

## ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Red Bud, Illinois

Adult Bible Class

*“The Gospel of Eternal Election and Predestination”*

Opening Hymn: 644 “The Church’s One Foundation” *stanzas 1-4*

### II. A Word Study of God’s Choosing of His New Testament People

#### A. The verb eklegomai “to choose”

This verb is used 21 times in the Greek New Testament with the meaning “to choose or select (for oneself) someone or something.” It is used with an indication of that from which the selection is made. It is used with a simple accusative, or direct object, which is the someone or something that is chosen. It also is used with an indication of the purpose for which the choice is made. In the New Testament this verb is used of Jesus choosing followers, of God choosing people, of people choosing something or of the church selecting representatives.

In the New Testament fruit-bearing is possible only when one’s election originates with Christ. This election is the basis and source of fruitful service. The election that applies specifically to the apostles in these passages has a wider reference to the community of faith as a whole. Ekleptomai is more closely related to words of calling than to words of foreknowing or foreordaining. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, One Volume*

#### B. The adjective eklektos “chosen”

In the Greek translation of the Old Testament and later Jewish writings, this adjective is used in three ways: a) for what is sacred or pure; b) meaning “consecrated” of sacred vessels; and c) for God’s election of Israel. There is a marked growth in the use of the Greek eklektos as compared with its Hebrew equivalent. This is not necessarily due to a liking for the religious concept of election, but there is an increasing inclination to stress the fact that Israel is the elect or chosen people of God.

This adjective is used 23 times in the New Testament to mean “chosen, elect.” It is used generally of angels but especially of those people whom God has chosen from the general mankind and drawn to Himself, thus of Christians in particular (as of the Israelites in the Old Testament). Since the best is usually chosen it also can mean “choice, excellent.”

It is used ten times in Matthew, Mark and Luke (the Synoptics) with nine of those uses for believers as God’s chosen people. There it always has an eschatological (end of world) reference.

It is used six times in Paul’s letters with five of those times for people’s relationship or connection to God. In Romans 8:33 there is no condemnation for the elect, for they have a salvation that begins and ends in eternity with the love of God.

It is used four times in 1<sup>st</sup> Peter with three of those times for people selected by God. The theme here is that predestination is the basis of election. Old Testament promises and descriptions are transferred from Israel to the New Testament community of faith. What marks the elect people is faith in contrast to unbelief and disobedience. Responsibility is presupposed. The aim of God's election of people is their ministry. It is used in Revelation 17:14 as a description of those who are with the conquering Lamb. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, One Volume, pages 522-523*

C. The noun ekloge "selection, election"

This noun is used seven times in the New Testament with five of those uses in Paul's letters and once in Acts of God's choosing of Saul/Paul to be His missionary. As a technical term it means, "choosing." The idea of "selection" is predominant in Greek usage. The stress is on the act, not on the result, and the basis is aptness for a specific purpose. Its use in 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 2:10 will be important for our study.

D. The verb proorizo "to foreordain"

This verb is used six times in the New Testament, once in Acts 4:28 and five times in Paul's letters. It means "to decide upon beforehand; to predestinate" someone or something.

This rare and late word has in the New Testament the sense, "to foreordain." It is parallel to "to foreknow" in Romans 8:29. God has ordained everything in salvation history with Christ as the goal. Hence, Herod, Pilate and the Gentiles can only do what God has predetermined for them to do (Acts 4:28). Herein lies the hidden wisdom of God (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:7). Divine sonship in Christ is the goal of God's ordaining in Ephesians 1:5. Our assurance of eternal inheritance rests on God's ordaining of it in Ephesians 1:11.

III. Election or Choosing in the Gospels

A. Matthew 24:22-24 and 31 (parallel in Mark 13:20, 22 and 27)

Jesus here is speaking of the great tribulation that will take place at the end of time before His return for final judgment. It will be a period of distress unlike anything ever experienced by God's people. Part of that trouble will be the appearance of false christs and prophets with their fraudulent powers.

**Verse 22: In the midst of this bad news, what good news does Jesus prophesy?**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Why is this?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Verse 24: What will the works of these "phonies" almost be able to do?**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Why won't that happen?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Verse 31: What will Jesus do when He makes His powerful & glorious appearance?**

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**How does Jesus assure us that at that time none of them will be missed, forgotten, overlooked or "left behind"?** \_\_\_\_\_