

February 2025 Newsletter

It always seems that we like sin and death more than righteousness and life. We tend to forget God's desire and will when it comes to our eternal good and we place a bigger emphasis on how we should live our lives.

Paragraph 10 leads us through a common misconception of election that typically affirms Calvin's false of double predestination. When we get to paragraph 12, we begin to see from scripture just how false our thoughts are.

Formula of Concord – Solid Declaration – Article 11 Election.

The eternal election of God, however, not only foresees and foreknows the salvation of the elect, but is also, from the gracious will and pleasure of God in Christ Jesus, a cause which procures, works, helps, and promotes our salvation and what pertains thereto; and upon this [divine predestination] our salvation is so founded that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it, Matt. 16:18, as is written John 10:28: Neither shall any man pluck My sheep out of My hand. And again, Acts 13:48: And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.

⁹ Nor is this eternal election or ordination of God to eternal life to be considered in God's secret, inscrutable counsel in such a bare manner as though it comprised nothing further, or as though nothing more belonged to it, and nothing more were to be considered in it, than that God foresaw who and how many were to be saved, who and how many were to be damned, or that He only held a [sort of military] muster, thus: "This one shall be saved, that one shall be damned; this one shall remain steadfast [in faith to the end], that one shall not remain steadfast."

¹⁰ For from this [notion] many derive and conceive strange, dangerous, and pernicious thoughts, which occasion and strengthen either security and impenitence or despondency and despair, so that they fall into troublesome thoughts and [for thus some think, with peril to themselves, nay, even sometimes] say: Since, before the foundation of the world was laid, Eph. 1:4, God has foreknown [predestinated] His elect to salvation, and God's foreknowledge [election] cannot fail nor be hindered or changed by any one, Is. 14:27; Rom. 9:19, therefore, if I am foreknown [elected] to salvation, nothing can injure me with respect to it, even though I practice all sorts of sin and shame without repentance, have no regard for the Word and Sacraments, concern myself neither with repentance, faith, prayer, nor godliness; but I shall and must be saved nevertheless, because God's foreknowledge [election] must come to pass. If, however, I am not foreknown [predestinated], it helps me nothing anyway, even though I would occupy myself with the Word, repent, believe, etc.; for I cannot hinder or change God's foreknowledge [predestination].

¹¹ And indeed also to godly hearts, even when, by God's grace they have repentance, faith, and a good purpose [of living in a godly manner], such thoughts occur as these: If you are not foreknown [predestinated or