

effort; for, without election, it is certain that all would be lost (Cf. Acts 18:10). While it humbles the sinner, so that he is willing to cry for mercy, it encourages him also by showing him that some will be saved, and (since election and faith are inseparably connected) that he will be saved, if he will only believe . . . Hence the question for the sinner is not, 'Am I one of the elect?' but rather 'What shall I do to be saved?' "

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, in his sermon *Election* says to the ungodly in his audience:

"I say, take courage, take hope, O thou sinner, that there is election! So far from dispiriting and discouraging thee, it is a very hopeful and joyous thing that there is an election. What if I told thee perhaps none can be saved, none are ordained to eternal life, wouldst thou not tremble, and fold thy hands in hopelessness, and say, 'Then how can I be saved, since none are elect?' But, I say, there is a multitude elect, beyond all counting a host that no mortal can number. Therefore, take heart, thou poor sinner! Cast away thy despondency -- mayst not thou be elect as well as any other? for there is a host innumerable chosen. There is joy and comfort for thee?

"Then, not only take heart, but go and try the Master. Remember, if you were not elect, you would lose nothing by it. What did the four lepers say? 'Let us fall unto the host of the Syrians, for if we stay here, we must die, and if we go to them we can but die.' O sinner! come to the throne of electing mercy. Thou mayest die where thou art. Go to God; and, even supposing he should spurn thee, suppose his uplifted hand should drive thee away -- a thing impossible -- yet thou wilt not lose anything; thou wilt not be more damned for that.

"Besides, supposing thou be damned, thou wouldst have the satisfaction at least of being able to lift up thine eyes in hell, and say, 'God, I asked mercy of thee, and thou wouldst not grant it; I sought it, but thou didst refuse it.' That thou never shalt say, O sinner! If thou goest to him, and asketh him, thou shalt receive; for he never has spurned one yet! Is not that hope for you? What though there is an allotted number, yet it is true that all who seek belong to that number. Go thou and seek; and if thou shouldst be the first one to go to hell, tell the devils that thou didst perish thus -- tell the demons that thou art a castaway, after having come as a guilty sinner to Jesus. I tell thee it would disgrace the Eternal -- with reverence to his name -- and he would not allow such a thing. He is jealous of his honor, and he would not allow a sinner to say that.

"But, ah, poor soul! . . . Let your hope rest on the cross of Christ. Think not on election, but on Christ Jesus. Rest on Jesus -- Jesus first, midst, and without end."

(*Election* pp. 29-31)

Actually, this objection could be turned back upon the objector. Instead of predestination's discouraging the lost from exerting efforts for their salvation, it could be said that a failure to emphasize God's sovereign love and grace and God's sovereign wrath and justice actually encourages the lost in the direction of negligence. Loraine Boettner, in his book *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), p. 261, states: