, let's look at Matthew 15, verse 21. "Then Jesus went thence and departed into the coast of Tyre and Sidon and behold a woman of Canaan." Now, this is a Gentile woman, a Gentile woman of Canaan, "...came out of the same coast and cried unto him saying, 'Have mercy on me, oh Lord, Christ, thou Son of David.'"

You see who she is calling him? "'Thou Son of David. Oh Lord, have mercy on me, thou Son of David. My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.' But he answered her, not a word."

This woman, first of all, Charlie, was confronted with the silence of God, the silence of God. Now, this is awesome. If God does not speak, we have no quarrel to make with him. That's right. He's not obligated, Richard, to speak to us. He is not obligated to tell you anything, Mike. You have no quarrel. If he...if...in our...us traitors, dirty, rotten, corrupt, rebels that crucified his son. If he doesn't even reply to us we've got no quarrel. He's not under obligation, God is not a valet, God is not our servant, he is not under obligation even to reply to our request. And he didn't answer her a word. But she didn't leave. She didn't leave.

I'll tell you it's to the point today that people are looking for a reason to leave the Church. They are looking for a reason to be offended. They want to be offended. It justifies them in their rebellion. Do you know that?

We have to walk on eggshells to keep from hurting somebody's feelings all the time from

the pulpit, afraid we're going to hurt somebody's feelings, afraid they are going to leave. But our Lord didn't even answer her. I wouldn't...if I pulled that...think about it.

She came up and asked for his mercy and he didn't even reply. He didn't even reply. And when he did reply, listen, "He answered her not a word. His disciples came and besought him saying, 'Send her away. She crieth after us.' But he answered and said this..."

Now, listen. Here is the doctrine of election. And this woman was confronted with it right here. He said, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Our Lord, when he did speak in her presence, he expressed his sovereign right to show mercy to whom he will; the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He didn't even include the Gentiles. She was a Gentile. Remember I said that Canaanite? He not only didn't include the Gentiles, he didn't include the bulk of Israel. He just said, "I am sent to the lost...I am sent to the elect of Israel." That's what he said.

Well, now, what's to be done? There is election. What's to be done?

Well, let's see what she did and see if we can imitate it? Verse 25, and I can get something out of each word here.

Then, then. When she had run full force into sovereignty, full force into God's elective grace, full force into the election of his grace and the truth that mercy is enthroned, that grace is enthroned and that Jesus Christ came to redeem and elect people that God the Father sent him on purpose to a people. She ran full force into that. And even then what did she do?

Read on. "Then came she." Where did she come to? She came to Christ. She came to Christ. Where else could she go?

You know, the disciples, our Lord said, "Will you go away?" They said, "To whom?"

If he is the sovereign Christ, well, you still better come to him. If he doesn't show you mercy you still better come to him. There is nowhere else to go. Tell me where else there is to go?

"Lord, thou hast the words of eternal life."

If he declares that he is the sovereign Savior who saves only his sheep you must still come to him because he is the only Savior. He is the just God and the Savior. Whether there is mercy for me or mercy for you doesn't change the fact that he is the fountain of mercy. You may not like the fountain, but it is the only one.

Where are you going?

And even he said, "I came to save my elect."

And then when she heard that instead of getting mad and running off, instead of getting mad and finding fault, instead of getting mad and saying, "I think," she came to him and did what?

"And she worshipped him." She worshipped him.

I'll tell you this. I mad this statement often. I wish we could learn it. Actually, that's the only kind of God a man really worship is a sovereign, almighty, omnipotent God. You're not going to change his omnipotence, his omniscience. "He is God. Besides him there is none else."

And she came and fell down, fell down and worshipped, fell down and kissed his feet, fell down and bowed before him, him, Jesus Christ to whom God has committed all flesh and over whom...over all flesh he has complete authority. She bowed down because only before a sovereign God will men worship. Only before a sovereign God will men bow. Only from a sovereign God can men receive salvation. But he is the only one who is able to save. And only a sovereign God can give us a good hope. And listen to him. [?]. Right there in the face of God's sovereignty elective grace. Then she came to him and she bowed down to him and she worshipped and she said, "Lord, help me."

That's the way to meet the doctrine of election. Because you know what he said then?

"But he answered and said, further trying her faith, he said, 'It's not right to take the children's bread and give it to dogs.' And she said, 'That's so, Lord. I'm a dog. But I'm your dog. You're my master. And dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table.'"

And then my Lord said, "Oh, woman, oh woman."

You say, "This kind of crawling and bowing and humility and lying in the dust is not for me."

Then this promise is not for you, either. "Oh woman, great is thy faith."

"God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. The Lord is nigh unto them that be of a broken heart and a contrite spirit."

Do what you will. Go where you will. But I'll tell you what this old sinners is going to do, just what this one did. I'm going to come to his feet.

Judas kissed his cheek and went to hell. The harlot kissed his feet and went to glory. And that's where you're going to find this old sinner, right where she is, confronted by the right, the crown rights of my Lord, the sovereign Lord to save whom he will. And I'm going to say, "True, Lord." And I'm going to keep getting closer and closer and

nearer and nearer and bow more humbly and contrite and kiss his feet and say, "Lord, you help me now. You're the only help I've got."

But you don't deserve the bread. That's true, too. And you're a dog. That's true, too, double dog. But I'm your dog. And I'll just take some crumbs.

I'll guarantee you, on the authority of this book nobody ever went away from our Lord unblest with that kind of spirit.

The hymn writer put it this way.

Come humble sinner, in whose breast
A thousand thoughts revolve;
Come with your guilt and fear oppressed,
And make this last resolve.

I'll go to Jesus, though my sins
Act like a mountain rose;
I know his courts, I'll enter in,
Whatever may oppose.

And prostrate I'll lie before his throne,
And there my guilt confess;
And I'll tell him I'm a wretch undone
Without his sovereign grace."

I'll to the gracious King approach,
Whose scepter mercy gives;
Perhaps He may command my touch,
And this old sinner lives!

Perhaps He will admit my plea,
Perhaps He will hear my prayer;
But if I perish, I will plea,
And perish only there.

I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away,
I must forever die.

How do you meet the doctrine of election? You meet it with a broken heart and a contrite spirit and a submissive heart. And you get saved. That's right.

All right.

Mike, come lead us in a song if you will.