

## **Examining Calvinism: Unconditional Election**

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • August 7, In the year of our Lord Christ, 2022

Scripture Reader and Reading: Nash Crisp – Second Peter 1.10–11

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Phil Joseph – Trust and Obey

### **Prelude:**

**I. Calvinism Claims God Chooses People Without Condition**

**II. When I quote Spencer, I will use the KJV, which is what he used.**

**III. There is a danger when we use a passage for its wording, but**

A. fail to observe the context or why it is worded that way.

B. This is what Spencer does in some of the passages I will show you.

1. What I have done is list the passages

2. that he uses and in the Old King James Version.

a) Sometimes I will offer his comment.

b) For the most part, let us see what these passages teach.

(1) Sometimes they are not even addressing Christian Salvation.

(2) Always remember to check the context.

### **Persuasion:**

#### **A. Romans 8.28–29**

**28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.**

**– Romans 8.28–29 (KJV)**

1. Spencer notes that this promise is for the called.

a) However, that says nothing about how they are called.

b) Nor does it exclude man's part.

(1) God calls, but

(2) we have to answer that call.

(a) In Second Thessalonians 2,

(b) Paul explained how we are called:

**13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, 14 to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**– 2 Thessalonians 2.13–14 (NKJV)**

i) God calls us through the Gospel.

ii) We have to respond to that call by believing the truth.

(c) If we do not believe and obey, Paul said earlier:

**8 ...in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**– 2 Thessalonians 1.8 (NKJV)**

2. Going back to Romans 8.

a) Look next at verse 29.

b) What did God predestinate?

(1) He predestinated that we should be conformed to the image of his Son.

(2) Not that he elected some whether they wanted to be saved or not.

### **B. Romans 9.11, 13**

**11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth)...As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.**

– Romans 9.11, 13 (KJV)

**“Here the apostle declares that the ground of election is in God Himself, which is to say in His will and purpose, and not in an act of faith or some ‘condition’...in the children for good or evil. Election is *unconditional*. Man can do nothing to merit it.”**

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1. In Romans 9–11,
  - a) Paul explained the Jewish problem of unbelief in Jesus,
  - b) that the Lord has not rejected his former people, but
    - (1) he still works to save them,
    - (2) using the Gentiles to bring them back into the fold.
      - (a) First, he used the Jews to bring salvation to the Gentiles.
      - (b) Now, he uses the Gentiles to bring the Jews to salvation.
2. This passage does not speak of God saving Jacob and sending Esau to hell.
  - a) God had a plan
  - b) that salvation would come through the Jews.
    - (1) However, that salvation was not based on the flesh.
    - (2) Otherwise, Esau would have been chosen
      - (a) just as much as Jacob was, and
      - (b) perhaps more so since Esau was the older one.
3. God made his choice based upon the spirit.
  - a) It was the spirit of Jacob that was righteous,
  - b) whereas, Esau was not righteous.
4. Now, observe the part that Spencer left out.
  - a) Remember the ellipsis.

b) He left out verse 12.

(1) So here is the whole sentence in verses 10–13:

**10 And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac 11 (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), 12 it was said to her, “The older shall serve the younger.” 13 As it is written, “Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.”**

– Romans 9.10–13 (NKJV)

(2) The passage does not address salvation,

(a) saying Jacob will be saved, but

(b) Esau shall be lost.

(3) No, God made the choice as to who would serve who.

### C. First Corinthians 1.26–29

**26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.**

– 1 Corinthians 1.26–29 (KJV)

1. Remember how we are called.

2. This passage simply affirms

a) that God does not choose people for salvation because

b) of their greatness in the world.

(1) He chooses those who have a humble spirit.

(2) He rejects the proud.

#### **D. Second Timothy 1.9**

**9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began...**

##### **– 2 Timothy 1.9 (KJV)**

1. God did not call because he saw us with lives filled with good works.
2. No, we had sinned.
  - a) He is the one who initiated our salvation.
  - b) It was his grace that saw our need for salvation.
    - (1) We heard the Gospel message and
    - (2) it told us what we needed to do.
      - (a) We did what God wanted.
      - (b) He saved us.
        - i) He still made the selection.
        - ii) It was still based on his purpose and grace.

#### **E. John 15.16–17**

**16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.**

##### **– John 15.16 (KJV)**

1. Again, it is written in the Gospel According to John:

**68 But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”**

##### **– John 6.68–69 (NKJV)**

2. Jesus chose twelve men to be his apostles.
  - a) John 15 does not discuss election for salvation.
  - b) John 6 shows that the apostles had also chosen to follow Jesus.

#### **F. Ephesians 1.4**

**4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world...**

##### **– Ephesians 1.4 (KJV)**

1. First, the emphasis is upon Jesus in the first fourteen verses.
2. The Father did the choosing in Christ.
  - a) Before the foundation of the world,
  - b) he decreed that he would call people in Christ.
    - (1) The subject is not whether one will be saved and another lost, but
    - (2) that salvation would come through Christ.

#### **G. John 6.44**

**44 No man can come to me, except the Father...draw him.**

##### **– John 6.44 (KJV)**

1. Let's look more at what Jesus said.
2. He had spoken of being the bread that comes down from heaven.
  - a) They did not like him speaking in that manner.
  - b) Therefore, they murmured about his meaning.

**43 Jesus therefore answered and said to them, "Do not murmur among yourselves. 44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me."**

– **John 6.43–46 (NKJV)**

- (1) How does the Father draw people to Jesus?
  - (a) In verse 45, he explained.
  - (b) God teaches us.
- (2) Therefore, whoever hears and learns,
  - (a) goes to Jesus.
  - (b) That shows us acting in some manner.

**H. Acts 13.48**

**48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.**

– **Acts 13.48 (KJV)**

1. That sounds like the ones who believed
  - a) were the ones whom God had previously ordained
  - b) to have eternal life.
2. However, let us consider the context:

**44 On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. 45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul. 46 Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. 47 For so the Lord has commanded us:**

**'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles,  
That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.'**"

**48 Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.**

– **Acts 13.44–48 (NKJV)**

- a) First, observe that the Jews in Antioch of Pisidia rejected
  - (1) the word of God concerning Jesus, and
  - (2) judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life,
- b) whereas, when the Gentiles heard
  - (1) that the prophets spoke of the word going to the Gentiles,
  - (2) they were glad and glorified God.
    - (a) They did something.
    - (b) When they believed
      - i) they appointed themselves to eternal life.
      - ii) In other words, it was not God ordaining certain ones
        - (1) from before the foundation of the world, but
        - (2) by believing, rejoicing, and glorifying God,
          - (a) they put themselves in line for eternal life.
          - (b) Verse 48 does not say God did the appointing.

**I. John 6.29**

**29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.**

– **John 6.29 (KJV)**

1. Spencer used this in the sense
  - a) that God worked to make them believe,
  - b) that they did not believe of their own accord.
2. However, in this text Jesus was not explaining how people believe, but
  - a) he stated that the work God wants you to do



b) is to believe in Jesus whom the Father sent.

J. He stated:

**“It it were left up to man he would never believe, for man is totally depraved, totally incapable of that which is good. Left on his own to make a decision for Christ, without first being given life and faith by an act of God, man would never ‘come to Jesus.’”**

1. How do we get faith?

- a) Spencer constantly references God deciding to give it to some people,
- b) through no choice or desire of their own.

2. But how does the Bible say we get faith?

**8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, *the word of faith* which we preach): 9 that if *you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.” 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. 13 For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.” 14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?***

- a) Observe in a moment when I continue reading,
- b) that Paul did not state that then the Lord has to inject faith, et al.

**And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:**

**“How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!”**

**16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “LORD, who has *believed* our report?” 17 So then *faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.***

– **Romans 10.8–17 (NKJV)**

- (1) A person has to hear the word of God.
- (2) Then that person considers what has been said.
  - (a) They reach a conclusion
  - (b) that they have heard the truth.
    - i) Therefore, they confess the Lordship of Jesus, and
    - ii) they show their belief by their obedience.

**Exhortation:**

**I. Second Peter 1.10–11 annihilates the idea of Unconditional Election:**

**10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

– **2 Peter 1.10–11 (NKJV)**

A. Unfortunately, the NASV changes it from “your call and election,”

B. to “His calling and choosing you.”

1. All other translations have, “your,” but
2. the NASV translators were influenced by Calvinism, and
  - a) they could not in their minds imagine
  - b) that we have anything to do with our calling and election.

**II. Other passages show God calling, but people refusing to heed the call:**

**11 “But My people would not heed My voice,  
And Israel would have none of Me.”**

– **Psalm 81.11**

**4 “So will I choose their delusions,  
And bring their fears on them;**

**Because, when I called, no one answered,  
When I spoke they did not hear;  
But they did evil before My eyes,  
And chose that in which I do not delight.”**

**– Isaiah 66.4**

**13 “And now, because you have done all these works,” says the LORD, “and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear, and I called you, but you did not answer...”**

**– Jeremiah 7.13**

**III. The issue now is whether you want to believe and obey.**