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Section: Doctrine of Christ (Christology)

Wednesday, Mayl 1st, 2024

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**TEACHING NOTES**

**Q63. For whom did Christ die?**

Christ died only for those people whom the Father had given Him: the elect.

Welcome church family.

Our lesson focuses in on the aim of Christ’s sacrificial atonement. I’ll begin by reading our catechism question and answer.

**Q63. For whom did Christ die?**

Christ died only for those people whom the Father had given Him: the elect.

If you have been with us for some time now you are not unfamiliar with the term elect.

You are also not unfamiliar with the doctrine of limited atonement. This is the doctrine that declares Jesus to have purposely sacrificed Himself for His elect.

Church there is such beauty in this doctrine and the work of God on behalf of His people! When we rightly look to scripture and see the truths of Christ Jesus’s atonement it brings joy and worship in our souls like never before. We will come back to this in my closing, but I want to remind you Christian God does not act haphazardly! God is purposeful and intentional in all that He does. If you think back to the covenant theology lessons you will remember that God’s plan of redemption began before you or I existed. God has an eternal plan set in His will to redeem a people unto Himself. The covenant of redemption is the plan wherein God chose a particular people whom Christ Jesus would come to save. This truth should bring us such awe!

Let’s read the definition of limited atonement from the WoTC.

**Limited Atonement (also known as Definite Atonement and Particular Atonement):** Christ’s work on the cross was not done for every human to ever live; rather, it was done exclusively for God’s elect, who are chosen people from throughout all of human history and represent every tribe, tongue, and nation. In doing this, Christ accomplished substitutionary atonement for the chosen ones by cancelling the debt of all their sin, appeasing God’s holy wrath, and earning all the benefits of their salvation.

Our answer to our catechism question declares that “Christ died only for those people whom the Father had given Him: the elect.” This is a very clear teaching in scripture. We will spend the bulk of our time seeing this from the gospel of John. However, before we turn to John, I want us to look at a passage from Matthew. So, if you have your bibles out grab them and turn to the gospel of Matthew.

**OUTLINE:** Our first point tonight is this, “Christ died only for those people whom the Father had given Him.” Our second point tonight will be “Who are the elect?” We will spend the bulk of our time in our first point but the points will blend a little so you’ll see why we don’t spend a lot of time in our second point as we go along. [repeat your points].

**P:1 Christ died only for those people whom the Father had given Him.**

Let’s first look in the gospel of Matthew.

**Matthew 1:21 “She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”**

Church, see right from the start that Jesus did not come to make something possible. Jesus did not come to try and accomplish something. Rather Jesus came to definitively accomplish that for which God the Father sent Him. Our verse in Matthew declares that the child born of Mary conceived of the Holy Spirit shall be given a very specific name for a very specific reason. He shall be called Jesus, for or because, He **WILL** save His people from their sins. GOD SAVES! Hear the confident and clear language from scripture. Jesus **WILL** save His **people!**

When you carefully look at each word of scripture and cautiously think about the meaning of every word you can in such a short passage see the beauty of God’s sovereignty and work on behalf of His chosen people. Church this is 1 sentence of scripture and yet it declares that the work Jesus came to do would be accomplished and would be for a specific set of people, namely Jesus’s people. Christ Jesus has a people whom He will definitely save. That was the purpose of naming Him Jesus. This so amazing Christian. Our salvation was not left to uncertainty, not left to our fickle will, indeed dead in sin we were unable to have partaken in the saving work of Jesus.

**Let’s see more clarity from the book of Romans:**

**Romans 8:1-9 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.**

**You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.**

Notice right away in this passage that for those who are in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation. In verse 2 it clearly declares that those who are in Christ are the ones whom the Spirit has set free. This was the work of God because as the passage continues to declare, those who are in the flesh (unregenerate sinners) cannot obey God.

Church we must see God’s work to monergistic-ly save as the great mercy and grace of God on our behalf!

Our focus tonight is not how Christ Jesus saves us but rather whom Christ Jesus saves. So, let’s turn now to the gospel of John chapter 6. We will read verses 35-40.

**John 6:35-40 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”**

Notice these words in verse 37, “all that the Father gives me will come to me.” There is a specific people God the Father gives to God the Son Jesus and these people WILL come to Him. There are also a people whom the Father does not give to the Son and we see Jesus Himself in this gospel account saying as much. In verse 35 Jesus declares to be life. For context sake Jesus had the day before fed a multitude. He left them and without a boat crossed a see to another town. The crowd in the morning goes to look for Jesus and when they find Him they ask Him how He got to the other side. Jesus’s response is not an answer to this temporary curiosity from the crowd, rather as Jesus often did, Jesus answers the greater question they need to be asking for their eternal souls. Jesus said to the crowd you did not seek me because you saw signs but because your belly was filled.

Jesus said don’t waste your time trying to fill your belly with perishable food but rather look to Me for eternal life. The people asked what they must do for this eternal life and Jesus declares they must believe in Him whom God the Father had sent. This is why in our passage He declares himself to be the bread of life. We then see the clarity in verse 36 that Jesus brings. Jesus declared that they have seen Him and yet do not believe. Church those for whom Christ died, Christ will also give saving faith. Those for whom Christ did not die will not be given this faith. They may see Him, but they will not believe. Christ Jesus came to save all that the Father had given to Him. This is what we see in verses 37-40.

**John 6:37-40** **All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”**

See this clarity from scripture. ALL that God the Father gives to God the Son Jesus WILL come to Jesus. There is no doubt that this will happen as God’s word has declared this, and thus it is truth!

Now notice the additional clarity that Jesus brings in the following verses; Jesus says, “I have come to do the will of the Father. And this is the Fathers will that I (Christ Jesus Himself) shall lose nothing of all that the Father has given Me.”

Church to say wrongly that Jesus died for all mankind and yet only a limited portion of them will be raised up on the last day as Jesus declared He would do, would be to say that Jesus failed the mission that God the Father sent Him to accomplish. When we see in verse 35 and 40 the term whoever believes, we must not think then that Christ died for all and yet His finished work only applies to those who will believe. (slow down here) **His finished work does only apply to those who will believe, and it important to know, those who will believe are those whom the Father gave to Jesus and therefore those for whom Jesus died.**

There is no “hoping” in the Godhead. What I mean is: what comes about is what God decreed. A situation in which God “hopes” for something to happen is not possible. That kind of God does not exist. The triune God is sovereign over all things and always purposeful in His acting. Jesus declares this in our passage. God‘s eternal, unchanging, effective will was that Christ came to redeem and lose none of those whom the Father gives Him. The Father does not give Jesus all of mankind or else, all of mankind would be saved. All who believe reveal that they were *of those* whom the Father gave to the Son. They are “the elect”—more on that later.

A main takeaway here is that we must not confuse Scripture’s language to think that Christ died for all mankind and only those who will believe in Him will be saved. Jesus declares His aim in this passage and others, to be intentional.

We see this with even more clarity in John chapter 10. I’m going to read a large section then we will go back through verse by verse to see the clarity of the work of Jesus on behalf of the elect.

**John 10:1-30 1“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. 2But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. 5A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” 6This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.**

**7So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. 10The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. 11I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. 14I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. 17For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”**

**19There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. 20Many of them said, “He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?” 21Others said, “These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”**

**22At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, 23and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. 24So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” 25Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me, 26but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. 27My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. 30I and the Father are one.”**

I know this is a large chunk of scripture to read through, however I believe the context is helpful enough that it is worth reading it in its entirety.

Now that you have seen the context and broader scope of the text I want to focus in more intentionally on the passages that clearly display Christ’s coming to take on flesh and die in the place of the elect to be limited only to those whom the Father had given to Him. Let’s start with verses 3-5.

**John 10:3-5 To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. 5A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”**

Jesus is the good shepherd. These verses clearly display that Jesus is not the shepherd of all mankind but that He has sheep that are His “own.” Verse 3 declares that Jesus calls “His own sheep” by name and leads them. Verse 4 declares that Jesus will bring out all “His own.” It also declares that Jesus’s own sheep **will** follow Him because they know His voice. Verse 5 declares that Jesus’s sheep will not follow strangers but will flee from strangers because they will not know the voice of the stranger.

Church consider all the false religions of the world. How many people follow false gods like sheep being led to the slaughter. These sheep do not belong to Christ if they proclaim a false god unto their death. These sheep followed the voice of a stranger because they were not Jesus’s sheep. For clarities sake, there are many who are holding false beliefs and yet they are of the elect, who, by the grace and power of God, will, at some point in their lives, repent and trust in Christ alone, proving they do belong to Jesus. This is why we are commanded to bring the gospel to the world because Christ ***WILL***  save his sheep, His people will be given ears to hear the truth of the good news. Church it is not our job to try and discern who we think God will save. Even if they are professing a false faith, we share the truth with everyone because it may be that Christ Jesus will give them ears to hear and eyes to see. There are few things to behold quite like that of beholding the work of Jesus in the heart of someone who has held to false faith in gods that don’t exist. It is a glorious work of God, and it is done because Jesus will call all of His own sheep and they will be saved.

Let’s continue in our John passage by looking next at verses 7-10.

**7So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. 10The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.**

When Jesus says that He is the door of the sheep, He is declaring to be the way in which His sheep are saved. Those sheep who hear Jesus’s voice and follow Him, they enter life through Jesus.

Jesus declares this in verse 9 by saying if anyone enters by Him, by Jesus that person WILL be saved and not just saved but find life abundantly. We, through Jesus, go in and out and find pasture. We have life in Christ Jesus alone! He is the only way, the only door that leads to life! Jesus declares in verse 10 that there is a thief and that the thief’s only aim is to steal, kill, and destroy, but that He Himself comes that “His sheep” may have life and not just any life but life abundantly.

**Limited, Particular, Definite Atonement**

So, Jesus has His own sheep, they know His voice, they follow only Him, they find true life in Him, He saves His own sheep! Let’s continue in the passage verses 11:

**11I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.**

Church verse 11 declares that Jesus is the good shepherd and that He lays down His life for ***His sheep!*** This clarity is important, though the verse literally says, “the sheep,” as we have already established, “the sheep” He refers to here have already been clarified to be His OWN SHEEP in verses 3-5, and this is clear through the rest of this passage and the rest of Scripture.

I am being repetitive purposefully. Unfortunately, as we read scripture and see verse numbers and chapter breaks, we can tend to miss vital connections between the verses. For some reason our minds see these numbers and spaces and think this is a new thought. When we do this and fail to connect the entire story, we miss these vital truths. The sheep that Jesus saves are His own and as we continue, we will see this in even greater clarity.

First, we must slow here for a moment and consider the amazing truth in Jesus’ statement: “**The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.**” Notice again the *limited atonement* nature of this sentence from Christ. (L*imited atonement is our main focus in this lesson.*) **Christ LAYS HIS LIFE DOWN** for **THE SHEEP**. Track with this: Christ lays his life down—He dies on a cross—He accomplishes atonement—an atonement that is limited in scope because it is to save certain sheep—a particular people. The atonement of the good Shepherd is of perfect value and is for and applied to *a specific scope*—a particular people.

Church…

This atonement is: **Limited**— Christ’s work on the cross was **not done for every human to ever live.**

This atonement is: **Particular**— Christ’s work on the cross **was done exclusively for God’s elect**, who are chosen people from throughout all human history and represent every tribe, tongue, and nation.

This atonement is: **Definite**— In doing this, **Christ accomplished** substitutionary atonement for the chosen ones by cancelling the debt of all their sin, appeasing God’s holy wrath, and earning all the benefits of their salvation.

Know this church: Christ Jesus’ atonement mission, that which He perfectly accomplished, was a **Limited, Particular, and Definite Atonement**.

Praise God for this. Praise God that we have a Redeemer who perfectly willed and completed all that was required. Praise God that we have an all-powerful, all-wise, intentional God who loved the elect from eternity past and completes the mission to save them. Praise God for the Limited, Particular, and Definite Atonement of Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior!

Let’s look at verses 14-15.

**14I am the good shepherd. *I know my own and my own know me*, 15just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.**

Church do you see it again? Do you see this entire illustration given graciously by God to us to help us understand Jesus’s work on our behalf, on behalf of the sheep who belong to Christ for whom Christ died! In verse 14 Jesus reminds us that He alone is the good shepherd, and that He knows His own and His own know Him! Church, if Jesus knows who the sheep are that belong to Him would He then go and die for sheep that are not His own? What about the wolves, the thief, the hired hands that Jesus has already referred to? Does Jesus die for them? No, that is not what God’s word teaches, rather what we have is a clear teaching and laser like focus that Jesus Himself is declaring that He has His own sheep and that it is those sheep, *and those alone*, for whom He dies, and gives life! In verse 15 Jesus says something that should cause our jaws to drop, remember He is continuing His comment from verse 14. Don’t let the small verse numbers cause you to miss this connection. Jesus declares to know His own sheep and that they will know Him in the same manner that the Father knows Jesus and Jesus knows the Father.

Church consider the deep and abiding “knowing” that Jesus is referring to here. This knowing is not simply an awareness of something. It is not simply a mental acknowledging of something. Jesus wants us to see how deep this knowing truly is. It is as deep as the intimate knowledge that God the Father shares with God the Son. Jesus knows His own intimately He has and will have a deep communion with his own, like that deep eternal communion He has had with the Father for eternity. If God has mercifully saved you Christian, then this is how you and I are known. It should cause our hearts to well up with thankfulness and praise. Christian have you felt like no one knows you? If you have been truly saved by the Good Shepherd, you are more intimately known and loved than you can fathom!

See the clarity one more time:

**14I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.**

Church, highlight this verse, memorize this verse, Jesus died for His sheep and He knows us in a like manner to the infinite knowing He shares with the Father! Praise God church you are known!

Let’s continue:

**Verse 16And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.**

All throughout the gospel of John, the writer is aiming to teach that God’s people are not an ethnic specific people. God through John declares over and over again that His people are from every tribe tongue and nation. In John 1:13 God declares that we are His not by birth nor by human will or human work, but by God’s will and work alone. In John 3:16 God declares that the son lays down his life for the believers of the world. Not just the Jews but all whom He saves, He died for. When we come to this passage in John 10, we need to have some of that bigger context to understand what Jesus is saying. The group He was speaking to specifically was a group of Jews. Again, this is where not disconnecting something due to chapter breaks is so important. If you look to the last verses of chapter 9 of John, you’ll see it.

**John 9:40-41 Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see, your guilt remains.**

Jesus was addressing the Pharisees and continued to address them with the illustration of the sheep and Himself as the Good Shepherd. So, in verse 16 of chapter 10, the clarity Jesus brings to the Pharisees in context is that Jesus has His own sheep that are not from the Jews only. Now for our sake, let’s see what Jesus says about these other sheep. In verse 16, Jesus says He **MUST** bring His other sheep and they ***will*** listen to His voice. So, there will be 1 flock and 1 Shepherd!

Let’s move now to verses 17-18.

**17For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”**

See the beautiful connection here that Jesus, the 1 Shepherd of the 1 flock, lays down His life (He accomplishes a Limited, Particular, and Definite Atonement—a true Substitutionary Atonement) for the sheep who are His own. The Father loves the Son because He accomplishes the work the Father sent Him to do. Jesus lays down his life of His own accord! This means Jesus willingly lays down His life. He does it first and foremost because of his love for the Father. This reality should be clear. Jesus did not first and foremost die for His sheep with them as His ultimate focus, rather He first and foremost lays down His life to glorify God.

Church, this truth should cause us to be in awe of our Savior. He glorified God through His willing human obedience to lay down His life for all the sheep whom the Father had given Him. When we place God at the center of our universe rather than ourselves, we would join in the chorus of myriads who sing “worthy, is the Lamb who was slain!” (Rev. 5:11-12).

John 10, verses 19-21.

**19There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. 20Many of them said, “He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?” 21Others said, “These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”**

I only draw our attention to these verses to show you what I declared earlier that Jesus was speaking to a Jewish audience that included the Pharisees. See in verse 19 there was division among the Jews. This was the audience of Jesus when He gave the lesson about the good shepherd.

Verses 24-26.

**24So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” 25Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me, 26but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep.**

The Jews gathered around Jesus again and said, ‘are you the Christ, tell us plainly.’ When Jesus responds, “I told you,” He is declaring to have told them plainly that he is the Christ. He goes on to say not only have I told you but the very works I have done prove that I am the Christ. So, if He has told them plainly and He has proven what He told them by the works He had done, why don’t they believe Him? Church, pay particular attention here because Jesus makes this so very clear. In verse 26 Jesus says, ‘the reason you do not believe is because you are not among My sheep!’ For true clarity think about these words Church, Jesus did not say to the Jews He was speaking to that they were not His sheep ***because*** they didn’t believe. That would be an incorrect reading of this clear passage. The proper reading shows us what Jesus clearly says: You *do not believe* **BECAUSE** you are not among My sheep. The cause of unbelief is owing to the fact that those who do not believe and will not believe unto their death, do not belong to Jesus as His sheep—they are not of the elect of God, chosen before time based on God’s will alone.

Tying it together then: Jesus declared that there are people who are not among His sheep and since He dies only for His sheep, then there are a particular people for whom Jesus does NOT lay down His life. Jesus accomplishes a Limited, Particular, and Definite Atonement—it was a true Substitutionary Atonement. That means, Christ’s atonement was not for people that God did not chose to save in eternity past. Church, not one drop of Christ’s blood was wasted. It was a perfect atonement, accomplishing exactly what God decreed it to, namely atonement for a Limited, Particular people—the elect. Not one drop of Christ’s blood was wasted.

This continues to be clear in verse 27-30

**27My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.**

**29My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. 30 I and the Father are one.”**

*Who* does Jesus know in a saving way? *Who* will truly follow Jesus? *Who* does Jesus give eternal life to? *Who* will never perish? *Who* will not be snatched out of Jesus’ hand? Certainly not all of mankind. It is **ONLY** those who He died to save. Scripture makes this absolutely clear. Christ was assigned and completed a Limited, Particular, and Definite Atonement.

Jesus’s sheep do indeed hear His voice and Jesus knows them and they follow Him. Church Jesus gives eternal life to His sheep and they will never perish. Now see the clarity in verse 29 and consider our catechism answer: Verse 29 declares God the Father has given Jesus a specific people whom he is calling His sheep. This group of sheep are securely given, purchased, redeemed by God the Son, and no one can change that! All based on the Limited, Particular, Definite, Atonement.

Our catechism answer states: Christ died only for those people whom the Father had given Him: *the elect*. This brings us to our second point for our time tonight.

**P:2 Who are the elect?**

The sheep whom Christ calls His own and for whom Christ Jesus lays down His life, most assuredly saving them, are called the elect. Our WoTC defines election this way.

**Unconditional Individual Election:** Before creation existed, God chose which individual human beings would receive salvation from sin, death, and God’s eternal wrath. This choice to redeem certain ones is not based on any so-called goodness, will, or work in them; rather, it is based on the freedom and grace of God in Christ Jesus alone.

We’ll have full lesson content on Election later in the catechism, but briefly let’s see here that: Those chosen by God in eternity past to be saved based upon God’s will alone are those whom scripture calls *the elect* (Titus 1:1, 1 Peter 1:1, etc). We see that those who are elect are all those whom the Father has given to the Son Jesus.

Turn to John 17:

**John 17:6&9 “I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.” “I am praying for them. *I am not praying for the world* but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.”**

**Ephesians 1:4 God “chose us [the elect] in him before the foundation of the world”**

Can scripture be any clearer? God the Father has given a people to God the Son. Those people are the ones whom Jesus graciously reveals the Father too. They are also the ones for whom Jesus is praying for in John 17. They are the ones chosen before time began.

See that Jesus declares that he is **not** praying for the *world*, but only for those whom the Father has given Him.

These are the elect. The understanding of election is not a new idea. Church history shows us many who see in the Scriptures this clear teaching, namely that those whom God chose in eternity past to be the recipients of God’s salvation are the elect of God.

The historic (1689) confession of faith declares in chapter 8:

**Paragraph 1: It pleased God, in His eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, His only begotten Son, according to the covenant made between them both, to be the mediator between God and man;1 the prophet,2 priest,3 and king;4 head and savior of the church,5 the heir of all things,6 and judge of the world;7 unto whom He did from all eternity give a people to be His seed and to be by Him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.8**

Jesus died for those whom the Father gave to Him. Those whom the Father gave are called the elect. The 1689 also shows this Limited, Particular, and Definite Atonement reality for the elect in chapter 8:

**Paragraph 5: The Lord Jesus, by His perfect obedience and sacrifice of Himself, which He through the eternal Spirit once offered up to God, has fully satisfied the justice of God,32 procured reconciliation, and purchased an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father has given unto Him.**

The Scriptures are clear, good theologians, pastors, and believers have seen this throughout Church history, and it should bless us to know these truths. If you trust in the finished work of Jesus on your behalf, if Jesus is your Lord and Savior then you are among the Elect.

You are the sheep for whom Jesus laid down His life!

Salvation has come! It is finished! Church there is nothing more for you to bear. This reality must cause us to be quick to repent of our sins, to turn to Christ knowing that He has covered every sin and has redeemed us unto God. This is why we can draw near to the throne of grace in our time of need Christian.

One more quote form the 1689 LBCoF that I want to end our time with. Church as I read this think deeply upon the words and see them applied to yourself in Christ Jesus’s work on your behalf.

**Paragraph 8: To all those for whom Christ has obtained eternal redemption, He does certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same, making intercession for them;38 uniting them to Himself by His Spirit, revealing to them, in and by His Word, the mystery of salvation, persuading them to believe and obey,39 governing their hearts by His Word and Spirit,40 and overcoming all their enemies by His almighty power and wisdom,**

**41 in such manner and ways as are most consonant to His wonderful and unsearchable dispensation; and all of free and absolute grace, without any condition foreseen in them to procure it.**

To all whom Christ has obtained eternal redemption He does certainly and effectually apply this redemption. Christian, Jesus called you one of His own sheep. He laid down His life to redeem you from your sin. You were chosen by the Father to be given to the Son. This was all done outside of you and not owing to ***ANYTHING*** in you. This was and is the will of God to work and to save His elect people.

Church The Christian life is not simple. It is a race. It is a difficult one filled with temptation and trials. For us who are the elect of God we have no more debt to pay. Christ has paid it. We get to run this race with the freedom of knowing it is finished.

Gods’ acting is always intentional. There is no flippancy with God. He has from eternity past chosen a people to redeem. In time, when the fullness of time had come, the Father sent the Son to take on flesh and die in the place of all those whom He had given to the Son. Jesus did this work and now we who have been saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ Jesus alone are the benefactors of this great sacrifice. Christian praise God for His plan, for His work, for your salvation!

Let’s pray.