

## ELECTION AND FOREKNOWLEDGE

Studies in Calvinism

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The Calvinists state that before the foundation of the world, God selected, or elected, who He was to save and, therefore, who He was going to consign to the eternal flames.

All this was ‘signed, sealed and delivered ‘ in Heaven before the worlds began. Man had absolutely no say in it and still does not.

That is not what the Bible says.

1 Peter 1.2 states that the elect are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God.

Foreknowledge is the Greek word *proginosko* which, of course, means to know beforehand and NOT to choose beforehand.

God is Omnipotent. He knows all things before they happen. He is never taken by surprise. He knew who were going to be saved before the foundation of the world and who were going to be lost. He knew who were to be the ‘elect’, if you want to use that word but saved is better.

The Lord is the God of knowledge (1 Samuel 2.3). He is also the God of understanding (Isaiah 40.28). He can reveal the deep and secret things (Daniel 2. 22).

The apostle Paul is saying that God foreknew all things including the identity of all who were to respond to the Gospel and be saved. Upon being saved, they come into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12.13) and therefore part of the Church or the elect.

As Calvin and Luther often used the terms election and predestination as being synonymous, it must be remembered that foreknowledge precedes predestination (Romans 8. 29-30) and predestination or election is NOT unto salvation but unto Christlikeness. In other words, if someone responds to the grace of God, repents, is baptised, he will endeavour to live the life that pleases God. This is the message of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 16.24. The would-be followers are given the requirement to follow Christ. God does not have robots as the disciples of the Lord whereas the teaching of Calvinists seems to suggest this idea. God pulls the strings.

It was expressed to me by an ardent Calvinist like this: “God selected me to be saved before the world began. I had nothing to do with it. I had no say in it. God gave me the faith to believe in Him and also gave me all the love by which I could love the Lord Jesus. I made absolutely no contribution at all. I was dead in trespasses and sins but, suddenly, God took me over without my asking or involvement. I had no choice in the matter. I had no freewill. I had not read the Bible or understood any of the ways of God. It just happened. God pulled all the strings.”

This reminds me of the famous story highlighting the Calvinist teaching that everything that happens is God’s will. You have heard this story of the Calvinist who fell down a flight of stairs and hurt himself. Nonetheless, he said, “Thank you God that that is over. I hurt myself but it was Your will and I will praise You for it.”

This seems very flippant and ‘laid back’ particularly in a series of serious essays, but the fact of the matter is that this does highlight the laughable doctrines of Calvinism.

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