

Lessons From I Thessalonians

The Chosen By God

(I Th 1:4-5)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Evening,
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of “Lessons From I Thessalonians.”
 - a. Last week we looked at “Faith Love & Hope.”
 - i. We noticed how the brethren at Thessalonica were remembered for their...
 1. Work of faith
 2. Labor of love
 3. Steadfastness of hope
 - b. This week we are going to look at “The Chosen By God.”
 - i. **I Th 1:4-5** “For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, 5 because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.”¹
3. Let’s look now at...
 - a. How the Thessalonians were chosen by God
 - b. How they made their election sure.

I. The Thessalonians: Chosen By God

- A. The word “chosen”
 1. Comes from the Greek word “ekloge.”
 - i. It is found seven times in the N.T.
 - ii. It means, “that which is chosen out, an extract” (Liddell, H. G. (1996). A lexicon: Abridged from Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English lexicon. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.)
- B. The Thessalonians had been chosen...before the foundation of the world
 1. Notice what Paul teaches...
 - i. **Ep 1:4** “even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love”
 2. What does this mean?
 - i. There are two popular views.
 - a. John Calvin believed and taught that God chose individuals, before the foundation of the world, to become children of God without their choice in the matter.
 1. In other words those individuals had no say as they were chosen to become Christians.

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

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- b. Arminian's believed and taught that God chose individuals, before the foundation of the world, based on His foreknowledge of their souls willingness to respond to the gospel and persevere in the faith.
 - 1. In other words God knew they would chose Christianity and thus chose them.
 - ii. What does the Bible teach?
 - a. The Bible does not teach that humans are without choice?
 - 1. **Js 24:15** "And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."
 - 2. **Ro 14:12** "So then each of us will give an account of himself to God."
 - b. The Bible teaches not of individual but collective election by God.
 - 1. **Ro 9:11; Ro 11:5, 7, 28; II Pt 1:10; I Th 1:4; Ac 9:15**
 - i. Every time except with **Ac 9:15** is it dealing with the collective and not the individual.
 - ii. In the one instance it isn't it is Jesus talking about Paul being chosen for a "special" purpose not becoming a Christian.
 - c. The Bible teaches the church as a whole as being in the foreknowledge of God not individuals.
 - 1. **Gn 3:15** "And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."
(NKJV)
 - 2. **I Pt 1:20** "He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you"
 - 3. **Je 31:31, 34** "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah...34...I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
 - iii. Thus we find the Thessalonians, like us, are chosen in the general since.
- C. The Thessalonians had been chosen...as God's people
- 1. Notice how Paul says they became the "elect people."
 - i. **II Th 2:13** "But 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.
 - 2. There are two things mentioned here.

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- i. “through sanctification by the Spirit”
 - a. This is God’s part giving us the Word of God.
 - 1. **Jn 17:17** “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.”
 - ii. “belief in the truth”
 - a. This is our part trusting and obeying the Word God gave us.
 - 1. **II Th 2:14** “To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- D. Thus...
- 1. When the Thessalonians heeded the gospel call they were sanctified by the Holy Spirit as a result of being obedient to the truth and were add to the church.

II. The Chosen By God: Making It Sure

- A. God’s election is unconditional
 - 1. God chose to save people “in Christ.”
 - i. That choice/election is unconditional and final.
 - a. There is no way anyone can be saved apart from Christ.
 - 1. **Jn 14:6** “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
 - 2. **Ac 4:12** “And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”
- B. Our election is conditional
 - 1. Whether we the church remain elect ie in the church of Christ is conditional.
 - i. That is why Peter wrote...
 - a. **II Pt 1:10** “Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.”
 - 2. This is why we see so many warning about staying faithful.
 - i. Jesus stated clearly...
 - a. **Jn 15:1-6** “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.”
 - b. **Rv 2:10** “...Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the

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crown of life.”

CONCLUSION

1. It was the faithful and fruitful lives of the Thessalonians that gave Paul confidence concerning their election.
 - a. Their active faith, love, and hope.
 - i. **I Th 1:2-3**
 - b. Their reception of Paul and the Word.
 - i. **I Th 1:6-7**
2. Question: If Paul were to send Timothy to this congregation would his report concerning our faith and fruit be as encouraging as the Thessalonians?
 - a. If so continue therein and grow thereby.
 - b. If not why not?
3. Invitation
 - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Have Faith In Jesus **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**