



How do I know if I am elect?

When people first begin to learn about the biblical doctrine of election, one question that often occurs to them is, "Am I elect?" And the more they think about whether or not they are elect, the more uncertain they become. So, if you believe in the doctrine of election, how do you know if you are elect?

The answer is really quite simple: *You continue believing in Christ.*

"But," you reply, "you didn't answer my question. I want to know if I am elect."

So I will ask:

- Do you believe that you have offended the all-holy Creator (Romans 3:10-18; Psalm 51:1-4)?
- Do you believe that your sins cry out to heaven itself for justice, and that you deserve to perish under the wrath of the God you have offended by your sins (Isaiah 59:2-3; Ezekiel 18:4)?
- Do you believe that you are, in fact, dead in your sins and unable to make yourself alive (Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 8:5-8)?
- Do you believe that nothing you could ever do—no good deeds, no mighty acts of faith, no church attendance, no niceness of character—will ever be sufficient to appease the wrath of your holy Creator against your sins (Micah 6:6-7; Isaiah 59:12-14)?
- Do you believe that God, the God you have offended by your sins, has himself provided the way of escape through his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (Titus 3:5-7; Colossians 2:13)?
- Have you been united to Christ by faith, a faith you did not earn, but received as a gift from God? Do you believe that, having been savingly joined by faith to the Son of God, your sins are finally and fully paid for, and that you are forgiven and declared righteous, as though you had never sinned (Galatians 2:16, 20; Romans 8:1-4)?
- Do you believe that, by the grace of God, having turned from your sins and turned to the Son of God to pay for your sins and to give you his own righteousness, you will be received by God as his own dear child, to be loved and blessed by him throughout eternity—that is, that you are saved by God's unmerited grace (Romans 3:21-28; 5:1-11)?

If you believe these things, you are exhibiting a key characteristic of the elect: *the elect believe the gospel of Jesus Christ and continue in faith.* The elect do not focus on their election, but rather on their Savior. The elect are saved from the wrath to come because God has chosen them to salvation through Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:9-10; cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:13). And that is what the gospel promises as well: the one who believes in the Son has eternal life and escapes the wrath of God (John 3:36).

Think back to the day of Pentecost. In Acts 2, we find Peter directing the crowds to consider, not election, but the Lord of glory whom they crucified. *The elect will believe the gospel*, but the reprobate will turn away from the gospel.

Paul points to the same truth in his great exposition of the blessings of election in Ephesians 1. But note what he says:

*"For he chose us **in him** [Christ] before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons **through** Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will" (vss. 4-5).*

Paul talks about election with reference to Jesus Christ. And we know Christ through the gospel.

In his book *God-Centered Evangelism*, R.B. Kuyper uses a wonderfully simple illustration (on page 38). He compares election to the foundation of a house. The foundation is there, essential but unseen. We enter a house, not through the foundation, but through the door. And Jesus Christ is the door. If we would enter the kingdom of God and be saved from our sins, it must be through him (John 10:9). So the Word of God directs us, again and again, to Christ.

We make our calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:10) by living in the faith that what God has promised to do for those who believe in Jesus, he will most certainly do for us (Romans 8:28-39; cf. Galatians 2:20; 1 Timothy 1:15). *The elect are enabled by the power of God to believe the truth of the gospel, live by its promises, and keep on believing them.*

How do I know if I'm elect? Believe what the elect believe, the gospel of God's saving grace.

(Read the Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 3, section 6; chapter 10, sections 1-3; and chapter 18, sections 1-2.)

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