

## God's Elect

"Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God." I Thessalonians 1:4

Earlier in this letter Paul said, "...remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup> He is assured that they are God's "elect." Paul used "knowing" to express his perception that the assembly in Thessalonica was genuine.

Those elect from before the foundation of the world, like the Gospel, cannot be impeded by anyone's opposition. In the perfect plan of God, the world thinks it can successfully resist the will of God in that His followers can be persecuted and killed, but in reality, Christ is building His Church, "and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it."<sup>2</sup>

Paul believed in election, but he understood that even the elect have to hear the Word to be saved. Many Calvinists do not evangelize because of election; it is a convenient way to avoid persecution. For the elect to obtain salvation, Paul must suffer the persecution that comes from preaching.

The doctrine of God's electing His own takes the pressure off of the ministry.

1) - You can know that you need not be certain who is and who is not elect.

2) - You realize a person's profession of faith does not ensure he is one of the elect.

3) - You are only called to discharge your responsibility of proclaiming the gospel.

4) - You look to God to care for the results.

5) - When people do accept Christ, you assist as best you can in their growth in Him.

The doctrine of election is meant to motivate you to be faithful to the Lord, not give you an excuse to neglect sharing your faith. Remember, your willingness to faithfully proclaim the good news is evidence that you are one of the elect.

<sup>1</sup> I Thessalonians 1:3 <sup>2</sup> Matthew 16:18