

## SUNDAY MORNING

### Announcements

Mike Davis

### Song Leader

Daniel Allgor

### Lord's Supper

Bill Rinehart      Clay Morris  
Hunter Byrd      Pete Rowland

### Prayers

Jon Barry      Preston Ellis

## SUNDAY EVENING

### Announcements

Mike Davis

### Song Leader

Cory Easley

### Lord's Supper

Bill Rinehart      Pete Rowland

### Prayers

Mark Davis      Daniel Allgor

## WEDNESDAY

### Announcements

Preston Ellis

### Song Leader

Jack Calvert

### Prayers

Gerald Eaton      Sonny Monaghan

### Invitation

Bill Brittenham

## ABOUT US

### Elders

Jack Calvert      Rodney Ellis

### Deacons

Jon Barry      Bill Brittenham  
Mike Davis      Dave Massey

### Evangelist

Bryan Garlock

## SERVICE TIMES

### Sunday

Bible Study .....9:30 A.M.  
Worship .....10:15 A.M.  
Worship .....6:00 P.M.

### Wednesday

Bible Study .....7:00 P.M.

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## GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

**Hear** the word of truth ..... Romans 10:13-17

**Believe** the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

**Repent** from all sins .... Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

**Confess** the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 8:35-30

**Be Baptized** in His name ..... Mark 16:16;  
1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

**Walk** in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death ..... Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10

# Think On These Things

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## Appointed to Eternal Life

Bryan Garlock

Luke recorded, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed." (Acts 13:48, ESV)

Calvinism teaches that we are born in sin because we inherit Adam's sin. There is no time at which one becomes a sinner and in need of God's grace; rather, we are all born sinners. Since we are supposedly born in sin, we are totally depraved in mind and can do no good; we cannot even seek after God. Therefore, God seeks after us. This leads to unconditional election (God picks and chooses who will be saved and lost), then limited atonement (that Jesus only died for the elect – those who were chosen), then irresistible grace (since God has chosen you, you cannot resist His limited and loving grace), and finally, preservation of the saints (once saved always saved – since you have been chosen, you cannot lose your salvation). It is the second tenet of Calvinism – unconditional election – that our passage

under examination is often used as a proof text.

Typically speaking, the word "appointed" means "decided on beforehand; designated." Coupled with the fact that the sentence structure within most translations seem to indicate an appointment or election by God of certain individuals for salvation, the verse can be confusing and demands a fair answer.

Contextually speaking, the Calvinist overlooks the contrast made (please read the context in verses 13-51). Notice that the Jews *rejected* the gospel while the Gentiles *accepted* the gospel. In fact, while it is true that the joyous, glorifying-God's-word Gentiles were "appointed to eternal life," (48) the Jews who were filled with jealousy and contradicted and blasphemed (45), thrust God's word aside and judged themselves unworthy of eternal life (46). Consequently, they fulfilled what the prophets spoke (40-41); that is, that they would not believe because they *willed* not to believe (cf. John 5:40). Therefore, free-

## FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **Willie Margaret Mobley, Bob Buls, Bonnie Allgor, Max Thomas, Maxine Burnham** and **Mary Alice Turner**. Cards, calls and visits are ALWAYS needed and appreciated.

Continue to pray for **Max Thomas**. He hasn't gone home yet. Perhaps this week. Please keep **Max, Ann** and **Mark** continually in your prayers.

**Francine Davis** had a visit to the ER due to an infection. She is home now on antibiotics.

cont. from pg. 1

will, which is in opposition to unconditional election (God chooses you against your will), is expressly visible throughout the passage. Additionally, since free-will can be demonstrated in the context, it cannot contradict the text under review; therefore, the text cannot mean what Calvinism teaches.

Interestingly, if Calvinistic predestination is true and God arbitrarily judges us worthy or unworthy against our volition, then even if one judged himself unworthy, God could still judge this person worthy for it has nothing to do with what that person wills. Furthermore, if appointment is something that God chooses regardless of our free-will, would He not then choose all to be saved since He does not want anyone to be lost (2 Peter 3.9)? Remember, God is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10.35; Rom. 2.6-11, etc.)! If

unconditional election is true, it makes God a God of favoritism.

Additionally, the passage teaches that the Gentiles who were appointed to eternal life "believed." It is not the case that certain individuals were chosen to believe while others were chosen to disbelieve. In fact, Paul preached, "Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him *everyone who believes* is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses" (38-39, emphasis added). Prior to Luke writing that the Jews had thrust aside eternal life, Paul had already told them they would be freed from sin by believing in Christ (cf. John 8.32). Therefore, the same saving message preached to the God-fearing Gentiles (16, 26) was preached to the Jews and the same saving condition of salvation – faith – was commanded to all.

Faith is a condition to have peace with God (Rom. 5.1) and that belief in Christ is to lead us to confess Christ and pledge our allegiance to Him (Rom. 10.9-10). The Holy Spirit teaches that "without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him." (Heb. 11.6) However, we must understand that the Gentiles' faith was not an inactive or mere mental faith, but a faith that sought God's will for their lives. James taught, "You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone." (James 2.24) Therefore, when Luke records that the Gentiles believed, these were individuals who believed in their heart the resurrected Lord Jesus, confessed Him, and then obeyed Him in whatever He taught – that's an active faith (see Matt. 7.21; Luke 6.46; Acts 2.38)!

Finally, we should note that not all Gentiles believed, but "*as many as were* appointed to

eternal life believed" (emphasis added). A similar phrase is found elsewhere in Scripture and is intended to indicate only a certain number of individuals. For example, we read, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3.27) All those and only those who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have put on Christ. If one has never been baptized into Christ, he cannot say he has put on Christ. Therefore, all the Gentiles and only the Gentiles who were appointed to eternal life believed.

As to "were appointed to eternal life," we acknowledge that God has provided and appointed eternal life to all who believe (John 3.16) and love Him (Rom. 8.28-30) – that is, all those and only those who are in Christ (Eph. 1.3-4; Rom. 6.3; 8.1; Gal. 3.26-27). Accordingly, we can confidently say that God determined ahead of time that those who believed would be the ones appointed to eternal life. However, this does not mean that God has individually chosen men against their free-will; instead, those who choose to believe are the ones appointed by God to eternal life – because they judge themselves worthy of salvation while those who have chosen to disbelieve are appointed to eternal damnation – because they have judged themselves unworthy of salvation. In other words, since those who did not believe "judged themselves unworthy of eternal life" is contrasted with those who "were appointed to eternal life believed," then those who believed, judged themselves worthy of eternal life. Remember, Jesus taught, "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God." (John 3.18) This fact is a thorn in the flesh for the

Calvinist because it shows the appointment to eternal life was not forced by God. This helps us to determine Luke's usage of "appointed to eternal life" and that it is not against man's volition; in fact, contextually speaking, there is a sense in which they appointed *themselves* to eternal life (cf. Acts 2.40).

The Calvinist bias assumes the ordaining was done preceding the creation of the world; that is, that God picked individuals to be saved or lost prior to creation and prior to the person being born. However, the context illustrates that both parties had a responsibility to hear and believe the message preached. Furthermore, as many as received the message and obeyed it were saved; while as many as rejected the message were condemned. Correspondingly, those who submitted their will to God's will were chosen (elected) in Christ Jesus; for God chooses *everyone* for salvation who is in Christ (see Eph. 1.4). Since getting into Christ is conditional (Rom. 6.3; Gal. 3.26-27), it cannot be *unconditional* election; rather, *conditional* election. This clarifies that God does not pick individuals against their will; instead, He picks everyone who is determined for themselves to be "in Christ."

While God certainly saves us, we must determine for ourselves whether we will be appointed to eternal life. In the context, those who heard and believed determined for themselves to be appointed to eternal life. In contrast, those who heard and disbelieved, judged themselves unworthy of eternal life. Reader, have you judged yourself worthy or unworthy of eternal life? BG