

1 Peter 1:1

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Date: 20 February 1983

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[0 : 0 0] We shall turn now to 1 Peter, chapter 1, reading at verse 1.

1 Peter, chapter 1 and verse 1. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.

Now there is nothing at all unusual on the face of it about the salutation to this particular epistle. It performs two basic functions.

It identifies the writer and it identifies the addressees. The apostle indicates his own position and status quite unambiguously.

He is Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. And reminds them in those words of his own authority that he writes as a delegate and a plenipotentiary of the Savior.

[1 : 3 3] He is an apostle commissioned by the Lord. But he is also Peter. And he knows that the very mention of that name will remind them of many facts with regard to himself and his reputation and his personality.

They will know that this Peter is the one who was an eyewitness of the main events of the life of the Lord Jesus.

They will know too that Peter was the great denier. The one who said with cursing that he had never known the Lord Jesus.

And they will know too that he was among those whose faith failed at the very critical moment of the arrest of Christ himself that he forsook him and fled.

And very often in the course of the epistle the apostle will allude to his own background. For example in verse 3 he speaks of being begotten again to a living hope.

[2 : 5 1] Because he never forgot how they had lost their hope. But they had got their hope back in the resurrection of the Savior.

And so we have in a very incidental and yet very significant way an indication to us of what we saw some weeks ago. That all these New Testament documents convey truth through personality.

It is Peter speaking. Peter the apostle. Peter the denier. The Peter who lost his hope.

Peter with all those experiences. And a reminder to ourselves that the service that we offer to Christ is one that must come through our own personalities.

And maybe in those personalities we have scaled the heights. Maybe we have seen great things. Maybe we have great endowments.

[4 : 0 6] And great potential. But always as in Peter's case there is this other side. There is always the dark side of our own personality.

And yet that too. As it is disciplined and modified and trained by God. Is caught up by him and subsumed.

Under the principle that he works all things together for good. To them that love him. It is one of the great things.

And not only is Peter's courage and Peter's insight part of service. But so also is Peter's loss of hope.

And Peter's terrible failure. In the moment of that denial. And all the lessons learned there. All the modifications and personality undergone through those experiences.

[5 : 15] These too are part of this epistle. And part of Peter's whole episcopate and apostolate. Then Peter also identifies for us the addressees.

It is written by Peter. And it's written to the elect of God. Scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia and those other areas that the apostle mentions.

Peter's writing to those who are the elect of God.

Peter the apostle. Peter who lost hope. Peter the denier. It's writing to those who are the elect of God.

And I want first of all to ask. What is the basic idea? That is expressed in this word election. They are the elect.

[6 : 28] What is the basic idea? We find the word used frequently in the Old Testament. Sometimes in very interesting contexts. For example, when David encounters Goliath.

We are told that he chooses or selects five stones from the brook. There is a process of selection.

Which involves equally a process of discarding. Or of non-selection. Choice always implying non-choice.

Selection always implying that some are left behind. And that's the way it was with David. He chooses five stones. And he leaves all the other stones.

We have it more dramatically. In the charge given by Joshua to Israel. Or the challenge uttered by Joshua to Israel. When he says.

[7 : 31] Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. That is choose whether to serve Jehovah. Or to serve others. Other gods than Jehovah.

There is, he says. A straight choice. Between Jehovah and the others. There is an election to be made. There is a selection to be made.

And that selection implied again. That the choice of Jehovah. Implied the non-choosing of others. It meant that the other gods were left.

They were not opted for. They were passed by. So that when they chose Jehovah. There was quite specific.

Non-choosing. Of the other gods. And then we find the same thing. With regard to. The election of. Israel itself. It is chosen.

[8 : 31] Out of the nations. And in that moment. Of Israel being chosen. All the other nations. Are not chosen. But they are left. There is a selection of one.

And the passing by. Of the others. Israel chosen. To be God's special people. To be those among whom God will pitch his tabernacle. Those to whom God.

Offers his covenant. Those to whom God commits his oracles. And above all those. And above all those. Those whom God has chosen. To bear the promised seed.

The Messiah. The people from whom. Jesus came. It is the choice. Of one nation. Of one ethnic group. And it is a choice.

That involves. The passing by. Of all the other nations. Nations. You only have I known. Says Abel. Of all the nations of the earth.

[9 : 30] You are the only ones. Am I have chosen. So constantly. With David. At the brook. With Joshua. And the other gods.

With Israel. Over against the nations. There is. An election. Which is. Selection. And which implies. The passing by.

Of those who are non-elect. And we find. The same thing. Carried into the New Testament. Where for example. Paul in Romans 9.

Speaks of. God choosing Jacob. And passing by. Esau. There is again. Deliberate selection. A deliberate election. Of the one. And the passing by.

Of the others. And Paul summarizes. Is it in the great statement. In Romans 8. Whom he did foreknow. He did predestinate.

[10 : 25] To be conformed. To the image. Of a son. There is he says. A divine. Predestinating. There is.

A divine. Selection. Of men and women. And it is. Predestination. To be conformed. To the image of Christ.

It is. It is a selection. Of some. Which involves. In the mystery. Of God's will. The non-selection. Of others. A selection.

Of some. To be made. Utterly. And totally. Christ-like. In their character. In their capabilities. In their destinies.

In their inheritance. They have been chosen. Eternally. By God. To this particular. Destination. It is.

[11 : 21] In other words. The selection. Out of. What Augustine. Called. The corrupt. Mass. Of mankind.

It is. A selection. Of men and women. Lost. The selection. Of some men. And women. Who are God's enemies. Who are sinners.

Who are rebellious. Who are in those qualities. Quite. Undistinguished. From their fellow men. But are chosen. Out of the lump.

Of human depravity. Chosen out of the great. Aggregate. Of sinners. Chosen. By God. Out of that.

Lost. And fallen society. Chosen. To be his own sons. Chosen. To be members. Of his own kingdom. Chosen.

[12 : 17] To be heirs of God. And joined heirs. With Jesus Christ. And it is this whole idea. Of election. Of selection.

Of choosing. It is that. That Peter has in mind. In his use of the word here. They are. God's select ones. They are God's chosen ones.

And eventually of course. God by grace. Will make them God's. Choice ones. Well so much for the. Bare idea. Of election. You will see that Peter goes on to.

Add. Two or three points. Descriptive. Of. Of this election. To tell us. What kind. Of election. It is.

And I want to mention. Just three of those points. First of all. It is election. Unto the sprinkling. Of the blood of Christ.

[13 : 17] It's election. To the sprinkling of blood. Now you may recall. In Exodus 24. That. We had. A ceremony. Of blood sprinkling.

The incident. Was the. Inauguration. Of the covenant. Between God. And Israel. And in that context. God makes.

Certain promises. God. And God. Imposes. Certain obligations. Other people say. We will obey. And. Then.

Mostly. Sprinkles. The blood. On the altar. And more significantly still. Sprinkles. The blood. On the actual. People. Themselves.

Now. One of the great themes. Of this epistle. For those who got entered. In some detail. Is that. The New Testament church. Is the new Israel. It is the new covenant. People.

[14 : 14] And Peter. Is quite deliberately. Alluding. To Exodus 24. And telling us. That we have been chosen. To be sprinkled.

With blood. Just as the Old Testament church was. But this time. It's the blood. Of Jesus Christ. And he's telling us.

That that blood. Is the blood. Of the new covenant. Now. I'm laboring the point. For this reason. That sometimes. We are told. That although.

In the Bible. There is. Certainly. Election. It is not. We are told. Election. To salvation. It is. Election. To service. Or election.

To temporal privilege. Now. It's very. Very true. That in the Bible. There is. Election. To temporal privilege. To be born a Jew.

[15 : 09] Meant. That one lived. In a land. Overflowing. With milk and honey. It meant. That one also. Had the means of grace. And the benefits.

Of. Judaistic civilization. And it's also true. That in the Bible. There is. An election. To service. That is most clear.

In the conversion. Of Saul. Of whom we are told. That he is a chosen vessel. To bear God's name. He is chosen. By God.

But he is chosen. To bear. The name of God. In other words. Chosen. For the service. Of preaching the gospel. But when I say. That there is indeed.

Election. To privilege. And there is indeed. Election. To service. I am not thereby. Denying. That there is also. An election. To salvation. And that's what we have here.

[16 : 08] We have been elected. Chosen by God. To have the blood. Of Jesus Christ. Sprinkled upon us. And applied. To us. In other words.

We have been chosen. To participate. In the covenant. In all the blessings. Of that covenant. In all the blessings. Purchased by Jesus Christ. We are elect.

Into the covenant. Elect. Elect. Into covenant. Blessing. Elect. To have the gospel. And all its benefits. Applied to us. In other words.

We have been chosen. Says Peter. To be. Have the forgiveness. Of our sins. To our justification. To have. The adoption of children.

By God. To himself. We have been chosen. To be glorified. Remember how it is. In Paul. In Romans 28.

[17 : 04] Whom he predestined. Them he also called. And whom he called. Them he also justified. And whom he justified. Them he also glorified.

In other words. There is a straight line. From predestination. To glory. There is. A predestination.

Which is the assignation. Of individual. Men and women. To glory. God has. Elected. These people.

To have. The blood. Of Christ. Actually. Spreached. Dilled. Upon them. He has chosen. Him. To be brought. Into God's.

Covenant. He has chosen. Him. To be effectually. Called. Chosen. Him. To be justified. Chosen. Him. To be kept. Chosen.

- [18 : 00] Him. To be sanctified. Chosen. Him. To be glorified. Chosen. Him. To be absolutely. And totally. Christ like. That is God's.
- Commitment. Involved. In his election. We are elect. Unto the sprinkling. Of the blood. Of Jesus Christ. But then also.
- We are elect. He says. Unto obedience. And that is something. Of enormous significance. Because. We're going to be told.
- At once. If we say. That we believe. In election. We're going to be told. Well. Doesn't that doctrine. Doesn't it. Destroy. The whole basis. Of morality.
- Doesn't it. Encourage men. To sin. Doesn't it. Lead men. To say. We're elect. And we can live. As we please. Doesn't that.
- [18 : 55] Take away. All the earnestness. Out of the moral struggle. Is it not. An antinomian doctrine. In its very. Very nature.
- One hears. The objection. Constantly. Now. Let me say. That in my view. There is no logical defense.
- Against that. That kind of reasoning. In the same way. As the doctrine of justification. Justification. By grace. By faith alone.
- Is logically defenseless. Against the inference. Let us do evil. That good may come. So the doctrine.
- Of sovereign. Redemptive election. Has no logical defense. Against the argument. That it breeds.
- [19 : 51] And encourages. Amorality. And indolence. On the spiritual level. But it has the defense. Which is greater.
- Than a logical defense. It has a spiritual defense. It has. This defense. That the elect of God.
- Will not live. In sin. Not because. It is. Illogical for them. But because.
- What they have been. Chosen to. Is obedience. They will obey. Not because. It is logical.
- For the elect. To obey. They will obey. Because they have been. Predestinated. To obey. It has been. Decreed.
- [20 : 50] That they will obey. It has been. Decreed. That they will be holy. And it seems to me. Enormously important. To. Get this.
- Absolutely clear. In our own thinking. That just as certainly. As God. Preordained. The creation. Of the world.
- So God. Preordained. The holiness. Of his own people. As God. Preordained. Calvary. So God. Preordained.
- The holiness. Of his own people. As God. Preordained. The resurrection. Of Christ. So God. Preordained. The holiness.
- Of his own people. I am. Not simply. Motivated. To saintliness. By the logic. Of. My election. But I am.
- [21 : 46] Shut in. To holiness. Holiness. I have no option. But holiness. Because. That has. Been God's purpose.
- That is what I have been chosen to. That is what God has decreed. If I go back into the language of the Old Testament. For a moment. Remember how in Psalm 148.
- We sing. And from that place. Where fixed they be. By his decree. They cannot pass. There is a divine decree.

That bounds the movements of the oceans. That controls the tides. That controls the movements of planets. Planets and galaxies and constellations.

There is a decree that bounds the movement. Of every subatomic particle. But there is also a decree. That bounds the people of God.

[22 : 46] And that keeps them. Within the parameters. Of saintliness. We have been chosen. To be saints.

We are elect and to obedience. And. Where fixed we are. By that decree. From that we cannot pass.

Now. I would need to make many distinctions. Going into that thoroughly. I do not for a moment mean that. God's decree. Treats us. The way it treats.

Subatomic particles. Because we are persons with wills. And God's decree. Respects that. And furthermore. I would also have to say.

That the decree. That confines me. Within obedience. It does not mean that I never step out. That I never fall.

[23 : 46] That I never wound my own conscience. Never disgrace. The faith that I profess. But it does mean. That there is.

A holiness. Which is inevitable. For God's people. And that. God is determined. To make them saints.

I come back again. To Romans 8. We have been predestinated. To be conformed. To the image of the son. Let us see.

To absolute clarity. What is predestination about. It is about being Christ like. And if I may be so bold.

Remember again that. Christ. Is the image of God. God is love. What we have been chosen to. Is not simply.

[24 : 45] To be orthodox Calvinists. We have not been chosen simply. To the practice. Of a legalistic morality.

But we have been chosen by God. To reflect. And reproduce. The love. Of Christ. Himself.

And I come back again to this. And from that place. Where fixed you be. By his decree. You cannot pass. And although I'm terribly conscious.

That I see it only dimly. Even in its dimness. It is glorious. That for us. There is a decreed holiness. A holiness that cannot escape us.

This great fact. That we and holiness are destined to meet. And destined to walk together. Remember in Ephesians 2.

[25 : 46] The apostle Paul says again. You are God's workmanship. God's poem. God's poem. It is.

You are God's poem. Created in Christ Jesus. Unto good works. Good works. Which God. Has ordained before.

That you should walk in them. Good works. That God has ordained before. That we should walk in them. And I wonder whether to any extent at all.

That figures in our own psychology. As you ponder today. What the day may hold for you. Or what life may hold for you. Maybe because of our own congenital pessimism.

We are only thinking of the difficulties and darkneses. That one day we are going to encounter. Maybe sometimes we think of the joys. That may have been prepared for us.

[26 : 49] But it seems to me. A marvelous idea. A marvelous perspective. That as I walk along the road. There are good works here.

And good works there. And God has prepared them for me. God has ordained them for me. And if I may. Put it even this way.

What good works are there. Which lie. Even in this day itself. For me and you. What obedience is. What Christ likeness is.

What good works. And the glorious thing that God's decree. So binds us and so fixes us and so bounds us.

That we and Christ likeness are bound to meet. And we and obedience are bound to meet. And we and love and loveliness.

[27 : 48] Are bound to meet. We are chosen to obedience. Now it does not really allow the least. Relaxing of effort.

It doesn't allow at all for any kind of indolence. We are to work out our own salvation. We are to purify ourselves as God is pure.

In other words. The holiness. God has decreed for us. Is a holiness that we shall work at. God has. Decreed.

That we shall work. At mortification. At self-denial. And growth. And grace. But I still think. It's a moralist thing.

That when we get so frustrated. And so defeated. We should be able to look at life. From this point of view. We have been predestinated. Not only to be converted.

[28 : 46] Not only to be glorified. But there are predestinated encounters. Between ourselves and good works. I believe.

That in the last analysis. This whole idea. Of election. Of predestination. Of redemptive love. Three things which to me are synonymous.

I believe that. They all mean this. God. Is determined. To make me Christ like. I believe.

That that determination. Was always in God's heart. That long ago. God's mind was made up. That his own elect.

Should be absolutely conformed. To the image of the son. And I believe. That if we are Christians this morning.

[29 : 50] Then the great purpose. In which we are caught up. Is that purpose of God's. His determination. Not only.

Or primarily. To make me orthodox. Not primarily. To make me respectable. But to make me.

Through and through. Body and soul. Mind. Emotions. In the world. And will. And moods. And feelings. To make me like. Jesus Christ. Elect.

To the sprinkling of the blood. Elect. Unto obedience. And the third thing. Peter puts in. Is this. We are elect.

According to the foreknowledge. Of God the father. We are elect. According to the foreknowledge. Of God the father. Father. Now there are many remarkable things there.

[30 : 46] More than I. Have time to go into. Or even plan to go into. One of them is the great emphasis. That we have. On the father himself. And I do feel more and more.

That we ought to be conscious of this. Because sometimes. Love. Love. Love. For us. Means Christ. And we do not relate it. To God the father.

And I would recommend. To all of you. That you go through the new testament. Carefully. And look. At the tremendous number of passages. In which it is the father's love.

And the father's concern. And the father's initiative. That are so prominent. It's the father who loved. And who gave his only begotten son.

And I fear sometimes. That we are. Making God the father. Only our remote. And. Almost. An intimidating being.

[31 : 45] And that we do not do justice. To the marvel of his concern. And that's what Peter is saying. It is the father who chose us. Now. The son also chose us.

But here. The language is about the father's. Choosing. About the father's. Selecting us. And. We're told.

That this was. On the basis. Of his foreknowledge. Now. It's very easy. To misunderstand this. As if God foreknew us.

And therefore God chose us. In other words. God foreknew. That we would believe. That we would repent. And therefore God chose us.

I want to remind you. And I must do this. As patiently. As you can bear it. That. The idea. Of. Of. Knowledge. And foreknowledge. In the bible.

[32 : 45] Is not simply. Intellectual. It isn't. Foreknowledge. In the sense. Simply of. Prescience. Because.

In that sense. Of course. God. Foreknew. Everything. And God. Foreknew. Everybody. What we have here. Is.

A distinct foreknowledge. A particular. And almost. Limited foreknowledge. In other words. In the bible. To know.

Very often. Means. To love. Now I can show to you. In terms of two or three instances. In Amos. For example. The prophet says.

Or God says. Through the prophet. You. Only. Have I known. Of all the nations. Of the earth. Now of course. God. Knew. All the nations.

[33 : 42] But God. Knew Israel. In a special way. With love. And with affection. You have it equally. In.

Psalms 1. For the Lord. Knows. The way. Of the righteous. Now the Lord. Also knows. The way. Of the wicked. But he knows.

The righteous. His way. Especially. Knowledge. Again. With affection. Now let me be. Bolder still. You remember.

The statement. In Genesis. Where we are told. That Adam. Adam. Knew. Eve's wife. And she conceived. Now there.

The knowledge. Has become. Almost. Erotic. It is in the clearest. Possible way. A knowledge. In which there is love.

[34 : 37] And in this instance. Even the physical expression. Of that love. There are many reasons. Why it is enormously important. To keep.

That element. In our conception. Of God's love. I'm even prepared. Under certain conditions. To speak. Of the. Erotic aspect.

Of God's own love. For his people. God's. Because. Only then. Can we safeguard. The passion. And the exclusiveness. And the totalness.

And the possessiveness. Of the love of God. And only then. Can we. Read. Do justice. To those great concepts. Such as the jealousy. Of God. In his love.

For his people. God's whole attitude. To his own church. Like a man's attitude. To his wife. Now it is knowledge. In that whole area.

[35 : 34] Of association. It is. Knowledge which is love. And knowledge which is affection. Knowledge which is passionate affection. It is in fact this.

There is a distinction. I think of nuance. Between saying that we love somebody. And that we are in love with somebody. And I believe.

That in God's relations with his church. Then it is the latter. We have to think of. God is in love. With his church. And what we are told here.

In my terms therefore is this. That we are elect. According to the fact that God fell in love with us. Or God was. In love with us.

Because it was an eternal love. In other words. The election. The election. Is stressed right back to its source. In the love of God.

[36 : 34] Now I can't go far into that. Beyond to say this. If I am asked. Why did God choose us? I can say.

Because he loved us. But if I am asked. Why did God love us? I cannot answer. And I must not answer.

In other words. In the love. I find the ultimate. In the love. I find the last thing. In the love. I find the end of the road. I can't go beyond.

And I can't go deeper. I have no reason for the love. I have no logic for it. He didn't love us. Because we were attractive. He didn't love us.

Because we were relations. Because in fact. We were enemies. He didn't love us. Because we were friends. Because again. We were enemies. He didn't even love us.

[37 : 30] Because Christ died. On the contrary. Christ died. Because God loved us. The cross. Is not the cause. Of God's love.

It is the consequence. Of God's love. And when I stand. At last. Before the glory. Of election. What I'm saying is. There is no logic. Beyond the logic. Of the love.

We can only say. As Paul says. Contemplating his own election. It pleased God. Who.

Who separated me. From his. From my mother's womb. And called me. By his grace. It pleased God. And that's all. Can't get. Beyond that.

We can only say again. In the words. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. Even so. Father. For so it seemed good. In thy sight. So.

[38 : 28] We stand. In election. Before the finality. Of love. That love. That love. Caused us. Sometimes. We know. In human relationships.

The mystery of love. And we might ask. Why did you love? And we might. Even say. I can't understand. Why you love me. And that is.

Found. That it's intensest. In our relationship. With God. Because there we find. Sovereign love. Gratuitous love. Love. Love. Love. Love.

Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. We stand. Before the marvel. Of that. Now I want to add.

To that. Two points. Not suggested by Peter. But still. Of tremendous importance. I have gathered. From Peter.

[39 : 23] Three lessons. First. We are elect. To the sprinkling of blood. Secondly. We are elect. Unto obedience. And thirdly.

We are elect. On the basis. Of love. And I want to add. Two more points. The first is this. That this love. Is intensely.

Individualistic. And particular. And personal. In other words. It is not. An election. Simply of classes. Believers.

As a class. The Jews. As a class. Or the Scottish nation. As a class. Or the free church. As a class. It is an election.

Of particular. And designated. Individuals. When God. Called Abraham. That was particular.

[40 : 20] Election. God. Knew his name. God. Went straight for him. God. Chosen. Minutely.

And particularly. When God. Choses. Jacob. Again. There is. Particular choice. We find the same thing.

In Jeremiah. God says. To Jeremiah. Before. That was formed. In the womb. I knew thee. I. I knew thee.

There is a pre-temporal knowledge. But above all. There is a particular knowledge. I knew thee. Jeremiah. I have chosen you. It is. Terrible.

It's for Jeremiah. Inspiringly. Particular. We find. The same thing. In the apostle Paul. God.

[41 : 17] He said. To. Separated me. From my mother's womb. And called me. By his grace. And then. In that tremendous. Affirmation. In Galatians 2.

Which is one of the. Whole keystones. Of my theology. The apostle says. He loved me. And he gave himself. For me.

And. We have the reference. In Revelation. In the Revelation. In the Revelation. In John. We have the apostle. Telling us of. That lamb's. Book of life. And there are names.

Written. In that lamb's. Book of life. And. That's why. Right through the bible. Our whole. Relationship.

With God. Is a personal relationship. It is. Individual. Particular. The psalmist. Can sing. The lord.

[42 : 13] Is my shepherd. I love the lord. Because. My voice. And prayers. He did hear. And in psalm 40.

More movingly. Than any of those. Even he says. I am. Poor. And needy. But the lord. Thinketh. Upon.

Upon me. In john. Chapter 10. We are told. That he. Calls his own sheep. By name. And leads them out.

And. In an age. When there is so much. Talk. Meaningful. Or meaningless. Of men. Being reduced. To ciphers. And to computer codes.

It is so marvelous. That at last. Whatever may come. We are not faceless. To God. And we are not nameless.

[43 : 14] To God. God is an enormous family. And yet God knows the name. Of each of his own children. And God knows the face.

Of each of his own children. In his particular. And personal. Choosing. And the second point. I wanted to raise. It was this.

That. There is nothing. In this election. To imply. The fewness. Of the saved. I don't.

Myself. Honestly. Know. Why people. Always jump. From a conclusion. From predestination. To the conclusion. Fewness.

Because there is no reason. Why. God should not choose. Vast number. And I will say furthermore. There is every evidence.

[44 : 13] That God has chosen. Vast number. You have it again. In the vision of John. The seventh chapter. Of revelation. Where he sees.

A multitude. Which no man. Can number. Out of every kindred. And nation. And people. And tongue. And they are all gathered. Before the throne. And I believe.

That God's elect. Is indeed. A vast community. It is vast. In history. Down through the Christian centuries. And today.

It is vast. It is vast. Geographically. Found in every continent. Literally. In every kindred and nation. And people in town. You have it in Romans 5.

Where sin abounded. Grace did much more abound. And for myself emotionally. It is difficult. It is difficult to believe. That that can mean anything.

[45 : 12] But. That. Christ. Even numerically. Will triumph. And that the numerical conquests.

Of Satan. The numbers. Carried. By him. And with him. To perdition. That they will not match. The numbers.

Carried. By Christ. Into the near presence. Of. Of the living God. Where sin abounded. Grace. Did much more.

Abound. Well I must. Close this. And. Maybe if I can just focus on. On one or two points.

Just two points. Because my time is gone. First. The question. How can I know. If I'm elect. And.

[46 : 10] In a very beautiful way. It is. Indicated for us. In this passage itself. That. It isn't. Evident. In our own providence.

You cannot tell. From our circumstances. That we are special. I mean this. The way that those people are described.

Not only as the elect of God. But as the strangers. Scattered. Now behind both words. There is. Technical.

Sociological terminology. We have. In fact. There. The. Alien. Sojourners. Sojourners. In other words.

The people. Peter wrote to. They were dispersed. And. They were stateless. And they were. Residence less.

[47 : 04] They had. No national identity. They couldn't have got a passport. Anywhere. And they had no permanent abode.

They were the stateless. Sojourners. Of the dispersion. In fact. Peter will say to them. Which before.

Were not a people. But now. You are the people of God. You have found. You have found. You have found. You have found nationhood. In your salvation. But look at those.

Elect people of God. They have no political status. They have no economic security. And they don't look. In their providences.

In the least. Like. Favorites of God. And yet it's possible. To know. That we are elect. Although many a time.

[48 : 00] We too. May say with John. It does not yet appear. What we shall be. And the world. Knows us not. And.

If I can just short circuit. My whole argument here. There is one great. Sign of election. And that is. Jesus Christ.

Calvin spoke of Christ. As the mirror. Of election. How do I know. I am elect. I know.

If I have Christ. If I have him. In the grasp. Of my faith. If I have him. In the longing.

Of my soul. If I have him. Even. In the groaning need. For him. I have him. In my faith. It may be a weak faith.

[48 : 58] It may be a fluctuating faith. But if I have that faith. Then. In that faith. I have Christ. And in that Christ.

I have the mirror. Of my election. I have the sign. Of my election. And I put it to you. At one fundamental level.

How monumentally important. That is. For Christian relationships. How important. It is that. Denominations.

Don't matter. And parties. Don't matter. Sectarian labels. Don't matter. All that matters. All that matters. Is that we see. A man's election. Mirrored.

In the fact. That he has Christ. And in that fact. I become. One with him. I see him. As my co-elect. We may have monumental.

[49 : 53] Theological differences. We may even engage. In earth shattering. Theological argument. And still we do so. Within the parameters. Of brotherhood.

Because he. With Christ. Having Christ. Manifestly. Is elect. He has a sign. Of election. In that he is Christ.

And that is the. The one thing. Do I have Christ. In that. I have my election. And the last point. I'll mention. Is this.

That this surely. Is the great. And in many ways. The only. Evangelistic. Comfort. And encouragement. It is very far.

From being a discouragement. To election. It is the great. Encouragement. And it's a great. Encouragement. Because. We go out. In the comfort.

[50 : 48] Of Paul's. Experience. When God. Told him. At Corinth. I have much. People. In this city. Don't be afraid. Preach.

The word. Engage. In your evangelism. Because. I have much. People. And Paul. You terribly. Well. These people. Were as hard. As nails.

Christians. I was talking. Last week. To. A man. Who is a full time. Evangelist. And he said. The thing. That strikes me.

Most. Is that. Whenever. We go to a new. Place. Or. A new mission. Whatever it may be. He says. We are always.

Told. This. Is the. Hardest. Place. In Britain. And. We told it. Everywhere. And he says. That all was right.

[51 : 41] Because. Every place. Is the. Hardest. Place. In Britain. Well. That's. The way it was. At. Corinell. And. God. Said. To the. Apostle. Don't.

Be afraid. Speak. Boldly. I. Have. Much. People. In this. City. The. Lord. Himself. Said. Other. Sheep. I. Have. Which.

Are. Not. Yet. In. The. Fold. Them. Also. I. Must. Bring. The. Glorious. Thing. Is. I. Have. Them. I.

Have. Them. Already. Those. Sheep. And. I. Must. Bring. Them. I. Think. Even. More. Important. For. Myself. And. Either. Of. These.

Is. The. Great. Picture. We. Have. With. Regard. To. The. Judgment. Where. The. Lord. We are. Told. Will. Send. His. Angels. To. Gather. His. Elect.

[52 : 36] From. The. Four. Corners. Of. The. Earth. And. The. Angels. Might. Very. Well. Say. But. Lord. If. They. Elect. We. Don't. Need. To. Gather. Them. They. Come. Anyway.

Instead. The. Lord. The. Angels. To. Gather. Them. And. Although. It. Is. Not. Teaching. About.

Evangelism. It. Is. Illustrating. What. Is. My. Role. And. You. Role. As. Evangelists. We. Have. Been. Sent. Into. The. Chaos. Into.

The. Almost. Apocalyptic. Bewilderment. Of. Our. Society. We. Have. Been. Sent. There. As. God's. Messenger. To. Gather. As. Elect. And.

The. Method. God. Has. Told. Us. To. Employ. Is. He. Says. You. Call. Everybody. And. Through. You. Calling. Everybody. I. Gather. My. Elect. And.

[53 : 31] I. Think. It's. Terribly. Important. For. Us. To. Put. That. Great. Fact. And. All. The. Certainty. It. For. To. Put. It. Into. Our. Own. Spiritual. Psyche.

Into. Our. Own. Emotional. Approach. To. Evangelists. But. What. We. Are. Being. Sent. To. Abredeem. For. Is. To. Gather. God's. Elect. We.

Haven't. Been. Sent. At. All. To. Elect. People. Report. Home. To. God. And. Say. Lord. We've. Chosen. Those. That. Promising. But. We. Have. Been. Sent.

Into. Community. To. Gather. Those. God. Has. Chosen. God. Has. Told. Us. Tell. Everybody. And. Through. You. Telling. Everybody. I. Gather.

My. Own. Chosen. Ones. To. Me. So. I. Hope. That. Maybe. On. Both. Of. Those. Levels. This. Morning. We. Can. Find. Some. Encouragement. And. Some.

[54 : 23] Motivation. That. We. Shall. See. For. Ourselves. Our. Own. Election. In. The. Sight. Of. Christ. And. That. We. Shall. See. In.

The. Fact. Of. God's. Election. Our. Own. Encouragement. In. The. Work. Of. Gospel. Proclamation. Let. Us. Pray. Oh.

Lord. We. Bless. The. For. The. Word. We. Bless. The. For. Its. Clarity. And. For. Its. Relevance. To. Ourselves. We. Thank. The. For. The. Many. Ways. Which. It.

Speaks. Comfort. To. Our. Hearts. And. We. Thank. The. Too. Lord. For. Its. Creative. And. Its. Redemptive. Rebukes. We. Pray. That. We. May. Be. Salutarily.

Influenced. By. Those. Words. That. Speak. against. Us. As. Much. As. We. Are. Comfort. By. Those. Words. That. Speak. For. Us. Guide. Us. Through. This. Day. For. Giving.

[55 : 18] Our. Sin. Father. Savior. Sage. Amen.