

The Doctrine Of Election

Written by Sylvester Hassell
Thursday, 27 May 2010 08:34 -

The doctrine of the personal unconditional election of all the people of God to eternal salvation was incorporated in the Scotch Confession of Faith, of 1560 (Art. 8); the Belgic Confession, of 1561, of the Dutch Reform Church (Art. r6); the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, of 1562, the Episcopal Church (Art. iv); the Second Helvetic Confession, of 1566, that of the Swiss and the French Protestant Church (Art. ro); the Formula of Concord, of 1577, that of the Lutheran Church (Art. ii); the Irish Articles of the Episcopal Church, of 1615 (Art. 14); the Canons of Dort, of 1619, the Confession of the Reformed Churches of Europe (1st. Head of Doctrine); the Presbyterian Westminster Confession, of 1647 (Chapter 3d); the Independent or Congregational Savoy Declaration, of 1658 (Chap. 3d); the London Baptist Confession of Faith, of 1689 (Chap. 3d), and the Philadelphia Baptist Confession of Faith, of 1742 (Chap. 3d). And the 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th Articles of even the Methodist Articles of Religion, of 1784, are much more consistent with the doctrine of sovereign, discriminating, rich, and reigning grace than they are with the doctrine of conditional salvation; in fact, Mr. John Wesley, in writing these Articles, simply abridged the 39 Articles of the Church of England, taking out some of their predestinarianism, but not putting in a particle of his Arminianism. And on the 480th and 481st pages of the 7th volume of John Wesley's works (published in 1853 by Canton & Phillips, of New York), there is an astonishing admission of the truth of Calvinism by Mr. Wesley, which probably very few Methodists ever saw or heard of.

``Having a strong desire to unite with Mr. George Whitefield," says Wesley, ``I wrote down my sentiments as plain as I could, in the following terms: There are three points in debate: 1. Unconditional election; 2. Irresistible grace; 3. Final perseverance. With regard to the First, unconditional election, I believe that God, before the foundation of the world, did unconditionally elect certain persons to do certain works, as Paul to preach the Gospel. That He has unconditionally elected some persons to many peculiar advantages. And I do not deny (though I can not prove it is so) that He has unconditionally elected some persons, thence eminently styled 'the elect,' to eternal glory. With regard to the Second, irresistible grace, I believe that the grace which brings faith, and thereby salvation, into the soul is irresistible at that moment. With regard to the Third-final perseverance-I believe that there is a state attainable in this life from which a man can not finally fall. That he has attained this who is, according to St. Paul's account, 'a new creature'; that is, who can say: Old things are passed away; all things 'in me' are become new. And I do not deny that all those eminently styled 'the elect' will infallibly persevere to the end."

If this admission of Mr. John Wesley does not do away with Arminianism and establish the doctrine of the personal and unconditional election of the people of God to eternal salvation, the original doctrine of the whole Protestant World, I do not understand the meaning of language.

The system that represents that God elects a human being because He foresees that such a person will repent and believe and obey, is a mockery of the Bible doctrine of election. In such a case a man really elects and saves himself and deserves the glory of his salvation.