

been made for an elect few, and all the rest left beyond the possibility of forgiveness; for if there is one truth more clearly taught in the word of God, than another, it is, that Christ gave himself a ransom for all, tasted death for every man, and came, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. Why then are few chosen? It cannot be because the influences of the Holy Spirit are withheld from the great mass of gospel hearers, no this cannot be, because the Holy Spirit has been poured out upon all flesh. That Divine agent has long since come to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

Why then are only a portion of those to whom the gospel call is addressed separated from the world, or chosen to salvation? Is it in consequence of some arbitrary decree of unconditional election on the one hand, and unconditional reprobation on the other? This cannot be, for such a doctrine is opposed to reason, to justice, to the dictates of every enlightened conscience, and to the plainest statements of Scripture.

But the grand, the radical reason why few are chosen out from among the many who are called, is, because few believe the gospel, few comply with the conditions of salvation. The election of individuals to distinguishing privileges here, and to glory hereafter, is a process which actually takes place in time, and not as many suppose, something which was actually accomplished in a past eternity. When speaking of God's purpose to create, and his actual creation, they make an important and necessary distinction, or they very properly view the one as a thing of eternity and the other as a thing of time. But, strange to say, they make no distinction between the Divine purpose to elect, and actual election, though it is most manifest that the latter is as truly a thing of time as the former is a thing of eternity.

The elect are in every instance chosen *in Christ*; and before it is possible for any man to be one of the elect of God he must be *in Christ*; a believer in Christ, united to Christ by a true and living faith. As Peter expresses it, (1 Peter, i, 2,) "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." Or, as it is expressed by Paul, (2 Thess. ii, 13), "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation THROUGH sanctification of the Spirit and *belief of the truth.*" It