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“If I forget thee, O Jerusalem! let my right hand forget its cunning.”—Ps. 137, v. 5.

### I fear I am not Elected.

A CARELESS old man, who had not attended a place of worship for twenty years, became very ill. I went to see him, and found him alarmed and anxious. I told him of Christ dying for the ungodly; that His blood cleanseth from all sin; and that whosoever believeth on Him “*hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.” For some time he continued anxious, but without getting that peace which flows from believing. One day I called, and after trying to show him that Christ had suffered enough to atone for sinners, and had invited him to accept that atonement as for *his* sins, I asked him why it was that He would not believe God, and take Christ as his Saviour, and be saved. With tears rolling down his cheeks, the old man said—“Sir, I need not hide it from you—I fear I am not elected.” He was thoroughly in earnest. Now, what are we to say to a man thus tempted?

We are not to tell him there is no such thing as election, for there are scores of passages in the Bible teaching us that there is. Whether men like it or not, it is a doctrine clearly revealed. But we are to tell him something like the following: This is a temptation of the devil to keep you away from Christ; so, be on your guard against it. Election is true, but it is a doctrine with which you have nothing to do at present. It belongs to God’s people, and to them alone. If you would come into my house, and take away some of my goods, you would be taking what did not belong to you; and just so,

when you meddle with election, you meddle with what does not at present belong to you. What right has an unconverted man to think, or talk, or dispute about election? None whatever. When you hear such a one speak on the subject, look him in the face, and with astonishment ask, “Sir, are you born again?”

What you have to discover is, not that you are an elect saint, but that you are a lost sinner. When you have discovered this, and been enabled by divine grace to take Jesus as your Saviour, and thus made your calling sure, your election will be sure also. You will then be thankful for the doctrine—glad to think that God loved you with an everlasting love—and will have higher ideas of the “length” of that love which passeth knowledge. The truth is, as an old divine once said—“Election is against no man, unless he is against election.” Rightly understood, it does injury to no one, and does great good to God’s people.

Your rule of duty is not what is written in the Lamb’s Book of Life, but what is written in God’s holy Word. “Secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children.” (Deut. xxix. 29.) The Bible tells us that the mercy of God is infinite, that the merit of Christ is infinite, and that the power of the Spirit is infinite. God’s oath is—“As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live,” (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.) His *invitations* and *promises* are—“A just God and a Saviour, there is none beside me. Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” (Isaiah