

1 Peter 1:1-12

Election and Predestination

Read Gen. 45:8; 50:20; Job 14:5; Ps. 33:13-14; 115:3; 147:5; Pr. 5:21; 15:3; 16:1, 4, 9, 33; Is. 14:26-27; Dan. 4:33-34; Jn. 1:13; Acts 2:23; Rom. 8:29-30; 9:9-18; 1 Pt. 1:1, 20.

The Logic of Omniscience and Freewill (confer Psalm 139)

1. God's knowledge is true and consists of all things past, present, future, and contingent, including those acts of the human will that are done freely.
2. Since God's knowledge is true and comprehensive, no human can perform any act that would in any way modify God's knowledge.
3. Therefore, all expressions of human freewill are confined to the boundaries of God's knowledge.

Put differently, humans, by their free acts of thought and/or behavior, do not have the ability to alter (make false) any aspect of God's knowledge. Free acts of the will are confined within the parameters of God's knowledge. This is not to say that God's knowledge of future events *causes* human free acts. Only, that no human activity is outside the scope of God's knowledge, which is the stage upon which all human activity plays out in time. If God's knowledge is true and comprehensive, and nothing occurs that has not been known, planned, and permitted by God, then humans are not "free" in any absolute sense. Human freedom, therefore, is relative to God's true and perfect knowledge.

How should this affect your attitude during difficulties you encounter?

Chosen for Obedience

1 Pt. 1:2 addresses both our salvation (entering into a personal relationship with God through Jesus) and sanctification (the daily outworking of our personal relationship with God through Jesus). Exactly how does "obedience" look in your life?

Peter mentions "sprinkling by his blood" (v. 2). Read 1 Jn. 1:7. How does "walking in the light" relate to "the blood of Jesus?" (see Lk. 9:23-24).

Read 1 Pt. 1:2. Note the references to the three Persons of the Trinity. More importantly, note the three activities by each member of the Trinity: God the Father foreknows, the Spirit sanctifies, and Jesus Christ redeems (pays the price for our ransom by shedding his blood, see Heb. 9:22). In essence, what God plans the Spirit empowers, and what the Spirit empowers Jesus Christ makes possible. Therefore, obedience plays a huge part in our identity as God's people (see Eph. 2:10).

Chosen for Hope

In one breath (vv. 3-12 is a run-on sentence) Peter spills over with excitement about our salvation and the blessed hope that we have. No matter what occurs in this life, nothing will stand in the way of our hope and joy in our certain future!

Having introduced our conversion (vv. 1-2), Peter expounds on our salvation (vv. 3-5). When is the last time you spent significant time reflecting on the time and circumstances surrounding your conversion?

Peter introduces the theme of suffering in 1:6-7. What is the purpose of suffering and trials according to verse 7? Read 2 Cor. 1:3-7 and James 1:3, then list other purposes for suffering and trials. Think of a time when you were wrongly treated because you were a believer. Did you consider it joy as you were suffering? How can hope in the future help you have the right attitude while suffering?

Why is salvation tied to suffering (see 2 Tim. 3:12)? Sadly, the sparks that fly from "suffering" are not always from the fires of commitment to holiness and an unswerving devotion to Gospel proclamation, but from the fires of contempt and outright hatred for our unbelieving neighbors and coworkers. Do you experience opposition because of Christ or because of you?