

COMMUNITY GROUP LEADER SERMON SUMMARY, 1/20/13

1 Peter 1:1-2 — “How God Makes Christians,” Ryan Kelly

Series: *First Peter: Between Two Worlds*

In short: God is the author of our salvation, from the begging to end, and this is a cause for great comfort for the Christian.

SUNDAY’S OUTLINE

1. Election by the Father
2. Sacrifice by the Son
3. Calling by the Spirit

Eight FAQs: Isn't election unfair? If he chooses, when why pray? If he chooses, why preach to people? Since it's confusing and mysterious, shouldn't we leave it alone? Since it's controversial and divides, shouldn't we leave it alone? Who's fault is it if I don't believe? So why is this a good thing? Why did God do it this way? How should Christians respond to this?

HELP FOR OBSERVING, INTERPRETING, AND APPLYING THE SERMON TEXT

1. This Sunday's sermon was on the subject of how Christians are made. God makes them. Much of Ryan's sermon dealt with the doctrine of election specifically. First, what is the doctrine of election? Some are excited about the doctrine of election, while others are confused, ambivalent, or even frustrated by it. Our purpose is to understand and embrace as glorious all that Scripture says.

The doctrine of election teaches that God ultimately chooses our destiny. He makes the first move in our salvation, so that if we believe, we believe because he predestined that we would do so.

2. Ryan said that this theme of God's choice of his people is all over Scripture, and he mentioned a number of passages. Which passages can you recall? How does the language of "election" relate to the language of "foreknowledge"?

God's call of Abraham; Ephesians 1:4-5; Romans 8:30; Acts 16:14; John 6:44; Matthew 16:16-18; Matthew 20. God's foreknowledge does not refer merely to what God sees, but to his ordaining purposes. There would be no comfort in election if it were only God's response to our choosing of him. And there would be no protest of injustice that elicits Paul's response in Romans 9:14.

3. In the second half of the sermon, Ryan worked through a series of FAQs. Which of these has been or is now a particular point of reflection or tension for you? How does Scripture address your specific question?
4. What is the purpose of the doctrine of election/predestination in Scripture and here in 1 Peter specifically? How might this doctrine serve that purpose in your life right now? How could you have or can you now use it to minister to someone else? Ryan mentioned a number of ways we should respond. Which of these rang with you?

The purpose of bringing of God's election of believers is to comfort believers, not confuse them. In 1 Peter this truth is intended to strengthen believers with comfort in persecution, for they may know that God is sovereign. Some of us need to study this from Scripture. Some need to accept it. Some need to cherish what they know.

QUOTES, ILLUSTRATIONS, AND OTHER MATERIAL FROM THE SERMON

- “God himself did not foresee that there would be any love to him in us arising out of ourselves, for there never has been any, and there never will be; he only foresaw that we should believe because he gave us faith, he foresaw that we should repent because his Spirit would work repentance in us, he foresaw that we should love, because he wrought that love within us... The case is self-evident – his foresight of what he means to do cannot be his reason for doing it.” – Charles Spurgeon
- “Is there any of you here this morning who wishes to be holy, who wishes to be regenerate, to leave off sin and walk in holiness? “Yes,” says someone, “I do.” Then God has elected you. But another says, “No; I don't want to be holy; I don't want to give up my lusts and my vices.” Why should you grumble, then, that God has not elected you to it? For if you were elected you would not like it, according to your own confession.” – Charles Spurgeon