

Christian Myth Busters We Are Provisionists Part 2

Remember Prayer & Praise, 5-6:30

- On the weekend of June 8th and 9th we presented, **"We are Provisionists Part 1"**
- We talked about two Protestant Theological positions,
- that have dominated conservative protestant theology for centuries

Calvinism and Arminianism

There are basically three theological camps today.

- The third being the growing wing of Christendom...
- ... that has moved away from the errancy of the Word of God...
- The NAR, The Emerging Church and many of the old-line protestant denominations, ...
- have moved away from the inerrancy of God's Word....
- and has to varying degrees embraced our antichrist, anti-bible, anti-sin, and anything goes culture.
- We did not address the core issues with Arminianism three weeks ago.
- Two things stand out about Arminianists and again there are variations of their basic theology.
- While Calvinism emphasizes the sovereignty of God,
- Arminianism emphasizes the responsibility of man and that one can lose their salvation.

The other stand out Arminianist teaching is that you can become perfected in holiness to sinlessness.

Jeremy Craft writes,

"Much of so-called Arminianism, which follows John Wesley's adaptation, teaches that entire sanctification is possible and even expected of believers. This teaches that Christians may reach a point in their spiritual progression where they have become completely sanctified or live a life of sinless perfection. And so concurs a Wesleyan theologian, John Miley who writes, "The fullness of sanctification shall be instantly attained on the condition of faith, just as justification is attained; and there shall be a new experience of a great and gracious change, and just as consciously such as the experience in regeneration." The conscious experience that Miley refers to is commonly known as a second work of grace."

But our focus is on Calvinism versus Provisionism

- Let me summarize what I said three weeks ago about your understood version of Calvinism and perhaps Arminianism.
- There are some Calvinists who will argue that we have misrepresented Calvinism.
- One problem is that some people are Calvin Calvinists,....
- others are Four-point Calvinists, Arthur W. Pink Calvinists, Presbyterian Calvinists,... etc.
- It would not be difficult to misrepresent somebody's version of Calvinism that they learned from others...
- who taught them something about their own brand of Calvinism.
- What they teach and understand may not be the complete picture of Calvinism.
- When someone labels themselves as Calvinist we take it that they believe...
- in all of the tenants of Calvinism unless they tell us otherwise.

We offered a third option, Provisionists, emphasizing God's Provision of Salvation for all of mankind.

- We are grateful to Leighton Flowers from whom I first heard use the word Provisionist.
- As Provisionists we spoke of what drives God to do what He does.
- We also quoted many Calvinists about what drives God according to Calvinist theology.
- If we went away that weekend with nothing else,....
- ... we hope you left with the understanding that in Provisionism God's love drives all of His attributes,
- including His sovereignty,

.... But in Calvinism God's Sovereign Determinism drives everything God does including whom He loves.

- True Calvinists love the Word of God but they put their Theology above the word.
- How do we know this?
- They will manipulate the meaning of Words and phrases to make the Bible fit their logical theology.
- Logic is very important to Calvinists,
- and that is why they totally deemphasize any aspect of man's free will in salvation.....
- while totally emphasizing God's sovereign determinism to elect some for Heaven and some for Hell.
- From their many quotations, the Sovereignty of God coupled with Man's Depravity is everything.
- To a Calvinist we are so depraved that we are unable to believe without first being born again...
- After God has made us alive, we are then able to believe unto salvation.

Provisionists also believe that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God....

- and are disqualified as we are, to enter the Kingdom of God, without faith in Christ Crucified.
- Jesus, the Apostles and Provisionists teach that you must BELIEVE in order to be born again.
- We gave many verses that show new life comes after believing, not before.

We discovered that all of this Sovereign Determinism goes out the window,

- when it comes to the perseverance of the saints, another major tenant of Calvinism.
- If YOU don't persevere by your own free will, by falling into continuous sin...
-you will then prove that you are not one of God's elect.

We answered the question, "Then How does Calvinism work Scripturally?"

- They do so by manipulate word meanings that might contradict their Theology of Determinism.
- Words like 'All' and 'World' are defined at times by them as 'all of the elect or the chosen.'
- 'world' becomes only the elect of the world. To them God only loves the world of the elect, ...
- if a passage seemingly contradicts God's Sovereign Determinism.

Again in Calvinism God's Sovereign Determinism drives all of His attributes, including His love.

- In Provisionism God's Love drives all of His other attributes including His Sovereignty.

Provisionists believe that God can love all, give free will to all, and still have His sovereign will be done....

- even with free-will Hell deserving mankind!
- Let's repeat one of our many quotations from three weeks ago by Calvinist,

James Montgomery Boice,

"We can never exaggerate the importance of God's sovereignty, for God is the greatest of all realities, indeed, the very ground of reality, and SOVEREIGNTY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING THAT CAN BE SAID ABOUT HIM. The other attributes of God are also important. But if in our minds we ignore, distort, or deny God's sovereignty, meaning the absolute determination and rule by God of all his works and creatures, God will no longer be God for us. His decrees and acts will be determined by something else, either by mere human beings or by circumstances or by some

other cosmic power, and these other things (or nothing) will be our actual God. In order to be sovereign, God must also be all-knowing, all-powerful, and absolutely free. If he were limited in any one of these areas, he would not be truly sovereign. Yet the sovereignty of God is greater than any one of these attributes."

Provisionists believe that God can drive His sovereignty AND accomplished His will while loving all!
-God is big enough, creative enough, powerful enough....
-.... to accomplish His will by using the free will of man, which is a part of man's image bearing from God.

Having looked at the words 'All' 'World' 'Totally Depraved' & 'Perseverance'
-in our first message we will look at three other hot button words, in Christendom,
'Election' 'Elect' & 'Predestination'

Before we proceed to the other two words that dominate Calvinism....

-We need to address the fact that words often have multiple meanings or applications....
-... the context of a passage must determine the true meaning, along with the rules of grammar.
-We also need to understand if the meaning of a word we choose in this passage, ...
-.... contradicts any other portion of Scripture, does it contradict the nature & heart of God?
-Our theological view of what drives God to do what He does,
-.....is also a huge factor in how we define words and passages.

Sovereign Determinism drives a certain attitude and meaning with many passages of Scripture.
-A Provisionist's attitude about what drives God can drive the same passage to another emphasis.

For Example

-Calvinism's Determinate Theology teaches some but not 'all' are DETERMINED for Heaven, ...
-.... and some are DETERMINED for Hell.
-So when Calvinism runs into the word **all** and **world** when the passage addresses salvation,
-They choose their Determinate Theology over the natural meaning of the passage,
-and thus they alter normal definitions to fit their Theology.

When Jesus says in John 3:16

"God so loved the world that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"

-... In Calvinism the word 'world' is limited to God only loving the elect of the world,
-.....only those He determined to be saved. **World here = elect only**
-The overlaying of Sovereign Determinism onto many passages like John 3:16....
-..... creates a certain attitude about God and about people.
-The Provisionist believes God is driven by love,
-.... and therefore has a different attitude about God and thus about people.
-We believe He loves everyone, and we need to be a light and witness to everyone...
-.... in the hope of their salvation thru the free will exercise of their faith, which God requires.

Provisionist tend to be more merciful, forbearing, longsuffering and gracious toward sinful mankind.
-Why? Because our God drives those attributes of His love into us and we should reflect His attitude.

Our Theology of What Drives God Affects Our Attitude Towards God and People

These theology driven definitions and attitudes have also affected our three other hot button words,
Election Elect and Predestination

-Let's look closely at these two words which we often reluctant to be talked about.

The Noun Election

-Found 7 times in 7 verses.

-It is the Greek noun, **ἐκλογή (ek-logē)**

-It identifies Israel as God's elect nation, not for salvation but for His purposes in Ro. 9:11, 11:5, 11:7, and 11:28.

-Election identifies Paul as His chosen vessel to the gentiles in Acts 9:15.

-Paul identifies the Thessalonian believers by their election by God in 1 Thes. 1:4

-And Peter in 2 Pet. 1:10 exhorts His Jewish/Christian brethren to live in such a way,

-....that their lives would match what they were elected for by God and if they do, they will not stumble.

-None of these verses speak of anyone being elected before time for salvation,

-.... but being elected for His purposes.

The Adjective Elect

The Greek word translated elect or chosen is 'eklektos' (pronounced ek-lektos) a descriptive adjective

-The verb form, **ἐκλέγομαι (ek-legomai)** is always translated chosen, chose, or choose.

-Let's see how this descriptive adjective and verb are used.

eklektos is used 23 times in the NT, it is translated either elect or chosen.

-In the Gospels eklektos is used ten times and is either translated elect or chosen.

-In the Gospels it is always used by Christ, and once it is used regarding Christ.

-Seven times He uses it of 'elect Israel', three times His usage is translated, 'chosen'

-Since **ek-lektos** is a descriptive adjective in the three verses where it is translated chosen,

-.... it could be translated, 'choice', which would be more descriptive of the person or people in question....

-..... Choice: as in a prime cut of meat.

Let's look at three verses and see what makes the particular people in question chosen or choice

-Let's start with the Luke passage where chosen is used by the mockers of Christ.

Luke 23:35

And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God [or choice one of God]."

-Here chosen is used of Jesus; He is the one God 'chose' to bear our sins,

-.... coming down from the cross not make Him choice!

We find **'eklektos,'** translated chosen in **Matthew 20:16**

Where we read: So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few CHOSEN [or choice]."

- 'chosen' here sounds like a verb a verb and not so much a description.

Let's turn to **Matthew 19:27** and get the back story to this concluding verse in 20:16

27 Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?"

28 So Jesus said to them [and tells them exactly what they shall have], "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration [of the earth, when does this occur?], when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me [and given up all] will #1- also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29 And #2-everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold [relative to what was given up], and #-inherit eternal life.

30 But [let me say this and warn you] many who are first will be last, and the last first.

1 "For [instance or for example] the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard.

-The parable follows the inquiry by Peter asking, 'what do we get seeing that we have left all and followed you?'

-Jesus tells them what they get in 19:28-29 'in the regeneration' which speaks of the Kingdom Age.

The Parable Continues.....

2 Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3 And he went out about the third hour [of the work day] and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,

4 and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right [or righteous] I will give you.' So they went.

5 Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour and did likewise.

6 And about the eleventh hour [of the working day] he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day?'

7 They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right [or righteous] you will receive.'

8 "So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.'

9 And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius.

10 But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius.

11 And when they had received it, they complained [grumble] against the landowner,

12 saying, 'These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.'

13 But he answered one of them [probably a leader like Peter] and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?'

14 Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you.

15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?'

16 So [in this manner] the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen [choice ones]."

-Often the older in service become the more expectant,

-... especially as we compare our years of labor to others who have come after us.

-Chuck Smith told us to finish well, finish strong, don't coast into the finish line.

-Ours is a life of grace, for we were and are undeserving bond-servants,

-.... who before Christ deserved nothing better than Hell!

-Let's finish the work as choice workers!

in Matthew 22:14

-We find a similar usage of the adjective chosen ...

"For many are called, but few are chosen [or choice]."

-In our minds 'chosen' sounds like a verb, rather than a description.

-let's see which holds up under scrutiny, 'chosen' or 'choice'.

-Let's turn to Matthew 22 and go thru this important passage and derive some principles from it.

-Let me make this bold statement about the adjective 'eklektos', usually translated elect or chosen:

"We are not elected and put into Christ, we believe and are put into Christ and described as elect"

Let's prove this statement as we look at **Matthew 22:1-14**

1 And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said:

- This is a parable about Israel's rejection of their Messiah
- As a whole they did not accept the call or invitation to receive Him as their Messiah.
- The nation formally rejected Him in Matthew 12.
- All in the nation were called to receive the Kingdom of Heaven that was at hand, but they did not!
- They were either 'ambivalent' or 'hostile' towards Christ.
- A few individuals Jews accepted the call and what adjective is used to describe the few in v.14?

Chosen (aka elect) or better: Choice

Let's look at the parable starting in verse 2

**2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son,
3 and sent out his servants to CALL those who were invited [already CALLED] to the wedding; and they were not willing to come.**

4 Again, he sent out other servants, saying, "Tell those who are invited [already CALLED], "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding."'

5 But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business [ambivalence].

6 And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them [hostility].

7 But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city [in 70 AD Jerusalem was destroyed].

8 Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited [CALLED] were not worthy [they did not believe, did not accept the invitation].

9 Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite [CALL] to the wedding.'

10 So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad [evil] and [those we would describe as] good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.

11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a [an appropriate] wedding garment.

12 So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless [without excuses, he could have put on by faith the required garment, but did not].

13 Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; [where] there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

14 "For many are called [invited], but few are chosen [or elect or choice ones]."

-When were the elect, the chosen declared choice?

-After they accepted the invitation and came to the wedding feast.

-Their acceptance finished the election process.

-God ordained that election includes calling or inviting all to come, then to believe of our own free will!

Elect describes anyone who has made the choice to receive Christ Crucified who imputes to them the right wedding garment of righteousness by faith

The Adjective Eklektos, Elect in the Letters to the Churches

----- is used 12 times, 9 times it is translated 'elect' and 3 times as 'chosen' in the Epistles.

- When examined closely none of the usages of *eklektos* are about being elected for salvation,
- but descriptive of those who are saved thru faith.

For Example *(show each separately)*

Romans 8:33

Who shall bring a charge against God's ELECT? [referring to those who are known believers] It is God who justifies.

Colossians 3:12

Therefore, as the [currently described] ELECT of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;

1 Peter 1:2

-Gives us the process of election....

ELECT according to [is kata: coming down from Heaven] the foreknowledge [or plan] of God the Father, [with]in sanctification [work] of the Spirit, for obedience [of all] and [to apply the] sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

The Elect process: God's plan came down from Heaven. The Spirit executes the plan with His sanctifying work in all of the world, drawing people to Jesus; to the obedience of faith and the application of the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

The Verb Chosen

ἐκλέγομαι (chosen) the verb is always used in the middle voice

- Signifying a self-contained decision without outside input.
- Signifying that merit or worthiness by observation or history was not a factor in the choosing.
- The verb is used 20 times in the Bible, often of men choosing someone for a purpose.
- The questions for Provisionists and Calvinists....
- is what drives God when He chooses anyone for whatever purpose He has in mind?
- And what is process for securing what He chooses?
- Provisionists sees a God who is driven by His love to send His Son Sacrifice for all!
- Calvinist sees a God who is driven by sovereign determinism and sending His Son to die for the Elect.
- Provisionists see a love-driven God, big enough to allow mankind free will, & having His will done.

The Verb Choosing is for a Purpose

-For example *(show each one individually)*

Luke 6:13

And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He CHOSE twelve whom He also named apostles:

-this is not about salvation but choosing His Apostles out of a larger group of disciples.

Mark 13:20

And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the ELECT'S sake, whom He CHOSE, He shortened the days [of the Tribulation].

-The context is Israel the ELECT people, CHOSEN to bring the Messiah into the world.

Choosing is not about salvation but about purpose,
-these verses are typical of the usage of elect a

Our Third Word is Predestination

-Προορίζω, (**pro-ho-rizo**), pro, “beforehand,” and horizo denotes “to set a forward boundary or goal”

-Pre-DESTINATION is only used six times and always of believers in the Bible.

-It is never ever used of unbelievers!

Translated in **Acts 4:28**, ‘determined before’; in 1 Cor. 2:7, ‘**ordained**’; in Rom. 8:29–30 and Eph. 1:5, 11 it is translated, ‘**predestined**’

Here are some examples of the six usages in the Bible (*show one set at a time please!*)

Romans 8:28-30

28 And we know that all things [currently] work together for good to those who love God, to those who are [described as] the called according to His purpose. 29 For [or they work together because] whom He foreknew, He also PREDESTINED [for what purpose?] to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30 Moreover [or and] whom He PREDESTINED [to be conformed to the image of Christ], them He [had already] also called: and whom He [had already] also called, them He also [had already] justified: and whom He [had already] justified, them He [had already] also glorified.

-In these verses believers are predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ.

In **Ephesians 1:3-5** we read:

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us [Paul and the Ephesian believers] with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He CHOSE us in Him before the foundation of the world, [for this purpose] that we should be holy and without blame before Him, in love 5 having [already] PREDESTINED us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Then in **Ephesians 1:11-12** we read:

11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being PREDESTINED [for this inheritance] according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, 12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

-Three predestined purposes go together and are for those who are described as ‘chosen’ or ‘elect’:

Here’s how they go together:

1st-Predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ, God’s Son

2nd-Predestined to legal adoption as His children. More Sons and Daughters

3rd-Which results in being predestined to ‘obtain an inheritance, only children inherit!’

The Calvinist though argues from logic in accordance with Sovereign Determinism...

-.... that since He predestined some to be saved, to be conformed to Jesus, to be His children and heirs...

-.... it logically follows that He predestined some to go to Hell.

-That is a human deduction based on the logic of sovereign determinism,

-We must leave predestination where the Bible leaves it:

Predestination only concerns God’s purposes for those who are saved by their faith

Ephesians 1:11 is a key verse that describes our larger, wiser, loving God:

In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him WHO WORKS ALL THINGS ACCORDING TO THE COUNSEL OF HIS WILL

-My God can work all things, all choices of mankind and use them in the fulfilling 'the counsel of His will'

-He is free, He is able, He is not restrained, He works all things to accomplish His will!

The key words or phrases we have looked at three weeks ago and today are:

(please show this chart at this point)

Calvinists	Key Words	Provisionists
Their Meaning Under Determinism		Their Meaning Under God is Driven by Love
ALL meaning elect only	All	All people were died for, though not all saved
Predetermined to go to hell	All	Refuse Heaven's sin remedy and go to Hell
World = predetermind elect only	World	Jesus died for the whole world
Equals total Inability	Total Depravity	All are sinners, but able to believe or not believe
In order to be able to believe	Born Again	Born again when we believe
Only heard and effective for Elect	Call	Call of God goes out to all, He draws all to Jesus
Solely a Work of God	Election	Starts with God who calls and requires our faith
A description that is solely God's work	Elect	Requires our faith to be described as elect
Heaven for the Elect, Hell for all others	Predestination	Explains the goals, purposes for the saved only
Depends on persevering to the end	Eternal Security	Once in Christ by faith there is no getting out

What drives Your God?

Love or Determinism

I follow a God who loves all

Yet hates sin

His love is stronger than sin

Love sent sin's killer

The Son of Love

Love does not ignore sin

Nor could He overlook it

But instead Love became

The only sacrifice acceptable!

What drives me? What drives you?

- We live in an age where God is Merciful, Forbearing and long, longsuffering
- Towards all sinners, yet calling out of the sin-pool of humanity a people for His name
- That is why we see so very little judgment directly from God in the Church Age.
- His direct Judgment will come, in His time after the fullness of the gentile has come in.

What drives the teaching of the truth around here?

- Love for our Father and love for you
- God's Provision is for everyone, will you not take advantage of His provisions of Grace!
- Let's pray**