



Old Testament Reading – Exodus 24:3-8
New Testament Reading – 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

How Should We Then Live **“The Search for Authentic Christianity” # 3** **1 Peter 1:1-2**

In his first epistle, Peter affirmed the doctrine of election to comfort those Christians who were being persecuted for their faith.

- In 64 AD, Roman Emperor Nero hired men to set fire to the city of Rome so he could rebuild it in the new Greek style and enlarge his castle to accommodate more people at his lavish, lewd, and lascivious parties.

- Nero blamed the Christians for the burning of Rome, and they began to suffer severe persecution, including torture, flogging, being cast into the lion's dens, and other forms of martyrdom.
- Many Christians left Rome and relocated to one of the many other Roman provinces, but they discovered they were not welcome there.
- Peter's letter was to assure them that even though they were treated as outcasts by others, they were chosen by God and sent by God to those new areas to spread the gospel to others.

**The blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church, for the more Christians they martyred, the more in number they grew until Christianity spread over the whole Roman Empire.
Adapted from Tertullian**

FIVE ASPECTS OF ELECTION

1. The Reality of Our Election – Verse 2 – “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.”

- The doctrine of election **does not mean** God looked down the corridors of time and chose some to be saved and others to be lost.
- The doctrine of election **does mean** that God is sovereign over all, in all, and through all, and He chose some to be saved, based on His divine will, and not upon our human desires.
- The doctrine of election **does not, in any way**, exclude man's need to respond to the gospel and to receive Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord.
- God's sovereignty and man's free will are a paradox – two statements of equal value that seem contradictory, but when understood, actually compliment each other.
- For example:
 - The Scriptures declare the humanity of Jesus.
 - Yet, at no time did He lose His deity.
 - Jesus was the true God-Man.
 - As a man, Jesus died at the hands of evil men.
 - As God, His death was payment for man's sins.
- In Ephesians 1:3-14, the Apostle Paul affirmed every aspect of our salvation, from our sanctification to our glorification, but he said those spiritual blessings rested upon the foundation of our election.

2. The Result of Our Election – Vs. 1 – “To the pilgrims of the dispersion...but the elect of God.”

- Christians have dual citizenship and a dual relationship.
- Christians continue to live on the earth, but our citizenship is in heaven.
- Christians are supernatural citizens living in an earthly culture.

- Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, with convictions, beliefs, ethics, and habits contrary to the ways of the world.
- While Christians do not hate the world, neither do we love it, because we know this world is passing away, and we are just passing through.
- However, as long as God allows Christians to live on the earth, we are to be His witnesses to the world, not only in what we say but, more importantly, how we live.
- Our election means God has called us to live in the world, and not to be of the world, but to be His witnesses to the world, even if that includes suffering persecution.

3. The Resource of Our Election – Vs. 2 – “According to the foreknowledge of God.”

- The foreknowledge of God is not what He knew we would do but rather the **specific work He has called us to do.**
- In John 15:16, Jesus told His disciples, ***“You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, to bear much fruit, and that your fruit should remain.”***
- In 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, the Apostle Paul made it clear that God’s calling had nothing to do with man’s innate abilities but with the availability of man to allow God to work through him – ***“That no flesh should glory in His presence.”***
- Jeremiah 1:5 – ***“Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you!”***
- Amos 3:2 – ***“Israel only have I known.”***
- Isaiah 49:1ff – ***“The Lord called me from the womb, from the body of my mother He named me, and He has made my mouth like a sharp sword.”***
- God is pursuing a personal, intimate relationship with every person He has adopted into His eternal family.
- In 1 Peter 2:9, Peter said God had called Christians to ***“Proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”***
- In Matthew 7:21-23, Jesus made it clear, ***“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.”***

4. The Realm of Our Election – Vs. 2 – “By the Sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.”

- Being “elect” and being “saved” are two different things.
- The Jews were, and still are God’s chosen people, but they are not, nor will they be, saved, apart from their confession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.
- Every believer was a part of the elect, and yet unsaved, for some time, but the reality of our election was made evident on the day of our salvation.
- The sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit is to convict us of our sins, convince us of our need for a Savior, and to accept Jesus Christ as the Savior we need.
- In Titus 3:5, we read, ***“He saved us, not on the works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy, He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.”***

God planned our salvation, Christ purchased our salvation, and the Holy Spirit applied our salvation, for Christ’s glory, and to achieve the redemptive purpose of God.

5. The Reason for Our Election – Vs. 2- *“For obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.”*

- God did not send His Son to pay the debt of our sin by His death on the cross JUST to save us from hell and assure us of heaven when we die.
- God saved us so we might obey Christ in response to what He did for us through His shed blood.
- In Ephesians 2:1-10, Paul said we were dead in our trespasses and sins, but God MADE US alive together with Christ so that in the ages to come, He can display us before the Heavenly host as the evidence of what His grace has done.
- *“Therefore, we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*

Those elected to be saved are also elected to serve. In that regard, we should live each day of our lives to answer the question: **“How Should We Then Live?”**