

THE NATURE OF THE CALLING AND CHOOSING IN
MATTHEW 22:14

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PREFACE

In these days of theological double-talk it is especially important that the student who is preparing himself for God's service find a school that truly upholds the Bible as the word of God. It has only recently dawned upon the writer how completely inadequate and incompletely thought-out were his understandings of the word of God when he entered Grace Theological Seminary, and how easily he could have fallen into the clutches of theological double-talkers had God allowed him to go to any of the schools which he first considered attending. It has been the writer's experience above all else that God brought him here to Grace Theological Seminary, and now he understands why. The expression of thanks and gratitude which are so greatly impressed upon the heart and mind of the writer for each teacher and to those of the Brethren Church who have made this school possible cannot be carried to each one individually as one would wish, but must be expressed here. Special appreciation is given to Dr. Homer Kent, Jr., for his advice and suggestions and to Dr. Benjamin Hamilton for his application of the "pencil of correction" and advice in the format of this monograph.

It is the prayer of the writer's heart that those to whom the Lord has given many talents will see that these talents are useless and powerless except the power of the spirit guides and directs their use, and that those to whom the Lord has given few

talents will take heart in the realization that with the power of the Holy Spirit ruling and reigning in their lives many souls shall yet be saved. We are but the Spirit's instrument, and may we allow Him free course in our lives to bring to salvation through us those whom God has ordained to eternal life.

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INTRODUCTION

Many times those things in the word of God that just seem tacked on as an extra thought and over which we quickly skim we find on closer examination to be the very gems of God. Just such a passage is the one under consideration in this monograph. The writer has found that by far the largest number of the popular commentaries skim over this little passage or don't even mention it. When mined, it is found to be a deep pit of God's sovereignty as it relates to human responsibility. It is the point of clear Biblical teaching between the extremes of hyper-calvinism and arminianism on the Biblical doctrines of election and calling.

The writer first became interested in the passage in the course on the life of Christ when dealing with the parable of the wedding feast. In the years that followed a continual question was in the writer's mind as to what groups or individuals this passage applied. When the passage was more fully considered in the choosing of a monograph text it became abundantly clear that here was a passage which would prove a rich blessing. Through the course of this study the writer has come to a firm and clear stand upon the Biblical doctrines of election and calling that is far different than that which he held before its undertaking. For this we praise God in His leading to this passage.

The writer's intent is to pin-point the identity of the "called" and "chosen," and in so doing it will be necessary to

locate the context of the passage, state the various views, and give a refutation of those views not in harmony with his own. In the writer's interpretation, supporting evidence and arguments for his own view will be given to show that it is the correct view.

However, feeling that a clear understanding of what the writer means by "election" and "calling," and yet not wanting to confuse the arguments in support of his own view with the necessarily bulky material on these doctrines, posed a problem. It was decided to set these things forth in two appendixes wherein the whole scope of these two doctrines could be summarized.

GREEK TEXT

According to The New Testament in the Original Greek,
edited by Westcott and Hort

Πολλοὶ γὰρ εἰσιν κλητοί, ὀλίγοι
δὲ ἐκλεκτοί.

There is no significant variant reading.

ENGLISH VERSIONS

Authorized Version, 1611

For many are called, but few are chosen.

American Standard Version, 1901

For many are called, but few are chosen.

Moffatt's Bible, 1913

For many are invited but few are chosen.

The New Testament in Basic English, 1941

For out of all to whom the good news has come,
only a small number will get salvation.

Revised Standard Version, 1952

For many are called, but few are chosen.

The Amplified New Testament, 1958

For many are called (invited and
summoned), but few are chosen.

ESSENTIAL BACKGROUND

The stage is set. For centuries the Old Testament had been proclaiming the coming of Messiah, His rejection by the Jews and His death (Dan. 9:25, 26, Is. 53). The Jews have recognized only the fact that He was coming as king, seeing His second coming in power and great glory as His only coming, and therefore not looking for Him as the Old Testament said He would come, and Mt. 21:5 says He did come: "Tell the daughter of Zion, behold, thy king cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of an ass." And so, Messiah has come and has publicly offered Himself as king (Mt. 21:1-16), and has been rejected by the civil and religious rulers.

Jesus now enters into a series of parables of final warning to the civil and religious rulers of what is about to take place. He first curses the barren fig tree and then gives the two parables of the two sons and the householder and his vineyard. In both of these he judges them on the basis of their own judgment, and plainly tells them that the kingdom of God will be taken from them because of their lack of fruit and will be given to another people who will produce fruit for the householder (Mt. 21:43). This is a clear warning that the kingdom of God is going to be taken from these Jews and turned over to the Gentiles. (This actually takes place in chapter 23 where Christ plainly tells them as He laments over Jerusalem that their house

is left unto them desolate and that they shall not see Him any more until they recognize that He is Lord, verses 37-39.)

He then goes on in chapter 22:1-14 to tell the parable of the wedding feast which pictures the king sending forth servants to call those whom he had bidden to come to the marriage of his son. Ancient oriental custom was for the king to send out an invitation to a feast sometime previous to the date of the feast, and then upon the arrival of the date for the feast, to send out another call to come now that the feast was ready. The original call in this passage undoubtedly had been given by the Old Testament prophets and now the king, whom we would picture as God the Father, is sending forth more servants to call those who had been bidden (the Jewish people) to come now that the time for the marriage of His son, Jesus Christ, had arrived. The servants which He sent out are the disciples and John the Baptist and possibly including the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The text tells us simply that they would not come.

Then we see Him sending forth other servants, who would be the apostles and preachers of the post-pentecostal era, to invite His people again with a description of the feast and the announcement that all is ready and that they should come to the marriage. This would be the call which the apostles and preachers of that era gave to the Jewish people alone. But they make light of it and go their ways, the one to his farm and another to his merchandise, and others persecute and treat his servants despitefully and kill some of them. (The early chapters of Acts recount the death of Stephen and other martyrs for the Lord Jesus Christ).

When the king hears of this he is angry and sends forth his army, the Roman armies under Titus, to destroy the city of those people, and kill the inhabitants.

The king then sends forth new servants with the instructions that the ones previously invited were not worthy, and that therefore, these should go into the highways and byways and invite anyone that they found to the marriage feast irrespective of moral character or position. This would liken to the turning to the Gentiles and the inviting of anyone into the kingdom of God. So the feast was furnished with guests.

However, when the king comes into the feast to greet his guests, he discovers there a man without a wedding garment. Upon the king's questioning of this one without the wedding garment, we discover that he has nothing to say; he is condemned in his own heart. So the king passes sentence upon this one and directs his servants to take him and bind him and cast him into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. This undoubtedly is a reference to Hell.

Then the king concludes this parable with the apparently strange statement, "For many are called, but few are chosen." It is with this last phrase that this monograph has to do. However, before this problem can be adequately dealt with, the writer has found that it will first be necessary to handle the minor problem of the interpretation of the wedding garment in verse 11.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

Minor Problem: What is the Interpretation
of the Wedding Garment in Matthew 22:11?

Major Problem: What is the Nature of the
Calling and Choosing of Matthew 22:14?

VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS

VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS

Minor Problem: What is the Interpretation of the Wedding Garment in Matthew 22:11?

The Holiness View

The men who hold this view, when difference of terminology is erased, all are thinking of the same thing. On analysis, this is not the holiness, or Arminian viewpoint, but would perhaps best be defined as faith that is shown by works.

Perhaps the ablest supporter of this view is Bruce, who says:

The broad lesson then of the sub-parable of the wedding robe is that the recipients of divine grace must live worthily of their privilege. The wedding robe represents Christian holiness, and the demand is that all believers in the gospel shall sedulously cultivate it...the silence means that the speaker wishes to accentuate the duty of each guest in seeing to it that he appeared at the feast in proper attire. In short, as has been remarked, prominence has been given to the ethical view which emphasizes man's responsibility, rather than the religious which represents all as depending on God.¹

The chief prop of this view is the establishment of the individual's responsibility and not God's. Hence these writers must prove that this man came to the feast without a wedding garment that he should have provided for himself. In order to accomplish this it is necessary for these writers to explain away the usual

¹Alexander B. Bruce, The Parabolic Teaching of Christ (4th ed. rev.; London: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.), p. 479.

interpretation of this incident as being comparable to ancient oriental custom regarding the feast given by kings. The custom was that when an oriental king gave a royal feast or dinner of some sort, that he gave out robes to each one of his guests, and expected them to wear them at the feast. It is a commonly recognized fact that ancient oriental dignitaries counted as part of their wealth great stores of clothing, and were known to give these as gifts to their special friends and envoys. (Compare Namaan the leper, and Joseph and his sons.) It is further proved by history that the invited guest who failed to wear the robe supplied by his host was liable to lose his life for this breach of ethic (see imputed righteousness view). The common view taken here is that this man was supplied a wedding garment to wear at the feast but he simply refused to wear it as a show of disloyalty and disregard for the person of the king. As a result he is judged by the oriental despot and cast out. This puts the responsibility for the supply of the garment upon the king and not upon the man. All will agree, on the other hand, that progressive sanctification in the individual believer's life is a personal responsibility, and therefore if this is to be equated with the robe that the man failed to possess then the idea of its being supplied by the king must be disproved. Again, Bruce has perhaps the most concise statement of this viewpoint:

Had the didactic significance of the wedding robe turned on its being a gift, the fact that it was presented to each guest to be worn on the occasion would have been mentioned. It will not do to say that the custom was so familiar to Christ's audience that the point might be taken for granted. Facts are not specified or omitted in parables according to the ignorance or the knowledge of hearers, but according as they do or do not bear on the purpose of the story. Thus, the parable of Dives passes over the piety of Lazarus, not because it might be assumed as known but because the

mention of it would have been an irrelevance. Similarly here: suppose it were not a matter of inference merely, but a certainty that the wedding garment was a robe similar to the Kaftan presented now in the East by kings to persons appearing before them, the absence of all allusion to the custom must be held to be conclusive evidence that it is irrelevant to the lesson intended to be taught.²

He contends that the doctrine of Christ and of Paul are essentially one and seeks to show that the equivalent of this marriage feast parable in the Pauline system are those portions where he insists on holiness as the outcome of faith. Specifically he points to Paul's writings in the book of Corinthians and the book of Hebrews to Jewish Christians reminding them of the fate which overtook the Jewish people in the wilderness even though they had experienced the blessings of Jehovah in the Exodus. He contends that these passages form the best possible commentary on the command of the king to cast this man into outer darkness as they prove that what we sometimes think as very pardonable sins of unbelief, and murmuring and dissatisfaction may be mercilessly condemned with no possibility of repentance even though carried before the Lord in crying for forgiveness.³ Heb. 12:14 is the passage which these men most often recite in supporting their view. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."

Taylor sums up the position thusly:

We have here...the inconsistency and insolence of the man who professed to accept the invitation, and yet failed to comply with the conditions upon which alone true acceptance of it was possible. He pushed into the festive hall without having on a wedding garment. So there are today those who have nominally accepted Christ, while yet it is evident, from the absence of the Holiness which He requires, that they are really

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 481.

rejecting him.⁴

Others who support this view are Lonsdale,⁵ Dods⁶ and Long.⁷ While it is true that God expects holiness of character from the lives of His true believers, the main failure of this view is that it puts undue emphasis and prominence upon holiness as a means of salvation. This is shown in that if they do not believe that holiness was the thing that was required, then why was the man who had it not cast out into perdition? It is true that some of the supporters of this view are not aware of the very tenor of their position, that it is dangerous of being labeled Arminian because this is the general tenor of the Arminian position. If we were to say that the wedding robe was Christian holiness, then that would require that each person who could ever be saved, the marriage supper of the Lamb be clothed in the robe of Christian holiness. And in the terminology of some of these men, Christian holiness implies sinless perfection, while to the majority it certainly indicated a positive bent to consistent Christian living. With the former the scriptures are at complete variance, while the latter is essentially true as the outgrowth of true faith it is still seen from scriptural evidence that

⁴William M. Taylor, The Parables of Our Savior (New York: A. L. Armstrong and Sons, 1910), p. 161.

⁵John G. Lonsdale, Exposition of the Parables (London: John W. Parker and Sons, 1855).

⁶Marcus Dods, The Parables of Our Lord (New York: Wilbur B. Ketchum, n.d.).

⁷Edmond M. Long, Illustrated Sermons on the Parables of The Old and New Testaments (Philadelphia: E. M. Long and Sons, 1889).

Refutation of the Holiness View

While it is true that God expects holiness of character in the lives of His true believers, the main failure of this viewpoint is that it puts undue emphasis and preeminence upon holiness as the means of salvation. This is shown in that if they do not intend to imply that holiness was the thing that was required here then why was the man who had it not cast out into perdition? While it is true that some of the supporters of this view are not Arminian, the very tenor of their position puts them in danger of being labeled Arminian because this is the general tenor of the Arminian position.

If we were to say that the wedding robe was Christian holiness then that would require that each person who could ever sit down at the marriage supper of the lamb be clothed in the robe of Christian holiness. And in the terminology of most of these men this Christian holiness implies sinless perfection, while to the others it certainly indicates a positive bent to consistent Christian living. With the former the scriptures are at complete variance, and while the latter is essentially true as the outgrowth of true regenerate faith it is still true from scriptural evidence that this is not the basis of salvation but the outworking of salvation. While it is true that Phil. 2:12 enjoins us to "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," it is also true that the following verse tells us "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." It is God who works out through our hearts and lives through the person of His holy spirit that

causes us to desire to live in accordance with His will, and not based upon our own self desire. Therefore for a man to be cast out because he did not possess the robe of "Christian holiness" would put the emphasis upon man, but this verse puts the emphasis upon God. Also in Lk. 17:10 we are told concerning the parable of service "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." There is not one born-again Christian who can do anything to receive merit from his father in heaven. All those things which we do we do because it is our duty to do them and not because of some goodness inherent within ourselves. Also in Mt. 7:21-23, where the danger of profession without faith is being discussed, we see that the thing that counts for all time and eternity is not the outward actions of the life primarily but the relationship which an individual sustains to the Lord Jesus Christ. This relationship and not Christian holiness is the thing that settles for time and eternity the destiny of each soul. As to the former, we are told in 1 Jno. 1:8 "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." And in the 10th verse we are further told "If we say that we have not sinned we make him a liar and his word is not in us." Therefore, if we assert that the final criterion for sitting down at the marriage supper of the Lamb is Christian holiness, or complete sanctification, then we are thinking contrary to the plain statements of scripture. There is not one of us who does not sin daily, and therefore who would be unfit to sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb if this were the basis upon which our salvation rested.

Tit. 3:5 says "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." Also Rom. 1:17 says "The just shall live by faith." And we might add with Martin Luther "Alone." Therefore we conclude that this view is wholly out of agreement with the scripture in putting undue emphasis and preeminence upon holiness or Christian character as the final means of salvation.

Wedding garment means the robe of Christ's righteousness, implying a state of reconciliation and acceptance; that is, in short, in which the true believer is, as distinguished from the nominal Christian. The man without a wedding garment is, therefore, one who bears the name of Christian but is not a Christian in heart.⁸

In general, this view lays great stress upon the common notion of the ancient custom of oriental kings. Kirk supplies illustration of the application of this custom as he says:

It is probable that the Saviour here made allusion to a custom which, in part, still exists in oriental countries; that of the kings providing splendid robes as presents for their guests. Chardin relates a case much to point. He expressly states that the king of Persia depends on incredible number of suspicious garments as presents to his guests; but he mentions the case of a visitor to whom the king had sent a garment. An enemy of the visitor changed the robe for a plain one. This the visitor took as a proof of his sovereign's displeasure, and refused accordingly to appear in the streets in it. His wearing of another robe than that which the king gave him cost him his life... The garment on great wedding occasions was a long white robe, variously and richly ornamented.⁹

Arnott agrees but points out that it isn't absolutely necessary to use the customary application:

But the point is not of primary importance. From what is briefly assumed in the narrative it may be held as

⁸Frederic Danford, *The Parables of Our Lord* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1911), p. 10.

⁹Edward M. Kirk, *Lessons on the Parables of Our Saviour* (New York: R. Craighead, 1837), pp. 480, 481.

The Imputed Righteousness of Christ View

This view is based upon the fact that the man evidently lacked something that was absolutely required - the lack of which caused him to be bound and cast into outer darkness.

This view is clearly stated by Bourdilon as:

The wedding garment means the robe of Christ's righteousness, implying a state of reconciliation and acceptance; that state, in short, in which the true believer is, as distinguished from the nominal Christian. The man without a wedding garment represents, therefore, one who bears the name of Christian but is no Christian in heart.⁸

In general, this view lays great stress upon the common application of the ancient custom of oriental kings. Kirk supplies an illustration of the application of this custom as he says:

It is probable that the Savior here made allusion to a custom which, in part, still exists in oriental countries; that of the kings providing splendid robes as presents for their guests. Chardin relates a case much in point. He not only states that the king of Persia expends an incredible sum for sumptuous garments as presents to his guests; but also mentions the case of a vizier to whom the king had sent a rich garment. An enemy of the vizier changed the robe for a plain one. This the vizier took as a proof of his sovereign's displeasure, and refused accordingly to appear in the streets in it. His wearing of another robe than that which the king gave him cost him his life...The garment for great wedding occasions was a long white robe, variously and richly ornamented.⁹

Arnot agrees but points out that it isn't absolutely necessary to use the customary application:

But the point is not of primary importance. From what is tacitly assumed in the narrative it may be held as

⁸Francis Bourdilon, The Parables of Our Lord (New York: Carlton and Lanahan, n.d.), p.

⁹Edward N. Kirk, Lectures on the Parables of Our Saviour (New York: R. Craighead, 1857), pp. 460, 461.

demonstrated alternately that either the king gave every guest the necessary garment, or it was such that every guest, even the poorest could on the shortest warning easily obtain it for himself. Two silences become the witnesses out of whose mouths this conclusion is established - the silence of the king as to the grounds of his sentence, and the silence of the culprit when the judgment was pronounced...on both sides it is confessed and silently assumed that the guest had not, but might have had the wedding garment on. If there had been any hardship in the case the king would have vindicated his own procedure, and the condemned guest would not have remained speechless when he heard his doom.¹⁰

All the supporters of this view hold that the Bible teaches that no man shall sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb without having been born again. The man without the wedding garment was cast into Hell because he had not been born again, he had not received the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ for his sin.

It should also be noted that essentially this view contends that both the imputed righteousness of Christ and holiness of character are required to enter heaven. That is, that a man who has the imputed righteousness of Christ will have issuing forth from his life the characteristics of Christian holiness, and that a man who has the elements of Christian holiness will also possess the imputed righteousness of Christ.

Keach says that it is the robe of Jesus Christ for both justification and sanctification.¹¹ Trench points out that the effort to bring in the usual reference to ancient oriental custom by some is probably an attempt to justify the king's action in the

¹⁰William Arnot, The Parables of Our Lord (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1874), p. 272.

¹¹Benjamin Keach, An Exposition of the Parables (London: W. H. Collingridge, 1856). p. 547.

sentence which he passed upon this man. He seems to feel that a man's deliberate rejection of the righteousness of Christ is ground enough for God to cast him into Hell. He also takes issue with those of the holiness view who revolve around a responsibility which was wholly connected with the man himself. He says:

But why could he not have answered that it was unreasonable to expect of him, brought of a sudden and without warning from the highways, to be furnished with such?...that he was too poor to provide, or that no time had been allowed for him to go home and fetch such a garment?¹²

In summation, this view holds that the man was cast out because he had neglected his responsibility to receive the imputed righteousness of Christ which would have issued in holiness of character and Christian life. This is the view which the writer holds.

Other supporters of this view are Buttrick,¹³ and Dover.¹⁴

¹²Richard C. Trench, Notes on the Parables of Our Lord (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., n.d.), p. 183.

¹³George A. Buttrick, The Parables of Jesus (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday Doran and Co., Inc., 1928), p. 230.

¹⁴T. B. Dover, The Hidden Word (New York: James Pratt and Co., 1887), p. 77.

Major Problem: What is the Nature of the
Calling and Choosing of Matthew 22:14?

In the course of investigating this problem, the writer has found that the vast majority of the men who have dealt with the passage have not made any real attempt to handle the problem. However, they have given views upon the text, though wholly inadequate, and so the writer will include their conclusions in this investigation in order that the presentation might represent as fully as possible the whole course of discussion which an interested reader would likely find in his own investigation. With this end in view, the author will present these views first, and then move into those views which actually treat our passage.

¹⁵Willoughby C. Allen, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew, Intertextual Critical Commentary, eds. Charles A. Briggs, Samuel E. Driver, and Alfred R. Meyer, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), p. 236.

Not Part of Scripture View

This view contends that this passage is not really part of the text, but that it was added by some editor from some of the Apocryphal books such as Esradus and Barnabas.¹⁴ or substitution.

This view is wholly inadequate for this passage is to be found in all the important manuscripts, and there is therefore no ground for ruling it out of the text. The only advantage of this view is that it gets rid of the problem. This view is supported by Allen.¹⁵

The robe of habitual righteousness is the only assurance of acceptance. Without this requisite, none will indeed be admitted to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Each claimant will meet the same refusal; to all will the same question be addressed, How comest thou in hither, giving a wedding garment?¹⁷

Others who support this view are Simpson,¹⁸ Makrakis,¹⁹ and Bruce.²⁰

¹⁴G. A. McLaughlin, Commentary on the Gospel According to Matthew (Chicago: Christian Witness Co., 1909), pp. 300-306.

¹⁷Lonsdale, loc. cit.

¹⁸A. B. Simpson, The Gospel of St. Matthew (New York: Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1909).

¹⁹Apostolos Makrakis, "The Gospel According to Matthew," Translation of the Entire New Testament, trans. Albert George (Chicago: Orthodox Christian Educational Society, Pub., 1940).

²⁰A. B. Simpson, The Gospel According to St. Matthew.

¹⁵Willoughby C. Allen, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew, International Critical Commentary, eds. Charles A. Briggs, Samuel R. Driver and Alfred Plummer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), p. 236.

Second Work of Grace View

This view contends that those called are the men who hear the gospel and come to salvation, while the ones chosen are those who get the robe of habitual righteousness, or sanctification, or the life of holiness.

McLaughlin says: "Only those will be chosen who choose holiness. This is the doctrine of election - *elect of God through sanctification.* (1 Pet. 1:1, 2)."¹⁶

Lonsdale says:

The robe of habitual righteousness is the only assurance of acceptance. Without this requisite, many will indeed claim to be admitted to the marriage supper of the lamb. All such claimists will meet the same refusal; to all will the same question be addressed, How camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?¹⁷

Others who support this view are Simpson,¹⁸ Makrakis,¹⁹ Plumptre,²⁰ and Bruce.²¹

¹⁶G. A. McLaughlin, Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew (Chicago: Christian Witness Co., 1909), pp. 303-306.

¹⁷Lonsdale, loc. cit.

¹⁸A. B. Simpson, The Gospel of St. Matthew (New York: The Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1929).

¹⁹Apostolos Makrakis, "The Gospel According to Matthew," Interpretation of the Entire New Testament, trans. Albert George Alexander (Chicago: Orthodox Christian Educational Society, Pub., 1949).

²⁰E. H. Plumptre, The Gospel According to St. Matthew, Ellicott's Commentary On the Whole Bible, ed. Charles J. Ellicott (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. Co., reprinted 1954), VI, 136.

²¹Bruce, loc. cit.

Refutation of the Second Work of Grace View

Doctrinal argument. This view fails to properly interpret the wedding robe in the eleventh verse, and thus makes the second work of grace, or personal holiness, the final requirement for salvation. This is directly contrary to Eph. 2:9 "Not of works, lest any man should boast."

This view also seems to indicate that there is a special classification of those out from among the saved and that these only will go into heaven and that the others will be cast into hell. This is nowhere taught in the word of God, and would again put undue emphasis upon human decisions and work. The word of God tells us that when we have done well we should say "We are but unprofitable servants."

Contextual argument. This view also fails to interpret the passage in the light of the whole parable. The many called in our passage undoubtedly refers to all those called in the whole system of parables including the marriage feast and the wedding garment, but this view seems to limit its interpretation to the parable of the wedding robe alone. It is evident when we realize that the many includes also those who did not respond at all that this could not possibly have to do with a "second work of grace."

Exclusively Contextual View

This view is held in reference to two different groups of individuals. Basically, therefore, there are two separate views which may be placed under this single heading. The first is:

Jews only, or historical view. This view holds that this passage is dealing with the Jews only, and that Christ is not here teaching the calling of the Gentiles to salvation. The primary basis of this view appears to be the usage of similar terminology in the Old Testament, and the supposed intent of the same phrase as our text in Mt. 20:16.

M^sNeile says:

In the Old Testament ΕΚΛΕΚΤΟΣ (ἐκλεκτός); see on 3:17) is used, in singular or plural, of the nation of Israel; but the failure of the nation to fulfill its destiny led to the use of the term, in later Jewish writings, for the "righteous," in contrast with the rest of the nation. -- If then, in Jewish thought, the elect are the righteous or pious, the word involves not only divine pre-determination, but also human responsibility. -- there is no reason to think that Jesus employed it in any other than the Jewish sense.²²

Page quotes Witby: "For many of the Jews are called, but few of them are chosen, that is, believe in the Gospel."²³

Gibson says:

Jesus is looking back over the time since he began to spread the gospel feast and thinking how many have been invited but how few have come? And even among those who have seemed to come there are hypocrites? One he especially would have in mind as he spoke of the man without the wedding garment. Our Lord -- let His sad thoughts rest on Judas, as He

²²Allen H. M^sNeile, The Gospel According to St. Matthew (London: The Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1915), p. 317.

²³Lucius R. Page, A Commentary on the New Testament (Boston: Benjamin B. Mussey, 1849), p. 250.

described that man. Taking all this into consideration, we can well understand how at that time He should conclude His parable with the lamentation: "Many are called, but few are chosen." It did not follow that it was a truth for all time and for eternity. It was true for the time included in the scope of the parable.²⁴

The second view is:

Profession vs. possession view. This view holds that what is contained in our passage is not just a reference to two different national groups, nor a differentiation between two groups within a national group, but a distinction between professors of faith in Christ and true possessors of the imputed righteousness of Christ and the outflowing life of consistent living which proves possession. In the mind of this group the "called" are all who hear the gospel and who make a profession of faith in Christ. The "chosen" are those who will be found, upon inspection by the King of Kings, to be actual possessors of saving faith, having received the wedding robe of Christ's righteousness and showing the consistent life which testifies to this possession. Taylor says:

The invitation is to all, without limitation or restriction, bad or good, old or young, or whatever color or nation. All are called; but they only truly accept, who in so doing, yield themselves up to God to be as He wills, to do as He commands, to live as He ordains.²⁵

Others who support this view are Kirk,²⁶ Alford²⁷ and Ryle.²⁸

²⁴John M. Gibson, The Gospel of St. Matthew, The Expositor's Bible, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll. (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1900), p. 321.

²⁵Taylor, op. cit., p. 162. ²⁶Kirk, loc. cit.

²⁷Henry Alford, The Greek Testament (New ed. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1894), I, 221.

²⁸J. C. Ryle, Ryle's Expository Thoughts on the Gospels (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, n.d.).

Refutation of the Exclusively Contextual View

Refutation of the Jews only, or historical view. While

what is said of the use of the terms in the Old Testament is true, this view is wrong in applying it to our text because of the context in which our passage is found. It is clearly seen that in Mt. 21:33; 22:14 (the parables and wedding robe) Jesus is teaching the replacing of the Jews with the Gentiles in God's place of blessing. Compare Mt. 21:43: "Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Compare also our interpretation of the parable of the wedding feast. Therefore, this cannot be taken in a strictly Jewish sense.

If some would argue that perhaps then this is a contrast between Jews and Gentiles, we reply (a) this is contrary to Biblical teaching in that Jews as well as Gentiles are among the elect. Compare the argument from the Old Testament by the supporters of this view, and (b) once the Gentiles appear at all in the interpretation, then this interpretation of the terms "called" and "chosen" must be in accord with the rest of the teaching of the New Testament on this subject. This we shall see later to include no idea of contrast between two nations, but between two groups irrespective of nationalities.

Refutation of the profession vs. possession view. While

this view is the popular view and it would be well for each of us to apply it to our own hearts as a challenge to be in our lives what we profess with our lips, it is found inadequate upon the

following ground:

This view does not interpret Mt. 22:14 in the light of the teaching of the whole parable. It takes for its interpretation the identification of the man without the wedding garment and sets him up as a representative of a whole class of individuals who fail to realize how close will be the scrutiny of the judge before whom they shall stand. The fact that others had also been called who did not come seems to escape their notice. This is a dangerous method of interpretation. The only safe way to interpret a passage is in the light of the whole context.

Refutation of the contextual view in general. This view is seen to be inadequate on the very ground of its purported strength - the immediate context. It fails to properly interpret our passage in the light of the whole context.

¹⁹ Aron Blum, *The Republic's Common Law* (New York: Nelson, 1978), p. 42.

²⁰ William N. Clarke, *An Outline of Christian Theology* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1892), pp. 383, 394.

Chosen To Special Tasks View

This view holds that all are called to salvation, but few are chosen to special tasks of service for the Lord.

Binney says: "Called -- chosen -- all are called to enter the kingdom of Heaven and labor for Christ, but few are chosen to the highest honors."²⁹

Clarke is more explicit as he says:

The choice, which is a divine act, is a summons to the side of God, to be fitted for His service and to be used therein. The elect of the New Testament, like the elect of the Old, are chosen and called of God that He may use them for the good of other men... Instead of holding that the elect are the only ones who can be saved, it is more accordant with the scriptures to hold that the elect are elect for the sake of the non-elect, that is, they are chosen by God to serve for the saving of those who have not yet been brought to God as they have been, the non-elect in God's own time may become elect.³⁰

...shall do the will of God."

Doctrinal argument. This view wrongly interprets the

of election. While it is true that God did and does

to special tasks (without necessarily highest honors

attached - compare Mt. 11:11: "Verily I say unto you, among

are born to women there hath not risen a greater than

Baptist; notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom

is greater than he."), this is not the true New Testament

word. The New Testament plainly tells us that God

ly elected (or chosen) some to salvation - not service.

²⁹Amos Binney, The People's Commentary (New York: Nelson and Philips, 1878), p. 99.

³⁰William N. Clarke, An Outline of Christian Theology (4th ed.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), pp. 393, 394.

Refutation of Chosen to Special Tasks View

Contextual argument. This view also fails to interpret this passage in the light of its context - in fact, this view cannot in any way fit the context. The author makes only a lame attempt to fit it into our text, but none whatsoever to the context.

This view also wrongly interprets and places undue emphasis upon the limitations of Christian service. This view teaches that only few are chosen of God to special efforts, while the scriptures in their very tenor continually exhort each Christian to yield himself that God might use him abundantly. The scriptures tell us continually that God has a will for our lives which includes a special task suited to our own abilities. Compare Mk. 3:35: "For whosoever shall do the will of God."

Doctrinal argument. This view wrongly interprets the doctrine of election. While it is true that God did and does choose some to special tasks (without necessarily highest honors being attached - compare Mt. 11:11: "Verily I say unto you, among them that are born to women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he."), this is not the true New Testament usage of the word. The New Testament plainly tells us that God has divinely elected (or chosen) some to salvation - not service. The doctrine of election must be interpreted in the light of its usage. What this usage is in the New Testament will be shown shortly.

Clarke sends his own system to destruction when he concludes that while this system solves all the problems, it still does not remove all mystery from life:

It does not explain why one man is actually brought to God for present service and welfare, while another remains thus far uninfluenced by any divine calling. It is still true, as Paul insisted, that God is sovereign in the administration of these gifts and callings, and that the ground of His providential action must be left with Him.³¹

The Catholic Biblical Association agrees, and adds:

The chosen or the elect is a technical expression for the members of Christ's kingdom; cf. Rev. 17:14. This term has nothing to do with the Calvinistic idea of pre-destination. Sometimes it is used entirely synonymous with "the called," and the two terms are distinguished; as here, "the elect" are those who of their own free will cooperate with grace.³²

They then add:

They who choose the divine calling are divinely chosen. They who refuse and reject the divine choice are divinely refused and rejected. The divine choosing and refusing in such cases, is conditioned on inner reality, and hence the chosen are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.³³

This view embodies the Arminian view of election and

Others who also agree and who firmly support this view

³¹ Thomas J. Sanders, St. Matthew, Commentary on the Gospels, ed. by A. H. Redford, 1873, I, 232.

³² Mark Kennedy, The Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Matthew, A Commentary on the New Testament, ed. by E. H. Rieu, New York: The Catholic Biblical Association, 1902, p. 149.

³³ Ibid., p. 395.

Election Based Upon Free Will View

This view holds that as God's election is based upon man's response to His call, the called are all those who hear the gospel, and the chosen are those who by faith respond to the call with a yielding of their lives which issues in a holy walk before God. This view would also lay stress upon profession vs. possession, but its main emphasis is upon human free will to accept or reject the divine call to salvation. Summers quotes Theophylact thusly: "It is God's heart to call, but to become elect or not is ours."³²

The Catholic Biblical Association agrees, and adds:

The chosen or the elect is a technical expression for the members of Christ's kingdom; cf. Rev. 17:14. This term has nothing to do with the Calvinistic idea of pre-destination. Sometimes it is used entirely synonymous with "the called," when the two terms are distinguished, as here, "the elect" are those who of their own free will cooperate with grace."³³

Morison adds:

They who choose the divine choice are divinely chosen. They who refuse and reject the divine choice are divinely refused and rejected. The divine choosing and refusing in such cases, is conditioned on inner reality, and hence the chosen are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.³⁴

This view embodies the Arminian view of election and calling. Others who also agree and who firmly support this view

³²Thomas O. Summers, St. Matthew, Commentary on the Gospels (Nashville: A. H. Redford, 1873), I, 253.

³³Mark Kennedy, The Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew, A Commentary on the New Testament, ed. by E. H. Donze, et al (Kansas City, Mo.: The Catholic Biblical Association, 1942), p. 149.

³⁴James Morison, A Practical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew (9th ed.; London: Hodder, Stoughton and Co., 1895), p.

are Gerhart,³⁵ Olshausen,³⁶ Maclaren,³⁷ Bourdilon,³⁸ Trench,³⁹ Henry,⁴⁰ Jacobus,⁴¹ Quesnel,⁴² Hubbard,⁴³ and Johnson.⁴⁴

³⁵Emanuel V. Gerhart, Institutes of the Christian Religion (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1894), II, 710-712.

³⁶Herman Olshausen, Biblical Commentary on the New Testament, trans. A. C. Kendrick (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman and Co., 1858), II, 173, 174.

³⁷Alexander Maclaren, Matthew 9 - 28, Exposition of Holy Scripture (New York: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.), p. 132.

³⁸Bourdilon, loc. cit. ³⁹Trench, loc. cit., pp. 190, 191.

⁴⁰Matthew Henry, A Commentary on the Holy Bible (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, n.d.), V, 181.

⁴¹Melanethon W. Jacobus, Notes on the Gospels (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1859), p. 224.

⁴²Pasquier Quesnel, The Gospels (Philadelphia: Parry and McMillan, 1855), I, 270.

⁴³George H. Hubbard, The Teachings of Jesus In Parables (Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1907), pp. 153-160.

⁴⁴B. W. Johnson, The People's New Testament (6th ed.; St. Louis: Christian Pub. Co., 1890), I, 121.

Refutation of Election Based Upon Free Will View

Doctrinal argument. This view does not interpret the idea of election in light of the clear teaching of the rest of scripture. This will be shown in the writer's interpretation.

This view puts the stress upon human ability and completely ignores such passages as Rom. 3:11, 12: "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Those who hold this view fail to realize that man is totally depraved and will not seek God on any grounds unless God first calls him, and brings him to Himself. This is also due to a faulty understanding of divine election, and will also be handled in the writer's interpretation.

This would differ with Lenski in making the actual clothing

A General Call Vs. Divine Election View

This view holds that there is a general call which can be rejected in addition to a special, or efficacious call, which always results in the salvation of the one called. This view holds that the call found in our text is the general call and that "the chosen" are actually the elect - those who have been divinely chosen or elect of God since before the foundation of the world.

Lenski may well speak for many who support this view when he says:

Both κλητοί and ἐκλεκτοί are verbals and are equal to passive participles, the agent back of the passive idea being God: "called by God," "elected by God." Moreover, in both verbals the entire action is included, that of God's calling and that of God's electing. This, too, is plain; that here the calling (καλεῖν) signifies the invitation of grace which may be accepted by means of grace it contains, but which, in spite of that grace, may be rejected by man's vicious perversity. Hence "many" are called ones, and far fewer are elected ones. As so often, the absence of the articles intends to stress the quality of the nouns. To be sure, the parable shows us who the elect are, namely those who accept the call and the garment of Christ's righteousness; and thus also who the non-elect are, all those who obdurately reject the call either in violence, or by indifference, or by spurning Christ's righteousness...In the very word ἐκλεκτοί we have the whole divine act of election, even as we cannot have the elect without their election...The essential point in this comprehensive act is the one picture in vs. 11: the king's looking for the wedding garment, Christ's righteousness embraced by faith. The whole act culminates in this point. Noting this culmination, we may also say that the divine election is that specific part of God's eternal grace which accepts the saints whom He has succeeded in clothing in Christ's righteousness as His own forever in eternal glory.⁴⁵

Some would differ with Lenski in making the actual clothing

⁴⁵R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel (Columbus, O.: The Wartburg Press, 1943), p. 859.

of a saint in Christ's righteousness the embodiment of election, for they see election as a divine decree, and efficacious calling the work of clothing the saint in Christ's righteousness. These would include Broadus,⁴⁶ Spurgeon,⁴⁷ Robertson,⁴⁸ Hodge,⁴⁹ Strong⁵⁰ and McClain.⁵¹

This is the view that the writer holds and will seek to defend in the writer's interpretation.

⁴⁶John A. Broadus, Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew; An American Commentary on the New Testament, ed. Alvah Hovey (Philadelphia: American Baptist Pub. Society, n.d.), p. 450.

⁴⁷C. H. Spurgeon, The Gospel of the Kingdom (London: Dassmore and Alabaster, 1893), pp. 194, 195.

⁴⁸Archibald Thomas Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1930), I, 175.

⁴⁹Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology (New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co., 1872), II, 675 - 707.

⁵⁰Augustus H. Strong, Systematic Theology (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., reprinted 1954), p. 782.

⁵¹Alva J. McClain, Christian Salvation (Unpublished notes for Theology Class at Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, Ind., n.d.). pp. 22-31. (Mimeographed).

Minor Problem: What is the Interpretation
of the Wedding Robe in Matthew 22:11?

The parable of the wedding garment shows this man as having been one of those who responded to the general call of both good and bad as found in verse ten. If we believe that the call was the offer of the gospel, or salvation through Jesus Christ, then for him to have responded to that call must have meant that he made a decision - or in the terminology of today, he went forward to register his decision for Jesus Christ. Then it is seen that he presents himself as ready for the marriage feast of the Lamb. As no illustration can walk on all fours it is of no consequence that we understand that no man shall appear at the marriage supper of the Lamb without having received Jesus Christ actually and fully as Lord and Savior in his life. To the teaching of the parable this is not necessary at this point and as we shall see later it is taken care of at the conclusion of the parable when he is cast out. However, we may, as Bourdilon, take this as a reference to their "having Gospel Light; the belonging outwardly to the church of Christ and taking part in religious ordinances."¹ It is interesting to note that evidently the other guests at this feast did not notice this man's lack of the wedding

¹Bourdilon, op. cit., p.

garment which was so obvious to the king. You and I cannot tell which are the wheat and which are the tares in the church of Jesus Christ today, but He knows, the word of God tells us, "For man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." (1 Sam. 16:7b). While he was fooling others, he could not fool the Lord. The word of God tells us again "keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." (Prov. 4:23). Therefore, the true picture here is the picture of a man who had made a decision for Jesus Christ and has outwardly to the appearance of other human beings, lived a nominal Christian life, but whose life has neither had the imputed righteousness of Christ in it nor the issue of a truly holy life which would proceed from the imputed righteousness of Christ. The man had been freely offered the robe by the king and had willfully rejected it. Therefore, as one who had sought to arrive at the feast in his own garments of self righteousness and had rejected the offered garment of the king, he was justly condemned to a sinner's hell. No righteousness of any man no matter how good and noble can be compared to the righteousness (imputed) and character of the regenerate man. ("All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Is. 64:6b). Therefore, this man was not fooling the King of righteousness who did not find in him the holy and righteous character of a regenerate man nor that he had the heart condition of one who had received the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

It is obvious that this man is a representative of a class of individuals, and as to why only one man is singled out to represent this class Trench offers this suggestion:

Why this many cast out should be represented as a single person, has been explained in different ways. Townson instances it as an example of what he happily calls "lenity of supposition," which marks our Lord's parable; just as in another, one servant only fails to turn his Lord's money to account. (Mt. 25:28; Lk. 19:20). Gerhard ingeniously suggests that if many had been thrust out from the marriage, the nuptial festivities might appear to have been disturbed. But more valuable is another suggestion which he offers, namely that the matter is thus brought home to the conscience of every man; "So diligent and exact will be the scrutiny, that not so much as one in all that great multitude of men shall on the last day escape the piercing eyes of the judge."²

However, while the writer is sure that this man represents a class of individuals, he believes that the term "many" in our passage applies to all who had been called.

The writer concludes that the wedding robe represents the imputed righteousness of Christ which will issue in Christian character. While it is true that no man can have true Christian character without the imputed righteousness of Christ, it is also true that "faith without works is dead." (Jas. 2:20^b).

²Trench, op. cit., p. 186.

Major Problem: What is the Nature of the
Calling and Choosing of Matthew 22:14?

The view which the writer believes to be correct, and which he will now seek to defend is: A General Call Vs. Divine Election. The basis upon which this view is supported is: doctrinal, contextual and linguistic.

Doctrinal argument. The Biblical doctrine of election as held by the author may be defined as: "That God, before the foundation of the world, chose all believers to salvation in Christ with all its attendant blessings and obligations."³ This view makes election an eternal decree of God issued in eternity, passed "before the foundation of the world." Therefore, election, or choosing, in our passage is not based upon the reaction of the individuals involved, but rather, the reaction in each case reveals the relation of each to this eternal decree. Those who respond to the call and whose lives reveal an attendant holy character show that they are of the elect, and those who respond but do not have an attendant holiness of life, or who despise or reject the call, show that they are of the non-elect. For a general discussion of the Biblical doctrine of election and various views of its interpretation, as well as the writer's conclusions, see Appendix A.

The interminable theological argument that has waged with unabated fury is: How do we harmonize the Bible passages which seem to teach that God's invitation to salvation is to all,

³McClain, op. cit., p. 22.

without limitation, with those passages, especially in Paul, which seem to indicate that God only calls those whom He has elected to salvation? This harmonization must include also a harmonization with our own particular doctrine, be it Calvinistic, Arminian or some other. This is the problem of a universal call as opposed to a limited, or special call.

The writer believes that both extremes are right, within limitations, and that both are wrong because they are extremes which fail to grasp the main stream of Biblical evidence. The Bible teaches not just one call of God to sinners to come to salvation, but two. One the theologians call the "general" or "external" call, and the other the "special" or "efficacious" call. The two may not be confused, for they are to two specific groups. Some theologians call these two "common" and "efficacious" grace, as revealed in the ministry of the Spirit in salvation.

The "general" or "external" call is made by God through His word and His faithful ministers to those who hear the gospel irrespective of their being part of the elect or the non-elect. This is a call that, though genuine, cannot be responded to by sinful men because of the perversity of their own natures, for which they, not God, are personally responsible and accountable. This call makes known the way of salvation to sinful men who have no capacity to receive it with understanding.⁴

A few of the passages which teach this general call are:
 "God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come

⁴John F. Walvoord, The Holy Spirit (3rd ed.; Findlay, O.: Dunham Pub. Co., 1958), p. 109.

unto the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. 2:3a, 4); "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." (Ac. 17:30); "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Mt. 11:28); "Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst let him come unto me, and drink." (Jno. 5:37b); "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Is. 55:1).

This is the call that some appear to have answered, but which is shown sooner or later to be nothing more than a case of mere profession. At times, the individual may exhibit all the marks of a true and faithful disciple, and yet when all is made plain they will be found to be only professors, and not possessors of salvation.

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Mt. 7:22, 23).

God is a holy and a just and a sovereign God, and if the only call He made to man was this "external" or "general" call which could not be received and answered by one single man in all the world, He would still be perfectly righteous in sending every last man to Hell. He owes no man anything! The only reason He saves any is because He chooses to do so.

To those whom He chooses to save He extends an "efficacious" or "special" call which always issues in the salvation of the individual called. "Whom He foreordained, them He also called:

and whom He called, them He also justified." (Rom. 8:30); "For the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of." (Rom. 11:29). "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. 1:23, 24); "Who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal." (2 Tim. 1:9).

Some, notably the strong Calvinist who holds to the TULIP (i.e. the five points of Calvinism), call this "irresistable grace," however, while this call:

...infallibly accomplishes its purpose of bringing the sinner to the acceptance of salvation...we reject the term "irresistable," as implying a coercion and compulsion which is foreign to the nature of God's working in the soul...God's saving grace and effectual calling are irresistable, not in the sense that they are never resisted, but in the sense that they are never successfully resisted.⁵

The way that God accomplishes this end is to open the understanding of the one called and instruct him so that he is willing to do God's will and accept salvation. "And a certain woman named Lydia...which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." (Ac. 16:14); "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13). Since it is God who opens the understanding and who instructs the one called, the call is certain as to its final outcome: "Faithful is

⁵Strong, op. cit., pp. 792, 793.

he that calleth you, who also will do it." (1 Th. 5:24).

For a general discussion of the doctrine of calling and the various views of it, as well as the conclusions in full, see Appendix B.

Therefore, the writer concludes that what we have in this passage in Mt. 22:14 is a general call to all who were invited, to which some responded, but only those out of the ones who responded who were elect of God to salvation before the foundation of the world really heard the call and responded because to them God chose to extend His efficacious grace which alone could bring them to Christ.

Contextual argument. The conclusion arrived at in the doctrinal argument is supported by (but not originated by) the context. In a glance through Mt. 22:1-13 we see that several groups of individuals were called to the wedding feast. Verse three tells of the call extended to those who had been bidden, that is, the Jews who had been bidden to prepare for the coming of the kingdom of God by the Old Testament prophets. Verse four tells of a renewed call to this same group, that is, the Jewish people. Verses nine and ten tell of a call extended to all found in the highways, both good and bad, that is, both Jews and Gentiles, as many as could be preached to. This would indeed comprise a group large enough to be simply designated "many."

However, verse three says that the first group would not come, and verses five and six say that upon being again invited the same group makes light of the invitation and makes excuses, and some even killed the messengers sent out to invite them in.

Verse ten says that the servants who went out into the highways gathered together as many as they found and brought them in. This verse ten applies, by opinion of the vast majority of commentators, to the turning to the Gentiles as shown in Acts 10. From a perusal of the following chapters of Acts and from the history of the church down to this day, we conclude that this does not intend to prove that all that they met came to the feast. Surely, if the other group could reject the call and make light of it, so could this group. We are not told of any coercion being used upon them to get them to come. Some think that they see coercion in Luke 14 where a similar call is given, but, while this passage says to compel them to come, very few writers think that the two feasts of Luke 14 and Matthew 22 are the same. Even so, the "compel" of Lk. 14:23 implies not military force, but urgent inviting. Thus, even if one would insist that the two feasts are the same, and that the same compelling is intended in both, it is evident that only a portion, and experience would limit it to a very small portion, of those thus called came.

In addition, verse eleven tells of a man, who undoubtedly stands for a whole class of individuals, who though he responded to the call appeared without the necessary garment which he could have possessed, and was expected to possess. As a result he too is excluded along with those who had not responded to the call. This man evidently professed faith in Christ, but did not really possess salvation.

The result is that only a very few of the many called actually partook of the feast.

A genuine invitation was extended, but only a small portion of those invited to receive Christ and His newness of life responded and some of these presumed to come on their own terms, without truly receiving Christ and the newness of life as symbolized by the wedding robe. All those who rejected or despised the invitation, as well as those who responded but who were found without the imputed righteousness of Christ and its issue of regenerate life, are barred from the kingdom of God. Only those whom God has succeeded in clothing in the righteousness of His son are allowed to sit down to the feast in the kingdom of God.

Linguistic argument. There are no grammatical problems involved in this passage. The only problem encountered is the confusion of application of κλητός and ἐκλεκτός in their usage in the New Testament. This confusion centers around a failure to note a difference between Paul's use of the terms and their use in the gospels. The confusion has been so complete that it appears as if some see an equation of the terms in Paul's epistles. This is not the case, however, as we shall see.

First, as to translation of the two words in the King James Version:⁶ (1) κλητός is used eleven times (Mt. 20:16; 22:14; Rom. 1:1, 6, 7; 8:28; 1 Cor. 1:1, 2, 24; Jude 1; Rev. 17:14) and every time it is translated "called." (2) ἐκλεκτός is used twenty-three times (Mt. 20:16; 22:14; 24:22, 24, 31; Mk. 13:20, 22, 27; Lk. 18:7; 23:35; Rom. 8:33; 16:13; Col. 3:12; 1 Tim. 5:21; 2 Tim. 2:10; Tit. 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:2; 2:4, 6, 9; 2 Jno. 1, 13;

⁶George U. Wigram, The Englishman's Greek Concordance (6th ed.; London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1870), pp. 425, 228.

Rev. 17:14) and is translated "chosen" seven times (as in our text), and "elect" sixteen times.

Second, as to possible translations assigned by the lexicons: (1) καλετός can be translated (a) invited, welcome, (b) called out, chosen, (c) summoned to court; according to Liddell and Scott;⁷ and called, invited in Mt. 20:16; 22:14 to the kingdom of Heaven and its privileges; and in the other New Testament usages emphatically of those who have obeyed this call, the called, that is saints, Christians, according to Robinson,⁸ and (a) invited (by God in the proclamation of the gospel) to obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of God through Christ - Rom. 8:28; 1 Cor. 1:24; Jude 1, 2, (b) called to the discharge of some office;" according to Thayer.⁹ (2) ἐκλεκτός can be translated:

(a) Generally select, chosen; e.g. of persons, 1 Pet. 2:9... of things, select, choice; (b) with the idea of approval, favor, delight, compare in ἐκλέγω No. 2; chosen, i.q. cherished, beloved; Lk. 23:35; Rom. 16:13 - specially οἱ ἐκλεκτοί, the elect, those chosen of God unto salvation, or as members of the kingdom of Heaven, and who therefore enjoy His favour and lead a holy life in communion with Him, i.q. saints, Christians...; absolutely Mt. 20:16; 22:14; 24:22, 24; Rev. 17:14;

according to Robinson;¹⁰ and 1. picked out, select; "2. choice,

⁷Henry G. Liddell and Robert S. Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, eds. Henry S. Jones and Roderick McKenzie (New ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), I, 960.

⁸Edward Robinson, A Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament (New ed.; New York: Harper and Bros., 1868), p. 402.

⁹Joseph H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Corrected ed.; New York: American Book Co., 1889), p. 350.

¹⁰Robinson, op. cit., p. 231.

pure; 3. Chosen of God, elect," according to Liddell and Scott;¹¹ and "picked out, chosen, chosen by God, and to obtain salvation through Christ," according to Thayer.¹²

On the one hand, from these considerations we may deduce that there is no disagreement over the meaning of ἐκλεκτός. It always refers to a special individual or group chosen or selected out of a larger group. There is no indication whatsoever of reflexive action as "chosen by one's own choice," etc. It plainly indicates a "choosing" or "selecting" by someone other than the person or persons involved, and we must take it to mean by God.

On the other hand, however, while the translation of κλητός in the King James indicates no difference when considered apart from the immediate context, the word being translated the same every time, the lexicons indicate a distinct difference of usage in the gospels as against the epistles and revelation. One indicates an invitation, or a call to the kingdom of Heaven, and the other speaks of those who have obeyed this invitation or call.

A third line of evidence of the usage of these words is found in the word studies and critical commentaries.

Robertson, in writing on Mt. 22:14 says, "There is a distinction between the called and the chosen -- called out from the called."¹³ In dealing with Rev. 17:14, he says, "For κλητός and ἐκλεκτός see Mt. 22:14 (contrasted)."¹⁴

¹¹Liddell and Scott, op. cit., I, 512.

¹²Thayer, op. cit., p. 197.

¹³Robertson, op. cit., I, 175

¹⁴Ibid., VI, 434.

Alford, in writing on Rom. 8:28 says:

To those who are called (not only invited, but effectively called) according to His purpose...the calling here and elsewhere spoken of by the apostle (Compare esp. 9:11) is the working, in men, of "the everlasting purpose of God whereby before the foundations of the world were laid, He hath decreed by His counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom He hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation." Art. X of the Church of England...on the one hand, scripture bears constant testimony to the fact that all believers are chosen and called by God, - their whole spiritual life in its origin, progress and completion, being from Him; - while on the other hand its testimony is no less precise that He willeth all to be saved, and that none shall perish except by willful rejection of the truth. So that, on the one side, God's sovereignty, on the other, man's free will, - is plainly declared to us.¹⁵

He goes on to say that for this reason he makes it a practice to translate each passage as found - no matter which side it presents. He also says, in writing on Rev. 17:14; "called and chosen (all the called are not chosen, Mt. 20:11; 22:14; but all that are chosen are first called, (2 Pet. 1:10) and faithful."¹⁶

Denney says, in writing on Rom. 1:1: "In the New Testament it is always God who calls."¹⁷ And on Rom. 1:6: "calling" in Paul always includes obedience as well as hearing. It is effectual calling, the καλητοί being those who have accepted the divine invitation."¹⁸ Note here that he says that Paul is speaking of those who have already accepted the divine invitation - Paul is not

¹⁵Henry Alford, The Greek Testament (7th ed.; London Rivingtons, 1877), II, 398.

¹⁶Alford, op. cit., IV, 712.

¹⁷James Denney, St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, The Expositor's Greek Testament ed. W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., n.d.), II, 585.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 587.

giving an invitation, or call to salvation. Thus he adds, in writing on Rom. 8:28: "calling" in Paul never means "invitation"; it is always "effectual calling".¹⁹

Findlay, writing on 1 Cor. 1:1, makes his definition clearer when he says: "The κλητοί are in Paul identified with the ἐκλεκτοί (2 compare; Rom. 8:29f), not distinguished as in Mt. 22:16."²⁰ We shall deal with the matter of identifying the two shortly, but for now, note that he too sees a differentiation between the usage of κλητοί in the gospels and in Paul.

Thus it is concluded that the "called" and the "chosen" in our passage do not refer to the exact same group of individuals, but rather, as in the context of the verse itself, the two groups are contrasted.

It would be good, however, to show a little more clearly that Paul does not equate "calling" and "election" as some have thought that Findlay implies.²¹ It would be impossible for Paul to equate the two terms, for "election" is a divine decree issued in eternity past by God before the foundation of the world, while "calling" is a divine work accomplished in history, not being consummated until the individual involved had been born and had entered the stream of human history. While it is true that God who knows the end from the beginning sees the calling of every one

¹⁹Ibid., p. 652.

²⁰G. G. Findlay, St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, The Expositor's Greek Testament, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., n.d.), II, 757, 758.

²¹Ibid.

of the elect who will ever be saved as a finished work, it is utterly wrong to equate the two terms as used by Paul. "Calling" is not "election," and "election" is not "calling?" The terms are synonymous or "identical" (as per Findlay as quoted above) in Paul only in that the same group is under consideration, and this is not to say that therefore Paul is saying that only the elect are called of God, for all our other evidence has shown that there is a group of individuals who receive the "general call" of God, but who do not receive the "effectual call" of God which alone can bring a man to Christ. Paul is only speaking of the one group, those effectually called; therefore the elect.

Perhaps, in the interest of completeness, one more Greek term should be dealt with. This is the word πολλοί, many. Some have felt that this word has held the key to the apparent differentiation in Mt. 22:14 between κλητοί and ἐκλεκτοί, but a study of its use in the New Testament leaves little ground for such thinking. The word is used over 300 times in the New Testament, and is translated variously many, much, great, plenteous, oft, long, straitly, far spent, far passed, sore, a great deal, greatly, common, great age, oftentimes, altogether, great while and abundant.²² From this it is obvious that the meaning of a word with so many possible translations must rely upon its immediate context. Bruce in the Expositor's Greek Testament says on Mt. 22:14:

πολλοί γάρ: If as γάρ might suggest, the concluding aphorism referred exclusively to the fate of the unrobed guest, we should be obliged to conclude that the story did not supply a good illustration of its truth, only one out of many guests

²²Wigram, op. cit., pp. 643-645.

called being rejected. But the gnome really expresses the didactic drift of the whole parable. From first to last many were called, but comparatively few took part in the feast, either from lack of will to be there, or from coming thither irreverently.²³

Therefore, we conclude that the word προσλῶ supports our conclusion on the basis of contextual evidence.

The writer therefore concludes on the basis of doctrinal, contextual and linguistic arguments that the nature of the "called" and the "chosen" in Mt. 22:14 indicates a "general," or "external" call of God to those who hear the gospel - which cannot be accepted because of man's perverse nature and because of the lack of God's "special" or "efficacious" call which always results in the sinner coming to Christ, and a group out of those to whom the "general call" was given who prove, because they received God's "special call" as well and received the imputed righteousness of Christ which issues in a life of holiness, that they are of the "elect" - that group of individuals chosen by a sovereign God before the foundation of the world to salvation with all its blessings and obligations.

²³Alexander B. Bruce, Synoptic Gospels, The Expositor's Greek Testament, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., n.d.), I, 272, 273.

ENGLISH PARAPHRASE

For all who hear the gospel are called by the general call of God which none of them can respond to because of their perverse nature unless they also receive the efficacious call of God which always results in the individual receiving the imputed righteousness of Christ which produces holy living, but few receive this efficacious call of God and by the life that it produces reveal that they are of those who were elect, or chosen, to salvation by a sovereign God before the foundation of the world.

APPENDIX

Appendix A

A General Summary Of The Doctrine Of Election

It is not the writer's intent to try to give a comprehensive discussion of the Biblical doctrine of election - that doctrine about which there is more written and least agreement of all of the doctrines of the Bible. It is not within the scope of this monograph to minutely examine the doctrine of election, but it is within its scope to set forth the various views of this doctrine and to support the view which the writer accepts, and which he has used in the interpretation of the critical passage.

We shall limit ourselves in this section to the doctrine of election, and will not stray into other fields such as predestination, limited atonement, etc. The various views of election will be presented and refuted or supported.

The subjective view. This view holds that God elects all men to salvation, either in this life or after death. This view includes both Calvinism and restorationism. Strong says:

Schleiermacher held that decree logically preceeds foreknowledge, and that election is individual, not national. But he made election to include all men, the only difference between them being that of earlier or of later conversion...Murray, in Hastings' Bible Dictionary, seems to take this view.¹

¹Strong, op. cit., p. 783.

Boettner calls this view "universalism."²

This view is totally inadequate in that the Bible nowhere teaches restorationism, the key to the view.

Lutheran view. This view holds that the believer is the non-resistant subject of common grace, holding that original grace preceded original sin. This view places the stress on human agency, as opposed to divine purpose. This is according to Strong.³

In other words, this view would hold that God, before man fell into sin, elected all to salvation by the gift of original grace and that those who do not resist the working of this grace in their lives will be saved.

This view is contrary to such scripture as: "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8);

And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (Eph. 2:1-3).

"I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth which things I also did..." (Ac. 26:9, 10a). Paul resisted to his last ounce of strength, and then God conquered him. Compare Ac. 9:4, 5; "And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest

²Lorraine Boettner, The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination (6th ed.; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1948), p. 47.

³Strong, loc. cit.

thou me? and he said, who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Romans deals the death stroke to the idea that God elects all to salvation when it says:

Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared to glory. (Rom. 9:21-23).

Pelagian view. This view denies total depravity and says that each man born is in the same position that Adam was before he was born - without imputed sin or depraved nature, and just as able to obey God as Adam was. The only effect of Adam's sin upon the race was to set an evil example. Corruption of human nature consists of a habit of sinning brought about by persistent transgression of known law. This estimation of the Pelagian view is according to Strong,⁴ who adds, "Men can be saved by the law as well as by the gospel; and some have actually obeyed God perfectly, and have thus been saved."⁵ There is no election, except individual decision to be good and thus be saved, according to the Pelagians.

This view is characterized by McClain as, "I came by myself."⁶ This view is totally devoid of scriptural support. In fact it is directly contradictory to plain scriptural statements as:

They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable: there is none that doeth good, no, not one...therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin...therefore

⁴Ibid., p. 597.

⁵Ibid.

⁶McClain, op. cit., p. 29.

we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. (Rom. 3:12, 20, 28).

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8, 9).

Semi-pelagian view. This view differs from the Pelagian view in that it recognizes the need for divine grace and therefore makes room in its system for universal sufficient grace. That is, sufficient grace is given to all men to believe, and if the man has first started to come to God, when he is given this sufficient grace, he has the potential to be saved. However, while sufficient, this grace is not always successful in bringing a man to salvation.⁷ This again is a matter of individual choice being the basis of election.

McClain characterizes this view thusly: "I started to come and God helped me."⁸

This view is also directly contradictory to scripture passages such as: "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (Jno. 6:44a); "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." (Jno. 15:16a); "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (Ac. 13:48b).

These passages, along with those given above under the Pelagian view show conclusively that God does have an elect group of people and that their salvation is wholly independent of any good work that they might do - yes, they cannot even start toward God until He first "draws" them.

⁷Walvoord, op. cit., p. 126.

⁸McClain, loc. cit.

Arminian view. This view, while closely allied with Pelagianism, has included in its system a definite election based upon human free agency. This election is based upon the foreknowledge of God, and consists in God electing to salvation those whom He foresees will accept His offer of salvation. Strong says:

The Arminian conception is that God appointed men to salvation just as He has appointed them to condemnation, in view of their dispositions and acts. As justification is in view of present faith, so the Arminian regards election as taking place in view of future faith. Arminianism must reject the doctrine of regeneration as well as that of election, and must in both cases make the act of man precede the act of God.⁹

McClain characterizes this view as: "God started to bring me and I cooperated."¹⁰

If, in the light of this view, election is based upon God's foreknowledge of how individuals would react to His offer of salvation, then salvation becomes something based upon the good work of an individual in responding to God's call. Thus a man will appear in Heaven and will say to God: "I got to Heaven because I chose to accept salvation."

But this is contrary to scripture which plainly teaches that salvation is solely based upon the goodness and mercy of God irrespective of human good works. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us." (Tit. 3:5a); "But as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (Jno. 1:12, 13); "For by

⁹Strong, op. cit., p. 783. ¹⁰McClain, loc. cit.

grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8,

One of the crucial points of this view is the idea that faith is something which comes from within the individual and is not a gift of God. If God is the source of saving faith, and we affirm that this is so, then the gift of this saving faith must be according to God's sovereign will, or else God must give this saving faith to all men, which idea the Arminian certainly will not support, for he is always talking of the man who lacks the faith to "pray through." If the gift of saving faith is according to God's sovereign will, then we again are back to divine election of those to whom He wills to give saving faith. In this the Bible agrees: "No man can come unto me, except it be given him of the Father." (Jno. 6:35); "God...giving them the Holy Spirit...cleansing their hearts by faith." (Ac. 15:8, 9).

Strong says: the discussion of election based upon God's

1 Cor. 12:3, "No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit," but calling Jesus "Lord" is an essential part of faith - faith therefore is the work of the Holy Spirit; Tit. 1:1, "The faith of God's elect," - election is not in consequence of faith, but faith is in consequence of election (Ellicott). If they get their faith of themselves, then salvation is not due to grace. If God gave the faith, then it was in His purpose, and this is election.¹¹

The other crucial point of this view is that election is based upon God's foreknowledge. This is founded upon Rom. 8:29 which says, "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate..." The whole thing hinges upon the Arminian's saying that this "foreknowledge" is "foresight." If the Arminian can prove his point,

¹¹Strong, op. cit., p. 782.

then he would take our argument about faith being given by election and say that this simply proves that to the ones whom God foreknew would believe He gave saving faith. But, as Strong quotes Wardlaw, Systematic Theology, and points out: "Election and salvation on the ground of works forseen are not different in principle from election and salvation on the ground of works performed."¹² And this is contrary to express scriptural statements as we have shown.

That Rom. 8:29 is not teaching prescience is affirmed by Shedd in his commentary on Romans as quoted by Strong: "Foreknew, in the Hebraistic use, is more than simple prescience, and something more also than simply *to fix the eye upon,* or to *select.* It is this latter, but with the additional notion of a benignant and kindly feeling toward the object."¹³ This is the view taken by Kennedy in a monograph on Rom. 8:29,¹⁴ and if further discussion is desired consult this work.

In concluding the discussion of election based upon God's foreknowledge of who would react favorably to the gospel invitation we cite Alexander, Theories of the Will, 87, 88 as quoted by Strong:

If Paul is here advocating indeterminism, it is strange that in Chapter 9 he should be at pains to answer objections to determinism. The apostle's protest in Chapter 9 is not against predestination and determination, but against the man who regards such a theory as impugning the righteousness of God.¹⁵

Calvinistic view. This view holds that "election is that

¹²Ibid., p. 784. ¹³Ibid., p. 780.

¹⁴Lester W. Kennedy, "Correct Meaning of the Word "Foreknow," Romans 8:29." (Unpublished Critical Monograph, Grace Theological Seminary, 1952).

¹⁵Strong, op. cit., p. 780.

eternal act of God, by which in His sovereign pleasure, and on account of no foreseen merit in them, He chooses certain out of the number of sinful men to be the recipients of the special grace of His Spirit, and so to be made voluntary partakers of Christ's salvation."¹⁶

The fact of God's sovereign pleasure in choosing between individuals is clearly taught in the Bible. In Lk. 4:25-27 Christ defends the right of a sovereign God in choosing to show favor to some in a material and physical way and not to others. One widow only was fed, and one leper only was cleansed.

Paul answers the Jewish objector to divine sovereignty in Rom. 9:6-13 by pointing out that if divine favor has to be shown by God because of Abrahamic lineage then all the children of Ishmael are in line as God's chosen people also. He reminds the Jew that as God sovereignly chose Isaac over Ishmael, just so He can and does choose between individual Jews. Then, as if this is not enough, he uses the illustration of God's choosing between Jacob and Esau.

(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth;) It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated. (Rom. 9:11-13).

Jesus also asserts that divine election rests upon divine sovereignty in Mt. 20:1-16 in the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, and the complaint of the first hired labourers that the ones hired last should not receive the same amount as they did for

¹⁶Ibid., p. 779.

labouring all day. He argues that it is his privilege to do as he wills: "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" (Mt. 20:15a).

Election is of God's grace "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace." (Rom. 11:5, 6a).

However, this election does not preclude a universal offer of salvation. McClain says: "The Bible never brings forth election until the gospel has been offered to all, and men have decided for or against it."¹⁷

Also, this election does not automatically condemn most individuals to Hell. God only knows how many He has chosen to save. We are not saying that God limited the number whom He would save when He sovereignly elected some for He might conceivably have chosen to save far in the majority of men (the scripture seems to indicate that most men will choose to go to Hell.)

In addition, this doctrine does not do away with the responsibility of each person to receive Christ as Savior. While Paul argues strongly for divine sovereignty in Romans 9, in Romans 10 he sets forth human responsibility. In Chapter 9 he is showing why some were saved, and in Chapter 10 he is showing why the others were not. Each man who finally spends eternity in Hell does so not because God did not elect him to salvation, but because of his sin. God did not have to save any - all should have gone to Hell on the basis of their own sin, and those whom God has not chosen

¹⁷McClain, op. cit., p. 26.

will still go there on their own responsibility. The external or general call is the basis of this responsibility and will be discussed in the next section.

And so we conclude with McClain: "That God, before the foundation of the world, chose all believers to salvation in Christ with all its attendant blessings and obligations."¹⁸

The universal view. This view holds that God calls all men to salvation in Christ Jesus. This is based upon such passages as "For God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Pet. 3:9); "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Rom. 10:13).

This view also takes the Arminian view that the response to the call is based upon free will and agency to accept it or reject it. Thomas says:

However potent may be the agency of the Holy Spirit through the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart, God does not violate responsibility. Faith is the positive act of the individual will. Neither belief nor unbelief is the effect of divine operation. Belief is the self-determined reception and appropriation of Christ, a reception however that presupposes the personal and saving power of the gospel.¹⁹

As we have shown in treating with the Arminian view of election, even the faith to believe is sovereignly given to individual men. Salvation is wholly apart from works, including the work of the will in deciding to receive Christ. That this view in its attempt to give a call which is universal is wrong, is shown by

¹⁸Ibid., p. 22.

Appendix B

A General Summary Of The Doctrine Of Calling

As has been said regarding election, it is not the writer's intent nor within the scope of this critical monograph to minutely examine the Biblical doctrine of calling. Rather, the various views will be presented in summary form and either rejected or supported.

The universal view. This view holds that God calls all men to salvation in Christ Jesus. This is based upon such passages as: "The Lord is...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Pet. 3:9); "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Rom. 10:13).

This view also takes the Arminian view that the response to this call is based upon free will and agency to accept it or reject it. Gerhart says:

However potent may be the agency of the Holy Spirit through the word of the Holy Spirit upon the heart, God does not violate personality. Faith is the positive act of the individual will. Neither belief nor unbelief is the effect of divine causation. Belief is the self-determined reception and appropriation of Christ, a reception however that presupposes the presence and saving power of the gospel.¹⁹

As we have shown in treating with the Arminian view of election even the faith to believe is sovereignly given to individual men and salvation is wholly apart from works, including the work of making the decision to receive Christ. That this view in its holding to one call which is universal is wrong, is shown by

¹⁹Gerhart, op. cit., II, 712.

passages which speak of a special and select call of God to sinful men to come to Christ. "But we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling block, and unto Gentiles foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. 1:23, 24); "For behold your calling, brethren, that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." (1 Cor. 1:26).

The Calvinistic view. This view holds that there are two calls to unsaved men. One, a general, or external call to all who hear the gospel, and the other a special, or efficacious call to the elect to bring them to salvation.

Calvin says:

There are two kinds of calling. For there is a universal call, by which God, in the external preaching of the word, invites all, indiscriminately, to come to Him, even those to whom He intends it as a savour of death, and an occasion of heavier condemnation. There is also a special call, with which he...favors only believers, when, by the inward illumination of His Spirit, He causes the word preached to sink into their hearts.²⁰

This is the view that the author holds.

The general, or external call which God extends to all men who hear the gospel is a call which cannot be answered. Hence the special or efficacious call. Some would perhaps doubt the sincerity of a call which could not be answered. To this we reply that the Bible teaches that there is a call which invites all who hear to come to repentance but which can be resisted and rejected. (Surely the Arminians believe and teach this). Compare Mt. 22:1-7 and the

²⁰John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. John Allen (8th ed. rev.; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., reprinted 1949), II, 227.

refusal of those bidden to come to the wedding feast and who are destroyed for not doing so. The fact that they are punished proves that it was a genuine offer and not a sham. (The extreme Calvinist believes, however, that Christ only died for the elect; therefore this is not a genuine call to him in that atonement was only made for the elect. Therefore, we must conclude that the extreme Calvinist holds this call to be only a perfunctory offer of God - a sham).

Also, if we are to object to this general, or external call on the grounds that it cannot be responded to and is therefore insincere, we point to the giving of the law and the offer of the kingdom. Most consistent scholars believe from the plain statements of scripture that these were genuinely given and offered of God.

In respect to the giving of the law, God said: "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord." (Lev. 18:5). We are not saying that the law was ever intended to be able to save a man nor that God said it could, but only that God commanded them to keep it when He knew that they could not. Only one man ever kept the law, and that was Christ. The reason they could not keep the law? The same reason no man can respond to the external or general call: the perverse, corrupt nature of man, not God's failure.

In respect to the offer of the kingdom, while it is true that there is no one place in the gospels where Christ offered the kingdom to the Jews in just so many words, He did offer Himself as the Christ, the king. Matthew 21 records His triumphal entry and public offer of Himself as king. McClain says:

It is difficult to understand how anyone could ask (as some have), where did Jesus ever offer the kingdom to Israel? Such objection would seem to be little more than strife "about words to no profit." Certainly, Jesus offered Himself to Israel as the Christ, the Messiah of Old Testament prophecy, but this title had no meaning apart from that prophetic kingdom over which Messiah was divinely ordained to reign as King.²¹

This was a genuine offer, yet He knew they would not receive it as the Old Testament prophets had foretold. It was an offer that included human choice and responsibility, just as the general, or external call includes. To doubt the sincerity of this call is to doubt both of these dealings of God with man, and others also.

The special, or efficacious call is that call which God extends to the elect which always results in the individual called coming to Christ for salvation. Some call this irresistible, but we reject this term as putting the wrong connotation upon this call. It is not that the person called cannot resist it, thus being deprived of all responsibility in the matter, but that this call always produces results in spite of the resistance of the individual in that it brings him to willfully accept Christ.

Strong says: "We reject the term 'irresistible,' as implying a coercion and compulsion which is foreign to the nature of God's working in the soul."²²

That the scriptures teach this efficacious call is evident from Phil. 2:2, 12, 13: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for His good pleasure." Strong adds: "That is, the result

²¹Alva J. McClain, The Greatness of the Kingdom (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1959), p. 306.

²²Strong, op. cit., p. 792.

of God's working is our own working."²³ Other scriptural support is found in Lk. 14:23 and Rom. 11:29.

Strong concludes, as do we:

That the operation of God is the originating cause of that new disposition of the affections, and that new activity of the will, by which the sinner accepts Christ. The cause is not in the response of the will to the presentation of motives by God, nor in any mere cooperation of the will of man with the will of God, but is an almighty act of God in the will of man, by which its freedom to choose God as its end is restored and rightly exercised....Jno. 1:12, 13, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become the children of God, even to them that believe on His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."²⁴

We hold, therefore, that there are two calls extended to sinners. Both are genuine, but the first (the general or external call) cannot be responded to; while the second (the special or efficacious call) always results in the salvation of the one called.

Others who hold this view are Calvin,²⁵ Boettner,²⁶ McClain²⁷ and Walvoord.²⁸

²³Ibid. ²⁴Ibid., p. 793. ²⁵Calvin, loc. cit.

²⁶Boettner, op. cit. ²⁷McClain, op. cit., pp. 29-31.

²⁸Walvoord, op. cit.

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