

**Desperate Assurance: Exegesis of Hyper-Calvinism's Proof Passage, 2 Peter 1:10**

Next comes the critical verse in this opening paragraph. It is the one that is a major "proof passage" used by hyper-Calvinists to support their contention that works are required to prove election and therefore one's assurance of salvation:

2 Peter 1:10 - Therefore, fellow believers, be more motivated to make your calling and election a spiritual reality; for by doing these things you will never stumble.

It begins with yet another affirmation that the people in context are believers: the vocative masculine plural of the noun:

ἀδελφός, adelphos - "brethren"; "fellow believers," "members of the royal family of God."

It is preceded by the inferential conjunction denoting that what is about to follow is self-evident from what has been stated before:

δίο, dio - "Therefore, fellow believers ..."

Next comes the challenge to the Church Age believer to develop his spiritual skills and make the double column advance into the sophisticated spiritual life. We have the aorist active imperative of the verb:

σπουδάζω, spoudazō, plus the adverb **μᾶλλον, mallon**:

"be more motivated"

aorist: Culminative; contemplates the action in its entirety. It is a mandate to make the Magnificent Seven the source of one's motivation but regards it from the viewpoint of existing results: the fulfillment of the plan of God in Stage 3 of the Sophisticated Spiritual Life. This emphasizes the 10th problem-solving device of occupation with Christ.

active: The believer produces the action by being more motivated.

imper.: Command for the double column advance.

Here we see that the source of motivation for the spiritual life is inculcation of the Word of God. The Magnificent Seven include (1) humility for teachability that enables (2) an objective analysis of *gnosis* doctrine that when believed produces (3) self-discipline for the advance, develops (4) the mental stability for the advance under the pressures of testing, stimulates (5) the motivation for the advance through piety or the reciprocal love of the right column, leads to sophisticated problem-solving through (6) unconditional love for your fellow believer, and maximizes at spiritual maturity with (7) virtue love toward all: unconditional love for all mankind, personal love or God, and occupation with Christ.

Two doctrines are selected by Peter as basic concepts that need to become facilitated components of this advance: "calling" and "election." "More motivation" emphasizes these two because they both depend on the essential ingredient for the advance which is the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. One occurs at the very beginning of the advance and the other occurs at the very end. They are introduced by the present middle infinitive of the verb:



ποιέω, *poieō* - "to make"

- present: Customary; denotes what habitually occurs or may be reasonably expected to occur from the mature believer.
- middle: Describes the subject as an agent participating in the results of the action. The omnipotence of the Holy Spirit provides the enabling power and the believer participates through positive volition.
- infinitive: Intended result; the expression of the sovereignty of God in eternity past regarding His plan for the believer.

The first thing God did for us was to bless us and this escrow became the means of glorifying Him. The method of our receiving the conveyance of the escrow begins with our salvation and ends with occupation with Christ. These are mentioned next by Peter. First is the possessive genitive from the pronoun:

σύ, *su* - "your" Then comes the accusative singular direct object:

κλήσις, *klēsis* - "calling"

This refers to the work of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. When the sinner understands the Spirit's revelation of the gospel and responds positively to it then the Spirit takes that expression of faith and converts it to saving grace which is effectual for salvation. This is called the doctrine of efficacious grace. It is at this moment that the believer is equipped with 40 spiritual assets that are designed to carry him to spiritual maturity, occupation with Christ, and fulfillment of the escrow agreement which results in maximum glorification of God.

Therefore, κλήσις, *klēsis* is the beginning point of the system designed by God for the believer to glorify Him. The final concept is brought out by the next accusative direct object:

ἐκλογή, *eklogē* - "election" But more specifically it refers to God's sovereign choice of those who experience efficacious grace to be the recipients of special favor and privilege.

This special favor and privilege is the escrow deposit that is retained in Christ until the believer fulfills the conditions of the escrow agreement. Fulfillment, again, is spiritual maturity, occupation with Christ, and maximum glorification of God.

2 Peter 1:10 - Therefore, fellow believers, be more motivated to make your calling and election ...

What comes next is a critical word in the exposition of this verse. It is the accusative singular of the predicate adjective:

βέβαιος, *bebaios* - KJV: sure.

This word refers to the payment of a legally guaranteed security. The etymology is provided by three sources:

Spicq, Ceslas. *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*. Vol. 1. Translated and edited by James D. Ernest. (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 280-81:



Bebaios—"That on which one can walk," hence "solid, firm, durable, sure, certain." It is often associated with **πιστός / pistos** ["faith"] and **ἀληθής / alēthēs** ["truth"].

Arndt, William F. and F. Wilber Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 138:

(The noun) **βεβαίωσις / bebaiōsis** / is a legal technical term for guaranteeing, furnishing security."

Deissmann, G. Adolf. *Bible Studies*. Translated by Alexander Grieve. (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988), 104; 106-107:

Βεβαίωσις / bebaiōsis / . "The seller was required, in general, to deliver to the buyer the thing sold *without* dispute. In the language of the Attic (legal) process, **Βεβαίωσις / bebaiōsis** / thus received the technical meaning of a definite obligation of the seller: the seller did not only make over the thing to the buyer, but assumed the guarantee to defend the validity of the sale against any possible claims of a third party.

A sale **εἰς βεβαίωσιν / eis bebaiōsin** / is a definitive, legally guaranteed sale. **Βεβαιωτής, bebaiōtēs**: sale-surety.

... in Attic jurisprudence: guarantee in regard to a sale; it is still a technical expression for a legally guaranteed security.

From these definitions we can discern what Peter is saying: The escrow deposit is a legal security whose delivery or conveyance is guaranteed to the believer who fulfills the conditions of the escrow agreement. Fulfillment is accomplished through faith by means of an advance described by the Magnificent Seven attributes who carry the believer from basic humility to occupation with Christ. The believer who makes this advance can rest assured that the transfer of his escrow account will become a certainty. One of the words used by Deissmann is "surety" which is defined by:

Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "surety":

Certainty of an end or result aimed at; certainty of obtaining something.

Therefore, the believer is not challenged to prove his election by means of the Magnificent Seven. He is to make his election a spiritual reality by means of the Magnificent Seven. Election has to do with being chosen for special favor and privilege.

Election is a decree that is the result of foreknowledge. God knew from His omniscience all those who would express faith in Jesus Christ and be the beneficiary of His efficacious grace. These are the ones whom God chose to be the recipients of special favor and privilege. To each of the elect He imputed an escrow account. Conveyance of the escrow was the means by which man would glorify Him. The advance through the plan described by Peter in this paragraph constitutes the fulfillment of that escrow agreement.

An additional promise is attached to the believer who makes this successful advance. It is introduced by the present active participle of the verb:

ποιέω, poieo - "by doing"



present: Retroactive progressive; denotes that which has begun in the past and continues to the present; signifies action in a state of persistence. It refers to consistency in the believer's advance to the stage of spiritual maturity.

active: The sophisticated believer produces the action.

participle: Instrumental; indicates the means by which the action of the main verb is accomplished. The main verb is **σπουδάζω, spoudazō**, "be more motivated." Persistence in utilizing the four spiritual mechanics is the source of motivation expressed by reciprocal love for God. This is summed up by the accusative plural of the near demonstrative pronoun:

οὗτος, houtos - "these things"

Finally we come to the aorist active subjunctive verb with a double negative of emphatic negation:

πταίω, ptaiō - "to stumble" or "go astray"

However, the double negatives emphatically deny this as a possibility. They are the negative conjunctions:

οὐ, su + μή, mē - "you will never stumble."

It is obvious that for a person at this level of spiritual advance this negation is not a promise that (1) he will not lose his salvation, (2) he will not be among the reprobate, or (3) he will not fall into hell. It is the status of the mature believer who may have confidence that in spiritual maturity he will not become engaged in prolonged excursions in cosmic living. Instead he will use the rebound technique to confess his sins, receive forgiveness of them, and then continue on in his spiritual life.

The expanded translation of this verse thus reads this way:

2 Peter 1:10 - (ETL) Therefore, fellow believers, be more motivated to make your efficacious grace and your election to privilege a spiritual reality; for by doing these things that cause more motivation, you will never, ever stumble into prolonged carnality.

The spiritual reality of escrow conveyance to the winner believer is the subject of the final verse of the paragraph:

2 Peter 1:11 - For in this manner, your entrance into the eternal kingdom [evaluation throne of Christ] of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly supplied [conveyance of escrow blessing for eternity at the presentation of the Nike Awards].

- 7) This passage, badly translated and thus wrongly applied, has been used to support the heretical doctrine of limited atonement.
- 8) This heresy was the subject of continuing debate in England between its development by Theodore Bèza after he succeeded John Calvin in 1564 to the approval of the *Westminster Confession* in 1648.



- 9) In the end, Bèza's doctrine of limited atonement found its way into the latter and thus had tremendous influence on Protestant theology in the colonies of America and later in the spiritual culture of the United States.

Bray, Gerald (ed.). "The Westminster Confession of Faith." In *Documents of the English Reformation*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 490:

By the decree of God ... some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life and others foreordained to everlasting death.

- 10) It is the impact limited atonement has on the thinking of American Protestants that has caused so many to consider the performance of "good works to be an essential part and parcel of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In the time we have left we will note some of this development.