

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Red Bud, Illinois

Adult Bible Class

"The Gospel of Eternal Election and Predestination"

Opening Hymn: 646 "Church of God, Elect and Glorious" *stanzas 3-4*

IV. Election and Choosing in Paul's Letters to Congregations (*continued*)

F. 1st Corinthians 12:17-20

¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as He chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

What image does Paul use here to describe the Christian church? _____

How does Paul stress God's design for this body? "God _____...as He _____"

What is the answer to Paul's question in verse 19? _____

Though we are different parts, with different gifts, together we are _____

G. Ephesians 1:3-6

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵ He predestined us for adoption to Himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, ⁶ to the praise of His glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved.

Verse 4: How did the God and Father chose us? _____

When did He do this? _____

Why did He do this? _____

This is more evidence that our election has the purpose of our holiness of life now.

Verse 5: How did He predestine us? "in _____" and for what? _____ as _____"

What is the purpose of His will? _____

Verse 6: In addition to the holiness of our lives, what else is the purpose of God's electing?

Who is the "Beloved"? _____

H. Colossians 3:12-13

¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Verse 12: How does Paul describe us? _____ and _____

So now, what are we to do? "put on _____... (clothing image)

How does this happen? _____

Verse 13: What might we have to do while in this sinful world? _____

What ultimately are we to do to each other? _____

Why should we do this? _____

I. 1st Thessalonians 1:2-5a

²We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers loved by God, that He has chosen you, ⁵because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.

Verse 2: Though it would appear from the Book of Acts that Paul was in the Greek city of Thessalonica for no more than a month on his second missionary journey, his letters to the new Christians in the congregation he established there show a warmth and affection for them of a longer and deeper relationship with them. The “we” and “our” include Paul, Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy. **What two things does Paul say that he and his companions are doing for the Thessalonians?**

Verse 3: What three things about the Thessalonians are they remembering in those prayers?

Verse 4: What does Paul and his companions “know” about the Thessalonians?

“that He has _____”

Because of this, how does Paul describe the Thessalonians? _____

Verse 5: What evidence does Paul see that shows God has chosen these “brothers”?

“because our _____ came to you...in _____ and in the _____
_____ and with full _____” (description of the gospel message,

rather than of the preachers or hearers of that message, although the gospel works that power, brings the Holy Spirit and gives the hearers that conviction, assurance and certainty)

“Many people are mystified by the doctrine of election. It is beyond our understanding. But for a believer, especially in a time of trouble, it is a great comfort. This doctrine assures us that our salvation is not in our feeble hands but in God’s almighty hands. God chose us from eternity, and in His grace He promises to keep us as His own to eternity. Although Paul refers to the doctrine of election only briefly in this letter, he knew the assurance which even this passing reference would give the Thessalonians in their trials. They were God’s own from eternity. Nothing could ever snatch them from the Lord.” (David Kuske, Thessalonians, People’s Bible Commentary, CPH, St. Louis, 1994, page 10)

J. 2nd Thessalonians 2:13-15

¹³But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. ¹⁴To this He called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.

Verse 13: Here Paul uses language that is very similar to the beginning of his first letter to them.

What should Paul always do? _____

How does Paul describe the Thessalonians? _____

Why can Paul do so? “because God _____ (aireomai) as the _____ to be saved”

What resulted in their lives because of God’s choosing? _____ and _____

Verse 14: By what means did God call them? _____

Because of that, what have they now “obtained”? _____

Verse 15: What are the Thessalonians now to do? _____ and _____