

1. **Introduction:** Continuing our discussion on “Election.” You can access the revised handout for last Sunday on the church website (cpcchatt.org - Adult Sunday School classes). It covers the general aspects of the doctrine of election.
 - Remember humans are “moral free agents” which means we choose according to that which most appeals to our nature at the instant of choice. Having “free will” would mean being able to choose any alternative we wanted independent of our nature.
 - Today we will consider some specific questions that were asked last week.
 - References used in thinking about this include the Bible and writings of John MacArthur, R.C. Sproul, John Piper, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and B.B. Warfield.
 - God does not judge anyone on revelation they have not heard, but those who have not heard His revelation will be judged by the law He has written on their hearts.
2. **Gift of Procreation:** Adam and Eve were created immortal and able to jointly procreate life. Their procreated life would like them be immortal. They were to populate the earth with immortal progeny. But it was not to be!
3. **Root Cause of Mortal Death:** In their original (as created state), Adam and Eve were not subject to death. Their sin of disobedience produced a great disaster in which they ceased to be immortal, died spiritually, and acquired a sin nature.
 - When Adam and Eve violated the condition for immortality (be holy as God is holy), they and their progeny (which is all humanity) became subject to death.
 - Death is a consequence of sin. Some mortals die in the womb or in infancy, some in childhood, some as adults, but all die.
 - Consequences of Adam and Eve’s sin that passed and continue to pass to their progeny include spiritual death, mortal death, a sin nature, susceptibility to illness, and the effects from the damage to the earth and its environment.
 - Everyone inherits a sin nature at conception which carries the seeds of death.
 - At some point in normal life, a person reaches a stage of development in which their condition enables understanding enough to be accountable for personal sin.
 - The issue of not punishing the innocent occurs in Scripture in several places including Jonah 4.
 - The death of infants confirms their inherited sin nature. Having no personal sin, if they had no sin nature, they would not be sinful mortals subject to death.
 - All human death is a consequence of sin, but sin is not necessarily the specific cause of death. For infants, death is a consequence of inherited sin.
 - From conception to mortal death, people are guilty. They can be saved from the consequences of their guilt only by and through the gift of God’s sovereign grace.
 - God can and does give sovereign grace as He pleases.

- Whomever God chooses to give the gift of sovereign grace is elect.
- God’s gift of sovereign saving grace is not dependent on anything people do or can do. Human inability is not a condition that prohibits God’s salvation.

4. **Question 1:** What is the eternal destiny, of infants who die before they can understand God’s law and grace, before they can understand sin and salvation, before they can understand and consciously reject the truth?

- Scripture nowhere teaches infant damnation. Revelation 20:11-12 teaches that all people sent to hell are sent there based on God’s record of their personal sins.
- Infants have no personal sin and, hence, no record.
- In general, God graciously saves those who lack the ability to understand and embrace the gospel due to mental impairment or lack of mental development.
- The top-level impression is that all children who die before reaching the “condition of accountability” go directly to heaven.
- Children who have not reached the “condition of accountability” are innocent of willful sin, willful rebellion against God, and willful unbelief.

5. **Innocence:** In Jeremiah 19:4-5 God’s wrath is stirred because of the sacrifice of infants to Baal. The penalty must be paid. The key point for us is that God says the sacrifices filled the place with “*the blood of innocents,*” the blood of infants.

- Even pagan infants were innocent in God’s sight despite their inherited sin nature.
- The issue of not punishing the innocent occurs in several places including Jonah 4.

6. **Effect of the Inherited Sin Nature:** The sin nature we are all born with means we are sinners destined for mortal death. An infant has no personal sin recorded against them in God’s record and will not be judged as a sinner.

- Infants, like all who are saved, are saved through the salvation work of Christ by their election to saving grace.
- When infants die, they are instantly glorified, thereby eliminating their inherited sin nature and enabling them to be holy and go immediately into the presence of God.
- If an infant who dies was to be punished because of their inherited sin nature despite having committed no personal sins, they would experience suffering with an absence of understanding why. God doesn’t work that way.
- Everyone who is punished will know why, because of Scripture, because of what God has written on every heart, and because at judgment people will be told what their offences were.

7. **Before Birth:** God works in our lives even before we are conceived.

- **Jeremiah 1:5:** “*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.*”

- In Psalm 139, David says that God formed his inward parts in his mother's womb. God saw His unformed substance and in God's book all the days ordained for David were written when as yet there wasn't one of them.

8. **Like a Child:** In Matthew 18, Jesus holding a child in His arms says in verse 3, *Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.*

- A little later in the same episode in verse 14, Jesus says, *It is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.*
- About this, John Calvin said, *“Those children have not yet any understanding to desire His blessing, but when they are presented to Him, He gently and kindly receives them and dedicates them to the Father by a solemn act of blessing.”*
- Charles Hodge said, *“He tells us of such is the kingdom of heaven as though heaven was in great measure composed of the souls of redeemed infants.”*
- B.B. Warfield wrote, *“If all that die in infancy are saved, it can only be through the abrupt operation of the Holy Spirit, who rules when and how He pleases, through whose ineffable grace the Father gathers these little ones to the home He has prepared for them.”*
- These highly-respected godly men along with others affirm that the intent of the passage about little children is to teach about God's special saving purpose which fills His kingdom with the little ones.

9. **What Will be the Age and Stage of Maturity of Infants in Heaven:** 1 John 8:29 says when we get to heaven, all will be like Christ. Romans 8:29 says, in heaven all will be conformed to the image of Christ, all will be perfect in maturity.

- 1 Corinthians 13:12b says in heaven “You will know as you are known.” Everyone in heaven will have knowledge, perfect maturity, and will know everything needed, and will be gathered to those who love you and whom you love.
- Children who die in infancy or before birth will in heaven be mature, knowing all they need to know and prospering in the love of Christ.

10. **Question 2:** Suppose a young person makes a public commitment to Christ that seems genuine, but later they seem to fall away. Does that mean they are not elect?

- No! When a person shows any interest in the things of God, it is certainly by the work of the Holy Spirit and the drawing of the Father.
- Scripture assures us that when God begins a good work in us, He will complete that work. It may not occur how and when we expect.
- What we know for sure is anyone who has received God's saving grace is “elect.”
- After receiving the grace of regeneration, a person will show outward signs of the ongoing transformation toward the holy nature that will be theirs in-full when they are glorified.

- Keep praying. Never give up. God's saving power can work its miracle while there is mortal life. The gift of salvation can occur as a person draws their last breath.
- Remember, God is not bound by time. The prayers we pray today were all heard before the foundation of the earth. God gives all prayers proper consideration.
- The prayer we are inclined to believe is too late may be just the one that is effective.