

## Article 5      God's Purposes in Grace

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Well, good afternoon, brothers and sisters.

Article 5, God's Purposes in Grace.

As Southern Baptists, we joyfully affirm and celebrate the doctrine of election. The reason we joyfully affirm election is because it is biblical. Election excludes boasting, and apart from election, no one would be saved.

Without God's gracious choice to save sinners, there would be no glorious gathering of every tribe and tongue and nation around the throne of King Jesus.

Without election, there would be no wedding feast of the Lamb. There would be no bride, no church, not a single worship song would be sung, and there would be no gospel advance, because no one would be saved.

*But thanks be to God, Paul tells us in **Ephesians chapter 1**, that He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in love before Him.*

He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

Thanks be to God, Paul tells us in **Ephesians chapter 2**, that *you were dead in your trespasses and sins, but God, who is rich in mercy because of his great love that he had for us, made us alive with Christ, even though we were dead in our trespasses.*

Our affirmation of election is a declaration that God's word is true and that salvation is God's work from beginning to end.

The God who elects is the God who regenerates. It is the God who justifies. It is God who sanctifies. And it is God who glorifies, so that God gets all the glory.

Brothers and sisters, God's sovereign goodness in election humbles us.

It causes the church to erupt in praise with Paul, as in **Romans 11**, *O the depth of the riches and the wisdom of the knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments and untraceable his ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? And who has ever given to God that he should be*

*repaid? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.*

Salvation is God's work from beginning to end, so that we can be confident that by the grace of God we will persevere to the end.

*He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion.*

God's purposes in grace give us courage, courage to share the gospel, and courage to go forward in global missions.

Because as Paul says in **2 Timothy 2:10**, *this is why I endure all things, for the elect, so that they may also obtain salvation, which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.*

Brothers and sisters, we witness and we send missionaries because God has an elect. And they will believe, they will persevere, and the church will advance until the return of Jesus.

And there will be a glorious gathering of the elect from all tribes and all nations and all tongues to the eternal praise of our triune God.

So brothers and sisters, let's reaffirm together and celebrate the biblical doctrine of election.

Let's preach the doctrine of election.

Let's rejoice that in the words of article 5.

We may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, and we may grieve the spirit, and we may even bring reproach on the cause of Christ, and even incur temporal judgment on ourselves—yet we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

This doctrine of election rightly understood has the effect of producing in us gospel zeal and evangelistic fervor and heartfelt joy.

I want to close with a quote from a fellow Baptist from the south... the south of England, Charles Spurgeon, who said, "Whatever may be said about the doctrine of election, it is written in the word of God as with an iron pen and there is no getting rid of it. If they could but know that the Lord had chosen them, it would make their hearts dance with joy."

And so Southern Baptists say to the doctrine of election, yes and amen.