

## ORDAINED TO ETERNAL LIFE?

On Paul's first missionary journey, while at Antioch (in Pisidia), the Jews were very angry at Paul and Barnabas due to the truth they delivered. They "contradicted and blasphemed" what these faithful servants had preached. These Jews were not about to accept the truth, but rather "*had put it away from themselves, and judged themselves unworthy of eternal life*" (Acts 13:46). Luke records that the Gentiles were glad to hear that they were at the top of the list of Barnabas and Paul's priorities: attention was now to be focused on them as these men of God "turned to the Gentiles."

In verse 48 it is written that "as many as were ordained to eternal life" believed. This verse is a favorite of the Calvinists as they push their erroneous doctrine of predestination. To them, it means that this was an action done by God, therefore God had ordained that some were going to be saved and that others were not!

In this context, Luke is contrasting two opposing points of view of those in Paul's audience that day. The antagonistic Jews were "filled with jealousy," contradicted the things spoken by Paul, and judged themselves unworthy of eternal life (v. 45). Contrariwise, the Gentiles were "*glad, and glorified the word of the Lord*" (v. 48). Remember the context!

Now, what does Luke mean when he says that the Gentiles "were ordained unto eternal life?" If you can figure out how the Jews "judged themselves unworthy of eternal life," you are getting close to Luke's meaning of "ordain." **They took part in the process, it was not done not for them by someone else.**

The word "ordain" is a participle from the Greek verb *tasso*, meaning to fix, determine, or appoint. In English, we have but two voices, the active and passive, i.e., the subject is either doing the action of the verb, or the subject is

receiving that action. However, in Greek there is a third voice which must be taken into consideration when dealing with matters of Biblical interpretation. The Greek has a MIDDLE voice, where the meaning is that the subject of the sentence is doing the action of the verb **FOR THEMSELVES!** Since both the passive and the middle voices share the same endings, we need to keep an open mind about the possibility of both the passive and the middle being used in Acts 13:48.

In Reese's work on the book of Acts (New Testament History, ACTS, p. 491), he states: "If we take it in the middle voice, it speaks of something the people did for their own benefit. 'Those who were determined to have eternal life believed'." What we have here are two entirely different mindsets: the Jews were determined to be disobedient, and the Gentiles were determined to be obedient. The former were contentious, envious, and blasphemed the word of God, while the latter were elated, and glorified the word of the Lord.

How did the Jews "judge themselves unworthy of eternal life?" The very same way that the Gentiles were worthy of eternal life! Both participated in their eternal destiny; neither had their destiny decided for them by a third party, i.e., God. It was their decision.

There was a huge difference that day in the attitude of the Jews toward the word of God, and that manifested by the Gentiles toward that same word of God. The Gentiles' attitude could be described as "Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth," while the Jews' attitude was to thrust it from them, reject it, and speak abusively of those who preached the gospel. These Gentiles were "determined" to pursue and obtain everlasting life.

Furthermore, in Acts 15:2 this word is again used where the leaders decided to send Paul and Barnabas up to Jerusalem to lay the problem of whether or not circumcision was required of new converts to Christianity. The King

James Version states: "*...they determined that Paul and Barnabas...*" and some others would go and get the apostles and elders to deal with this important issue.

There are three good reasons why God did not arbitrarily ordain these Gentiles to eternal life. (1) The word *tasso* can mean "to determine" (Acts 15:2), and here it is not even middle voice, but rather the active; (2) in Acts 13:48 there is the probability the word is in the middle voice instead of passive, and thus this would be an action "they had done for their own benefit"; and (3) when such a decision must be made regarding whether or not a word is passive or middle, the context is determinative. In Acts 13:48, the immediate context forces us to the conclusion that this action is in the middle voice, i.e. something they did for themselves (see paragraphs 3-8 above), and the larger context of the Bible demands the same, since God permits men to make their own decisions about salvation (Acts 10:34; Rev. 22:17). The Calvinistic doctrine of predestination again "bites the dust."

**Wayne Price** *from McCloud Messenger*

*Next Sunday we begin our*

**Fall Gospel Meeting**

*The Christian Family*

**Jack Williams**

**October 7-11, 2007**

**Sunday: 9:30 am 10:30 am 6:00 pm**

**Monday-Thursday: 7:00 pm**

**Wednesday Ladies Class: 10:00 am**

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Ralph and Helen Franklin, 10-01; Jeremy Keifer, 10-01.

## **ILL**

**Sunday:** Kathleen Camp; Janice Carter (PM), Joy Parish.

**Wednesday:** Millie Robertson. Millie Robertson had out patient tests on Wednesday with good results. Janice Carter is doing well with her knee surgery. Jamal Abyad continues to have difficulties with cancer.

**Those battling cancer:** Jamal Abyad, David Cole, and Ledgia Campbell. Please remember these in your prayers, as well as: Millie Robertson, Allen Scott, and Ralph and Helen Franklin.

## **HOME BOUND**

Bob Adams resides at Room D-4 of the Johnson County Nursing Center in Olathe. Marion Stone is at home. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

## **OUT OF TOWN**

Wilba Hopkins is visiting relatives in Neosho, Missouri this weekend. John and Barbara James are on vacation in New England until next week. Melissa Cole was in Osage City, Kansas last weekend. Robin Brown was out of town on business last week.

## **LADIES BIBLE CLASS**

The Ladies Bible Class will resume this Wednesday, October 3 at 10 AM. All ladies are encouraged to attend. Jack Williams will be speaking to the Ladies Class on October 10 with a taco salad luncheon following class.

## **FALL GOSPEL MEETING**

Our Fall Gospel Meeting, "*The Christian Family*" with Jack Williams will begin next Sunday! Pray for our meeting and invite your friends, relatives and associates to attend with you. Flyers are available in the foyer.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Sunday AM, 43; Sunday PM, 32; Wednesday PM, 32.

## **Those To Serve**

September 30, 2007

**BUILDING AND COMMUNION.....Thomas**

### **MORNING WORSHIP**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS..... George Thomas**

**SONG LEADER.....Steve Brown**

**OPENING PRAYER ..... John Cody Carter**

**PRESIDE..... Joel Nelson**

**ASSIST..... John Dodson**

**ASSIST.....David Parish**

**CLOSING PRAYER..... Chris Edwards**

### **EVENING WORSHIP**

**OPENING PRAYER ..... Trent Thrasher**

**CLOSING PRAYER.....Jared Nelson**

**LORD'S SUPPER..... Joel Nelson**

### **WEDNESDAY Oct. 3rd**

**SONG LEADER..... John Cody Carter**

**INVITATION .....Steve Brown**

## **WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

### **Sunday**

Bible Study ..... 9:30 AM

Morning Worship ..... 10:30 AM

Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM

### **Wednesday**

Ladies Bible Study ..... 10:00 AM

Bible Study ..... 7:00 PM

**Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher**

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