

How To Give Away Your Faith

HANDOUT #5

97. The Bible _____ teaches the doctrine of election in numerous passages (e.g., Acts 13:28; Ephesians 1:4–5; Romans 8:29–33; Colossians 3:12).
98. ____ Christians who take Scripture seriously affirm the doctrine of election.
99. The question is not whether God elects, but how He elects & any definition, will ultimately hinge on how one defines the _____ surrounding election.
100. There are those who are commonly identified as teaching unconditional election ____ others who are identified as teaching conditional election.
101. ‘**Unconditional election**’ refers to God’s sovereign choice, made by His own will before the creation of the world — to save certain individuals by _____ choice, entirely independent of any foreseen faith, merit, or action by them.
102. The Calvinistic doctrine of — “**unconditional election**” — teaches that every person’s eternal destiny to heaven or to hell—was determined _____ God — without regard to any — foreseen condition.
103. Calvin’s *doctrine of election* asserts that from the moment of conception, some individuals are elected to display God’s grace in salvation while _____ others are made to display His wrath in eternal damnation.
104. This teaching of John Calvin is known as double predestination:

“We call predestination God’s eternal decree, by which he determined with himself what he willed to become of each man. For all are not created in equal condition; rather, eternal life is foreordained for some, eternal damnation for others. Therefore, as any man has been created to one or the other of these ends, we speak of him as predestined to life or to death.”
(*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, III.21.5) Vol. 2, p. 926.

105. There are others in Reformed/Calvinistic theology that teach ____ by nature are damned but only those *whom God sovereignly* rescues some to be saved.
106. Whether one teaches one is preordained for damnation — or that one ____ passed over for salvation, all such people are “**doomed from the womb**.”

“Now, since the arrangement of all things is in the hand of God, since to him belongs the disposal of life and death, he arranges all things by his sovereign counsel, in such a way that individuals are born, who are doomed from the womb to certain death, and are to glorify him by their destruction” (John Calvin, *Institutes*, 3.23.6).

107. We have seen that Calvin’s definition of “**total depravity**” demands that God either regenerates and saves all or He regenerates a select _____.

108. According to this doctrine, sometime called “determinism—before _____ ever existed, God decided either to create you as one who would believe and be saved, or as one who would remain in unbelief & be condemned.
109. Unconditional election teaches that a person’s willingness to trust Christ and say “yes” to Jesus occurs only because God has first chosen _____.
110. Advocates of this view argue that our finite minds cannot fully comprehend this divine truth—and therefore we should _____ in any way object to it.
111. Calvinists like J.I. Packer in *Evangelism & The Sovereignty Of God* refer to this as an “**antinomy**” two truths that seem contradictory to human reason, yet are both clearly and undeniably _____ in Scripture.
112. They would say by definition this is different _____ a paradox (page 18):

“What is an antinomy? ... For the whole point of an antinomy in theology is that it is not a real contradiction, though it looks like one. It is an apparent incompatibility between two apparent truths. An antinomy exists when a pair of principles stand side by side, seemingly irreconcilable, yet both undeniable.”

113. Packer recognizes that the Bible teaches both God’s sovereign role in ordaining salvation _____ human responsibility to respond.
114. He explains that these _____ truths appear contradictory to human reason, but are both “**undeniable**” in Scripture and that we cannot comprehend how these truths — stand side by side — with our finite minds.
115. For Packer this kind of tension is not merely a “**paradox**” like “**when I am weak, then I am strong**” (2 Corinthians 12:10)—but rather an “**antinomy**” because both truths are simultaneously true without _____ comprehension.
116. J.I. Packer urges Christians to hold both truths together without trying to force a rational reconciliation—beyond what _____ has revealed.
117. For Packer & many Calvinistic theologians an “**antinomy**” is when 2 truths have “**an appearance of contradiction**” (p. 18) while at the same time being “**equally logical, reasonable or necessary**” and yet inexplicable to _____.
118. This is how strict Calvinists explain what appears to be a contradiction from our point of view—namely that God sovereignly elects individuals to salvation—and yet human beings—freely choose to receive _____.
119. Classical Calvinists urge Christians to hold both truths together without trying to force a rational reconciliation beyond what _____ has revealed.

120. Even Calvin himself acknowledged that this was a “**dreadful decree**,” making the teaching of “**unconditional election**” to be one of the _____ controversial doctrines in Church history.
121. Most trace the formal development of this doctrine to the _____ century writings of Augustine of Hippo, whose view of predestination marked a significant departure from the earlier theological consensus.
122. Those who teach ‘**conditional election**’ hold that God elects individuals for salvation based on their _____ in Jesus, which He ‘**foreknew**’ beforehand.
123. This reflects a very different understanding of “**foreordination**,” for Calvin taught that God foreordained even sinful events without Himself being the author of sin—and so—concerning the _____ he wrote quite explicitly:
- “The fall of our first parents was not unforeseen by God, for He had foreordained all things, even that they should fall... yet they sinned willingly, and so the guilt rests upon them, not upon God.”*
(*Institutes, Book II, Chapter 2, Section 11*)
124. Calvin held that God’s sovereignty extends over all events, good and evil, so nothing in creation—including Adam’s sin—occurs apart from _____.
125. If something happened apart from God’s decree, then in Calvin’s reasoning — God would _____ be — absolutely sovereign.
126. Therefore, in Calvin’s view, Adam’s fall was not accidental—nor merely something God foresaw—but was included within His sovereign _____.
127. All Christians affirm God’s sovereignty, yet the Bible shows He permits genuine freedom by allowing all things, without being the author of ____.
128. For those holding to—conditional election—Calvin’s theology is totally incompatible _____ God’s holiness as James says, “**for God cannot be tempted by evil and He Himself does He tempt anyone**” (James 1:13).
129. Those of us who teach **conditional election**—will agree with our Calvinistic brothers that salvation is not conditioned upon nationality—whether one is a Jew or a Gentile, nor upon morality—whether measured by good or ____.
130. However, the point of departure is whether faith itself is conditioned upon a prior — unconditional choice — of God determining _____ will believe.
131. “**Conditional election**” teaches that God has sovereignly provided a _____ for all, so that “**whosoever will**” may respond, in harmony with Scripture.

“The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost” (Revelation 22:27).

132. In his sermon on Mars Hill, Paul says that God now commands all people everywhere—not just Israel—to repent ____ light of the coming judgment.

30 Therefore, although God has overlooked such times of ignorance, He now commands all people everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30).

133. ____ would God command you to do something that is impossible?
134. God’s command for all people to repent affirms the genuine freedom of the human will to respond to His grace—it is *not merely a rhetorical* expression, but a sincere and universal ____ of salvation extended to everyone.
135. Under “**conditional election**,” the fact that God commands all “**to repent**,” shows that He truly desires ____ to be saved (John 3:16; 2 Peter 3:9).
136. Conditional election teaches that God’s election in eternity past was based based on His “**foreknowledge**” — that is, God in His omniscience knowing beforehand ____ would choose to repent and believe in Christ.

THE VERB: “TO FOREKNOW” (Greek: *proginōskō*)

Scripture	Description
Acts 26:5	Foreknowing Paul’s life
1 Peter 1:20	Foreknowing Christ’s death
2 Peter 3:17	Foreknowing false teachers
Romans 11:2	Foreknowing Israel’s failure
Romans 8:29	Foreknowing man’s faith

THE NOUN: “FOREKNOWLEDGE” (Greek: *prognōsis*)

Scripture	Description
Acts 2:23	God foreknew Christ’s death
1 Peter 1:2	God foreknew our choice

137. “**Unconditional election**” teaches that God unilaterally determines who will ultimately believe—in contrast to “**conditional election**” which teaches that God’s foreknowledge includes knowing the ____ choices people will make.
138. The Bible reveals that God’s election is according to God’s foreknowledge, meaning God’s “**prior knowledge**” of ____ individuals would respond to His gracious initiative (Romans 8:29; 1 Peter 1:1–2).

139. Understood in this sense, “**foreknowledge**” does not refer to a mere general awareness, but to God’s perfect and personal knowledge about us and our response to the gospel—knowledge He possessed before ____ itself began.

8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain (Revelation 13:8).

140. The Bible reveals that God’s election is according to His foreknowledge, which in its normal reading even in English simply carries the meaning of God’s “**prior knowledge**” since He is the omniscient God.
141. When properly understood, “**foreknowledge**” refers to God’s perfect and personal knowledge of us — while not in any way altering or overriding our free will — but simply expressing His omniscient awareness.

8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain (Revelation 13:8).

142. Thus, the doctrine election does not negate human responsibility but rather—it reflects God’s sovereign decision to save—those whom He ____ would respond in faith to Jesus Christ (Acts 2:23; Rom. 11:2).
143. The common meaning of the verb translated “**foreknew**” and of the noun rendered “**foreknowledge**” simply means to ‘**know something beforehand**’ or to ‘**know something in advance of its happening**’ — that is all it ____.
144. This is clear in both English and Greek, since the original verb “**ginōskō**” means “**to know**,” and when it is preceded by the prefix “**pro**” meaning “**before**” — it ____ “**proginōskō**” — “**to know beforehand**.”
145. Accordingly, English translations rightly render “**pro**” with the prefix “**fore**” so that when it is joined to the word “**knowledge**” we arrive ____ “**foreknowledge**” — meaning — “**to know something ahead of time**.”
146. We get our medical term “**prognosis**” from this Greek ____ meaning to describe “**prior knowledge**” & so to predict the course of a disease.
147. In Calvinistic theology — “**foreknowledge**” — (Greek **proginōskō**) does not mean that God merely foresaw who would believe; rather, it is understood to mean that He set His love upon certain individuals & so ____ them.
149. It is true that the verb “**to know**” can carry the idea of choosing, as seen, for example, in Genesis 18:19 ____ Amos 3:2.

18 since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? 19 “For I have chosen (known/KJV/ESV) him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him” (Genesis 18:18–19).

150. Here the Hebrew verb clearly means ‘**to choose**,’ indicating that God chose Abraham for His purpose rather than merely knowing _____ in advance.

1 Hear this word which the LORD has spoken against you, sons of Israel, against the entire family which He brought up from the land of Egypt: 2 “You only have I chosen (known/KJV/ESV) among all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities” (Amos 3:1-2).

151. Clearly, God was intellectually aware of other nations, but _____ this context “**known**” (“**יָדָע**”/yada) refers to His loving choice.

152. We can also point to New Testament passages—where the verb “**know**” (Greek *ginōskō* or *oida*), without the prefix “**fore**” (**pro**), clearly carries the sense of choosing, owning, or entering _____ a saving relationship.

153. In Matthew 7:23, when Jesus says, “**I never knew you**,” He does not mean “**I never elected you**,” but “**I never acknowledged you as Mine**,” showing that “**knowing**” is relational, evidenced by fruit & _____ by a divine decree.

154. Most conservative commentators—including non-Calvinists—agree that “**know**” here means — relational acceptance — not knowledge of _____.

155. Yet, Calvinists take the word “**foreknowledge**” from its normal usage and redefine it in passages like Romans 8:29 (“**For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined**”) saying that it means an _____ of God’s election.

156. A standard Calvinist observation is they will argue that the verse says “**whom He foreknew**” not “**what they would do**” — pointing out that that the object of “**foreknowledge**” is persons and not their _____.

157. With that said, non-Calvinists—such as classical Arminians, Provisionists, traditional Baptists & most Evangelicals—have a well-developed response to the Calvinist objection grounded in grammar and biblical _____.

158. Grammatically, the phrase “**whom He foreknew**”—rather than “**what they would do**,” does not preclude God’s knowing what those persons would ____.

159. Saying, “**I know John**,” can naturally include knowledge of his character, his choices — and his responses — since the pronoun — “**whom**” does _____ restrict the scope of what is known about him.

160. *Foreknowledge of persons* can still include *foreknowledge* of their faith ____ that the grammar does not force the meaning “**fore-loving**” or “**choosing**.”
161. *Grammatically*, the Calvinist claim is *possible*, but not *demanded* by the ____ because the Bible often treats *knowing persons* as knowing their responses.
162. Beyond grammar, a biblical examination of the noun and the verb for “**foreknowledge**” shows they are never used as the Calvinists ____.
163. The verb ‘**to foreknow**’ (πρόγινωσις/proginōskō) appears 5 times in the N.T. (Acts 26:5; 1 Peter 1:20; 2 Peter 3:17; Romans 8:29; Romans 11:2) — and the ____ (πρόγινωσις/prognōsis) appears 2 times (Acts 2:33; 1 Peter 1:2).
164. So for instance, when Paul *uses the verb* in reference to the ____ who have:
 “**known about me for a long time** (*literally it says, all the Jews—“**knew me before**” speaking of their prior knowledge of Paul before his conversion), if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.*)”
165. Here the same verb, **proginōskō**, used in Romans 8:29, appears when Paul testifies before Agrippa — that his Jewish accusers “**knew beforehand**” about ____ life—clearly unrelated to the concept of divine choosing.
166. In 1 Peter 1:20 the Apostle Peter *describes our salvation* declaring of ____:

20 For He was foreknown (προγινώσκω) before the foundation of the world . . .

167. He reminds us—that the God who knew our sin—and our ____ from eternity past—also “**knew beforehand**” of Christ’s death.
168. Jesus “**was foreknown before the foundation of the world**” in that our all-knowing God knew we would freely rebel, yet He would still ____ us.
169. In similar fashion, the Apostle Peter when he opens his ____ letter writes:

**1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens . . . who are chosen
 2 according to the foreknowledge** (*again prognosis/πρόγινωσις is a Greek medical term meaning advanced knowledge*) **of God the Father . . .**

170. All Biblicists believe in election & the issues is ____ **IF** God elects but the issue is **HOW** God elects & He does so based on His advanced knowledge.
171. I have covered this so that when sharing the gospel, you can confidently present predestination, foreknowledge & election in a way that honors God’s sovereignty while showing that _____ can freely believe.