

Predestination And Free-Will

So How Does The Gospel Take Effect?

Romans 10:17 - "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

God has chosen to use believers to get the Word of God out, to sow it in men's hearts:

Mark 4:15 - "And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, satan cometh immediately, and taketh away **the word that was sown** in their hearts."

Once we have preached the Word of God to someone it is up to God to do what He wills with our seed sowing. Nevertheless, we are obligated to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers to water the seed that we sow and to pray to God to have mercy on the souls of men just as Moses interceded for Israel. When it is God's time to save someone, He will give them new life from above. He will put His Spirit in them. A verse that describes this new birth is found in the Gospel of John:

John 16:21 - "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world."

What a wonderful picture of Christ's sacrifice for His people as well as a picture of the new birth! This passage is ever so descriptive of being born from above. When the Holy Spirit convicts us of our sins, our souls become grieved over our sins to the point of not being able to bear the grief any more, comparable to a woman giving birth to a child, as the Word says. We then cry out to God to 'deliver' us and He graciously does - since it is by His grace that we are going through the birth pangs - being convicted of the depth of our sin. Then, by God's grace, the burden of sin is lifted off of us and placed on Christ, just as a woman is relieved of her travail when her child is brought forth. Similarly, as a woman is joyful that a new life has entered the world, the new creature in Christ experiences the joy of their salvation for the very first time, as the burden of their sin rolls away.

Note that it is the woman going through childbirth that is a picture of a person being converted, and not the woman's child. There are many parallels here to the new birth of a Christian. I'm sure it is not uncommon for a woman to call upon God as the time of her delivery approaches, just as a sinner calls upon God to save him from the wrath to come. The birth of a child must be a time of great concern and fear for a woman because it can be a matter of life and death, for herself and for her child. Likewise, the birth of a believer is a time of great fear of the Lord, seeing how the Bible says, "the fear of the lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7). God causes us to have a holy

and reverent fear of Him when He saves us. We see this in Isaiah chapter 6 where we read the prophet's description of what it is like to stand before a thrice-holy God:

Isaiah 6:5 - "Then said I, *Woe is me!* for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."

When God saves a person, they are awakened to the fact that, without Christ's righteousness, they themselves as well as the people all around them, are spiritually unclean... morally filthy... their works are detestable... their thoughts loathsome.

Evidence of true salvation is a changed attitude about sin as described by the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-24 plus a desire to warn the lost to flee the wrath of God (1 Corinthians 9:16, 2 Corinthians 5:20) and a love for Biblical truth (Psalms 1:2) as well as a love for other true believers in Jesus Christ.

Summary: This article is a section of a much larger article on the Bible doctrines of Election and Predestination called "Who accepts Whom?". You are urged to check out that larger article for many other thought provoking questions pertaining these "Doctrines of Grace". — *RM Kane*
