

To argue that divine election leaves no room for preaching the gospel, for urging people to repent and to believe is just like declaring that since it is God that gives us crops at harvest, therefore the farmer need not plough the fallow ground and sow seed. God calls out His people by means of the gospel. But there will be no "crops" unless God blesses the ground with rain from heaven. He ordains the means as well as the end...author unknown



**KEACH'S CATECHISM – Benjamin Keach 1640 - 1704**

*(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)*

Q. 17. Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?

A. Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.

(Gen. 3:6; Eccles. 7:29; Rom. 5:12)

Q. 18. What is sin?

A. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.

(1 John 3:4; Rom. 5:13)

Q. 19. What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?

A. The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

(Gen. 3:6, 12, 13)

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**Services:**

Sunday Morning 11:00 AM

Sunday Evening 6:00 PM

Prayer and Bible Study Wednesday Evening 6:30 PM

WCWV 92.9 FM – 8:00 AM Sunday Morning

# THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

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## MAKING SURE

*Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 2 Peter 1:10*

With Peter, divine election is a stated fact. In His first Epistle to these people he referred to them as: *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. 1 Peter 1:2.* He does not argue nor offer any proof of the truth of the doctrine. Yet, down through the centuries men have vehemently debated the free will of man against the choice of God. Most who oppose it characterize it as the unfeeling exercise of the will of God without reference to the experience of believers. According to the scriptures, the will of man will always oppose that of God. God did not choose men to go to hell, they made that choice themselves. It is God who graciously chose to rescue some from their own choice and to bring them through the sanctification of the Spirit and Belief of the truth. See 2 Thessalonians 2:13. True believers are the elect of God. Thus, Paul refers to the “faith of God’s elect.” See Titus 1:1.

The issue with Peter in this passage is the assurance of salvation. Many on both sides of the debate over election tend to presume about the certainty of their salvation. On the one hand some seem to think that to believe that election (or for that matter grace) is true makes them saved. Yet, we read that the devils believe and tremble. Others think that they are certified for Heaven on the basis of a mere verbal profession of faith regardless of what happens thereafter.

But, Peter here declares that we are to make our calling and election sure. Certainly, he does not suggest that we may be the cause of our election or that we have the ability to maintain that status. We are both saved and kept by grace. It required the birth, life, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ in our place to merit our salvation. We can neither add to nor subtract from what He has done nor will God allow vain men to claim the credit for what comes at the cost of the life of His Son.

Peter here answers a question that might be properly asked. How do I know that I have salvation and that I am chosen of God? Paul stated the aim of God in election in this way: *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Ephesians 1:4.* Many quote the first part of the verse and leave off the second. Peter’s admonition to “make sure” was to look for the evidence of a divine work. A little earlier in the chapter he had directed them to be diligent with the matter of faith and the things that follow. So we find there the antecedent to the “things” that are to be done. True faith was to be followed by virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and sacrificial love. He then adds that “if these things be in you” fruitfulness in the knowledge of Christ is assured. Furthermore, Peter adds that where these things are there can be no fall.

Caution must be observed with these things.

Throughout the history of redemption men have presented cheap imitations with the belief they thereby have salvation. With some it is orthodoxy. In others it is self-righteousness. With many it is an ostentatious display of religion. And, many try to create these very things in their own way and with their own ability. Such false piety looks very much like the true. But, the key to genuineness is found in one's view of Christ and one's view to Christ. Peter references the "knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." All endeavor in these products of grace point to Christ. It is in looking to Jesus that these things develop. First, because they are an expression of His will for us, we pray for grace to answer. Secondly, as we look to Him there is a greater desire to be like Him. So it is that true believers want the manifestation of these things in their lives. These character traits reflect the identity of the possessor with Christ. They are the evidence of the operations of the grace of God in us. They cause us to know that we are His and that He has set His love upon us. *The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love:*

*therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Jeremiah 31:3.*

To make our "calling and election" sure is to sense the power and presence of the Holy Spirit teaching and communicating the things of Christ to us and in us. It is not the result of cold calculated logic. It is the fact of truly loving God and knowing the love of God to us. It is the presence of true faith that lays hold on eternal life in the person of Christ our Lord. Such faith believes the promise of God and the Gospel and claims it for themselves and this bears fruit in their life. It is manifested in a personal delight in the things of God and not mere servile obedience. It is born out in the hope of eternal life and that life is not separated from a love to Christ and a love from Christ.

We are to be afraid of claims without evidence of ownership. For this reason Peter warns us to "make sure." But, O what a delightful discovery is made where one truly gives diligence in "these things." While we are never to presume on His grace, we need not live our lives in fear of eternal loss. We just keep on "making sure." *bhs*

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## Read Your Bible More and More

by John Piper

Don't rest on past reading. Read your Bible more and more every year. Read it whether you feel like reading it or not. And pray without ceasing that the joy return and pleasures increase.

Three reasons this is not legalism:

1. You are confessing your lack of desire as sin, and pleading as a helpless child for the desire you long to have. Legalists don't cry like that. They strut.
2. You are reading out of desperation for the effects of this heavenly medicine. Bible-reading is not a cure for a bad conscience; it's chemo for your cancer. Legalists feel better because the box is checked. Saints feel better when their blindness lifts, and they see Jesus in the word. Let's get real. We are desperately sick with worldliness, and only the Holy Spirit, by the word of God, can cure this terminal disease.
3. It is not legalism because only justified people can see the preciousness and power of the Word of God. Legalists trudge with their Bibles on the path toward justification. Saints sit down in the shade of the cross and plead for the blood-bought pleasures.

So let's give heed to Mr. Ryle and never grow weary of the slow, steady, growth that comes from the daily, disciplined, increasing, love affair with reading the Bible.

Do not think you are getting no good from the Bible, merely because you do not see that good day by day. The greatest effects are by no means those which make the most noise, and are most easily observed. The greatest effects are often silent, quiet, and hard to detect at the time they are being produced.

Think of the influence of the moon upon the earth, and of the air upon the human lungs.

Remember how silently the dew falls, and how imperceptibly the grass grows. There may be far more doing than you think in your soul by your Bible-reading. (J. C. Ryle, [Practical Religion](#).)

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*All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me.*—John 6:37.

THIS declaration involves *the doctrine of election*: there are some whom the Father gave to Christ. It involves *the doctrine of effectual calling*: these who are given must and shall come; however stoutly they may set themselves against it, yet they shall be brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light. It teaches us *the indispensable necessity of faith*; for even those who are given to Christ are not saved except they come to Jesus. Even *they* must come, for there is no other way to heaven but by the door, Christ Jesus. All that the Father gives to our Redeemer *must come to Him*, therefore none can come to heaven except they come to Christ.

Oh! the power and majesty which rest in the words "*shall come*." He does not say they have power to come, nor they may come if they will, but they "*shall come*." The Lord Jesus doth by His messengers, His word, and His Spirit, sweetly and graciously compel men to come in that they may eat of His marriage supper; and this He does, not by any violation of the free agency of man, but by the power of His grace. I may exercise power over another man's will, and yet that other man's will may be perfectly free, because the constraint is exercised in a manner accordant with the laws of the human mind.

Jehovah Jesus knows how, by irresistible arguments addressed to the understanding, by mighty reasons appealing to the affections, and by the mysterious influence of His Holy Spirit operating upon all the powers and passions of the soul, so to subdue the whole man, that whereas he was once rebellious, he yields cheerfully to His government, subdued by sovereign love. But how shall those be known whom God hath chosen? By this result: that they do willingly and joyfully accept Christ, and come to Him with simple and unfeigned faith, resting upon Him as all their salvation and all their desire. Reader, have you thus come to Jesus? Spurgeon

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### True Revival

We hear much about revival these days, but the heart of revival is the Lordship of Christ. A mere emotional upheaval, a spurt of religious excitement, is not revival. When Christians become convicted of rebellion against the rule of Christ in their lives, confess their sins, renounce self, take the cross and let Jesus have the first and last word in everything, that is revival, by whatever name you call it. *COPIED*