

GOD'S PURPOSE ACCORDING TO ELECTION

Not Based On Works - Good or Evil

by Elder Bob Allgood

"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. – Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" Romans 9:11-13

As far as I know this is one of the clearest and plainest statements in the Bible that teaches that the eternal destiny of an Infant (actually two Fetuses not yet born) is not based on "works - good or evil". The spiritual condition and eternal destiny of Jacob and Esau, like every other person conceived and/or born into this world, was determined before the world began. God chose a people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and "AS MANY AS" the Father gave unto the Son, no more - no less, will receive the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ. This number which no man can number is known as the elect of God. Every person born into this world is either an elect of God or they are not. None can change their status by doing good works or having not done works of iniquity – "that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth". I Thought this was a basic Bible doctrine understood by all Primitive Baptists - but I am shocked to learn that some have departed from this precept.

Jacob was loved of God and Esau was hated of God - BEFORE they were born - BEFORE they had done any works, either good or evil, and BEFORE the foundation of the world. Jacob was chosen by God unto eternal life, not based on anything he would or would not do, but according to God's own eternal purpose and will. Esau was left in his state of depravity and sin, being alienated from God, and without hope, not because of anything he would do or not do, but according to God's own purpose and will. But those who make

the claim that "all infant that die in infancy go to heaven BECAUSE they have not done any works of wickedness" deny God's purpose according to election, and the fact that election is not based on works. For some reason they NEVER seem to want to use this passage (and several other) in their discourse.

I realize that I have written on this subject several times. But I keep hearing or reading things by Primitive Baptists that keep stirring up my mind. I would expect to hear such things from Arminians who follow a "works doctrine of salvation" but I am shocked, to say the least, to hear these things from Primitive Baptists. So this is another reply to those who claim "infants that die in infancy go to heaven BECAUSE they have not done any works of wickedness". My response is not a denial that infants who die in infancy go to heaven IF they are the of elect of God as was Jacob. It is a denial that infants that die in infancy go to heaven based on WORKS - either good or evil – or the absence of works, either good or evil.

Since becoming a Primitive Baptist I have never preached anyone into hell or heaven. Since I was converted to the true doctrine of Grace in 1976 from the Arminian world I have learned that God does not give man the authority, the privilege or the responsibility to determine the eternal destiny of anyone - from a fetus or an infant to an old person on his death bed. I am shocked to learn that some Primitive Baptist have not learned this. The eternal destiny of all of God's elect is God's business - not man's. We do not have a list of the elect, and should not try to play God by making such determinations - especially IF all we are going to do is "pick and choose" the Scriptures that we want to use to prove our own preconceived ideas, and disregard other passages that disprove our theory.

Eternal Life is NOT given based on whether one has done any good works OR has never done any wicked works. Eternal Life is the gift of God to his elect people through Jesus Christ our Lord. In Romans 9:11 Jacob represents the elect of God and Esau represents the non-elect. One can assume whatever they want about what would have happened had either died in infancy. The fact is they did not. Both lived to an old age, and both did some works of wickedness. Jacob was the "apple of God's eye". The Lord's portion is his people - Jacob is HIS LOT (Deut. 32:9).

For one to ASSUME that the eternal destiny of a category of people, other than the Elect of God, is based on "having not done any works of wickedness" IS a departure from the Doctrine of Grace TO a "works doctrine". But if one wants to assume that both Jacob and Esau had died in infancy, the truth is Jacob would have gone to eternal glory and Esau would have gone to hell. To deny this is to deny the word of God. To deny this is to deny "the purpose of God according to election". Now some will immediately say, This is unfair ! Paul answers that with this question, "Is there unrighteousness with God" ? God answers this with these words, "Nay but O man who art thou that repliest against God ? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me so ? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump (Adam - ba) to make one vessel unto honor, and another vessel unto dishonor. What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels

fitted (made up) to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles" (Rom. 9:20-24).

To make the statement that "all infants that die in infancy go to heaven BECAUSE they have not done any works of wickedness", and then support this by the claim that "the wicked live long enough to prove they are wicked" IS not only a distortion of the doctrine of Grace and Election, it is IMO a distortion of the doctrine of Total Depravity and the law of "Sin and Death" under which we are ALL conceived. Those who believe this should not oppose Abortion, but should be thankful for those who practice Abortion. Under this belief Abortion would be a sure way of securing eternal life for the infant. WHY let them live ?

Infants that die in infancy may well go to heaven - that is God's business, but we are told very clearly that all who will spend eternity in Glory do so because they have been chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world - NOT because they have "not done works of wickedness". Furthermore we find the "Righteous" doing "wickedly" just as much as we find the "Wicked" doing wicked works. IF you don't believe that - study the History of Israel and read Ezekiel 16. My quarrel is not over whether an infant that dies in infancy goes to heaven - my quarrel is with the basis some of my Primitive Baptist brethren are using to get them into heaven.

To make the statement that God permits the wicked to live long lives in order to prove they are wicked, denies the foreknowledge of God in election. This position makes several false assumptions, and leaves many unanswered questions. Those who advocate this position do not tell us when an Infant ceases to be an Infant, and WHAT constitutes a "work of wickedness". I suspect the reason they don't tell us is because they can't, or it would reveal they believe in an "age of accountability". ALL have sinned and come short of the glory of God - There is none righteous no not one - Not even the elect of God until they are made the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. Besides there are just as many passages that prove the "Righteous" live as long as the "Wicked" (non-elect). The fifth commandment to God's people is "Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee". Paul quoted this as "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor thy father and thy mother; (which is the first commandment with promise), That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Eph. 6:1-3). Solomon wrote, "Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days (old age) come not, when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them" (Eccles. 12:1).

To make such a claim that the wicked live long and only the righteous die young, is a distortion of the whole truth. Many of God's servants live to "old age". All one needs to do is read the Scriptures to prove this. David who lived to an old age, disagrees with this perverse philosophy. He wrote, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat

and flourishing; to shew that the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him" (Psalms 92:12-15).

My Arminian pastor once told me, "You can prove anything from the Bible by taking Scripture out of context or by selecting only the passages you want to use to prove your point". At least he had that much insight into the Truth. Most who hold to the position "all infants that die in infancy go to heaven BECAUSE they have not done any works of wickedness" attempt to prove this by using "selected Scriptures". Most never quote Psalms 58:3 or Psalms 51:5 or I Samuel 15:3, 18. I can not help but notice that they bothered to quote Romans 9:11 which is the landmark reference on Election by Grace and proves the spiritual condition and eternal status of Infants before they are born into this world. I guess the next thing the brethren who hold to this position will be telling us is that God did not hate Esau until after he had done some works of wickedness. I guess they will tell us that Esau was SAFE for eternal glory until he lost his "safety net" by his works of wickedness. I mean no undue disrespect, but I can not buy into that.

They usually quote from Job and his discourse with his three friends concerning his timely trial and the timely destruction he was suffering. Needless to say they make "eternal application" to these "timely Scriptures". IF one will examine Job they will see that the "destruction" under consideration is not "eternal" but Job's timely test of his integrity. The entire discourse between Job and his three friends is not about Job's eternal condition - that is establish in Job 1 by God. After the afflictions by Satan were imposed upon Job he said, "For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come upon me" (3:25).

Job is not talking about losing his eternal salvation for he said, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (19:25-26).

The discourse between Job and his three friends from Chapter 4 through 36 is about WHY Job is suffering the things he is suffering in the flesh. To use certain passages in Job, that speak of timely destruction, to prove infants are not workers of iniquity, is IMO, to wrest the Scriptures (Deut. 16:19, Psalms 56:5, II Pet. 3:16). IF a point of Sound doctrine is to be proven and relied, the Scriptures must not conflict or contradict other passages on the same subject. Job says "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down – Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean ? not one." (Job 14:1-4). These verses are often used to prove the depravity of Infants. David said in Psalms 58:3, "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies". The last time I checked "lies" are works of wickedness. How long does it take a baby to tell a lie ?

Another shocking thing that results from the position "that all infants that die in infancy go to heaven BECAUSE they have not done any works of wickedness" IS the denial of the doctrine of Total Depravity and the "law of sin and death". IF infants are not conceived in sin, under the penalty of "sin and death" and alienated from God then when do they become dead sinners

in need of being born of God ? And how does one not born of God enter eternal glory ? If the condemnation of "the law of sin and death" does not apply to ALL of Adam's posterity, and warrant them a place in eternal hell, then WHY did Paul say "the law of the Spirit of Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death". Until the Elect have been made Free from this condemnation they are in effect destined for an eternal Hell - regardless of what kind of works they have or have not done. BUT thanks be unto God who Foreknew them, Predestinated them, Calls them, Justifies them, and Glorifies them according to his purpose of Election.

The idea that "all infants that die in infancy go to heaven BECAUSE they have not done any works of wickedness" may be a Primitive Baptist belief for some. I suspect it is believed this way out of emotionalism and sentimentality rather than "rightly dividing the word of truth" in a rational manner, precept upon precept. I would rather think that Primitive Baptists would believe that "all that go to heaven, be they infants or anyone else, go to heaven because God chose them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world". Some may say, well that implies some infants that die in infancy do not go to heaven. Yes and it implies that some adults don't either. God's word does not teach "election by category" - nor does it teach "a man made age of accountability" - be it Arminian or Primitive Baptist. I would rather stand on the sure foundation that "God knoweth them that are his", than to preach a works doctrine to accommodate a preconceived idea. If this makes me less of a Primitive Baptist, then I would rather be true to the Word of God than to wear a label that denies the doctrine of Grace and Election.

Respectfully and loving submitted - Elder Bob Allgood

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