

July 23rd, 2017

THE EXPERIMENTAL CHRISTIAN

John 17:3

At the beginning of sermons, or lectures, or great speeches, they tell you that you have to have grab the audience's attention. You have to compel them to listen. So here is my attempt to compel you to listen: unless you are an experimental Christian you will not be saved. This is at the very heart of what Jesus is praying for His church in John 17. Look at v.3 "And *this* is eternal life, *that they know you*, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." This verse is what it means to be an experimental Christian. This is a term that the Reformers and the Puritan used quite frequently. It means "trial." It's interchangeable with the word *experiential*. Both of these words experimental and experiential, when attached to the word Christian, mean that the most vital, most central, *sin qua non* of the faith is experiencing Jesus Christ in head, in heart, and in hands. Joel Beeke has said this about experimental Christianity:

"...unless our religion is experiential, we will perish, not because experience itself saves, but because the Christ who saves sinners must be *experienced personally* as the foundation upon which our eternal hope is built."¹ Joel Beeke

And this type of faith is *not* the prevailing faith of our day. Sociologist Christian Smith performed a study in 2005 amongst 3,000 American teenagers. He published his findings in his book *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*. What he found is that most teenagers hold to the religion that he coined Moralistic Therapeutic Deism.

Moralistic meaning that God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, and that it is these "good" people that go to heaven when they die.² **Therapeutic** meaning that the central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good

¹ Joel Beeke, *Puritan Reformed Spirituality*, (Webster, NY,: Evangelical Press USA, 2006), pg. 426

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moralistic_therapeutic_deism accessed July 22, 2017

about oneself.³ **Deistic** meaning that although God exists, and that He created and ordered the world, He does not need to be particularly involved in your life except when needed to resolve a problem.⁴ To sum up, God wants you to be good to others, happy in yourself, and you don't need His personal involvement to accomplish either. Jesus is *merely* a life coach, or a guru, that helps you accomplish these goals.

And sadly, that is how many in the church (especially the church in America) treat Jesus. 'God I'm doing my penance, I'm coming to church, I'm taking my medicine. Now bless me, and make me happy in life.' And don't think you are immune to this type of thinking because you are a Calvinist. John Newton, an eminent Calvinist in the 18th century wrote to a younger pastor saying

“We may be very orthodox, skilled in the defense of the five points, satisfied that our constitution of church order is the very best in the world, and yet be lamentably cold and formal in the feelings of our hearts towards him.”⁵

Having orthodox beliefs is not the *essence* of Christianity. The essence of Christianity is: 'Jesus, You are my life.' Listen to how Paul describes the Christian life in **Colossians 3:3-4** “For you have died, and *your life* is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ *who is your life* appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.” Or **Philippians 1:21** “For to me *to live* is Christ, and to die is gain.” Or **Galatians 2:20** “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ *who lives in me*. And the life I now live in the flesh *I live* by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”⁶

³ *ibid*

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ John Newton, *Wise Counsel: John Newton's Letters to John Ryland Jr.*, Ed. Grant Gordon, (Carlisle, PA.: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint 2011), pg. 128

⁶ or see Psalm 63:3 “Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.”

When Jesus prays for His church in John 17, He is not *merely* communing with the Father. He is teaching you the meaning of *everything*. The meaning of your existence is to *know* the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He sent. That is what an experimental Christian looks like.

The Big Idea...

Experimental Christians are those that find all their happiness in the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He sent.

- ☆ The Presumptions of Love Towards God
- ☆ The Proofs of Love Towards God

I. The Presumptions of Love Towards God

Knowing You

Look at v.3 “And this is eternal life, that they *know* you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” Last week we saw that this *knowing* that Jesus speaks of here is not a cognitive exercise. It is a Jewish idiom for marital intimacy (**Genesis 4:1**)⁷ The *essence* of eternal life is not *merely* endless existence. It is an invitation into the most intimate encounter conceivable. In John 6, we saw that God created appetites so that when Jesus said “I am the bread of life” (**John 6:35**) we would know that eternal life is being fully satisfied in Jesus. So here we see that God created sex so that when Jesus says eternal life is *knowing* Me, we would know that gaining Christ is the most thrilling, most affectionate, most intoxicating relationship that exists or can exist.

⁷ “Now Adam *knew* Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain,”

The Only True God

But Jesus says more here. He says “that they know you, the *only true* God.” This is perhaps the most controversial thing that our culture could hear. You would think that the verses that condemn homosexuality would be more sting more. But I don’t think that’s the case. When Jesus says ‘Eternal life is knowing the *only true God*’ He is cutting off all ability to say “That’s just your truth.” Christianity is *not* one truth amongst many. It is truth with a capital T.⁸ There is no god outside of the Triune God of Scripture. Anyone who rejects this God rejects eternal life. 1 **John 5:20** says “And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.”⁹

And Jesus Christ whom you have sent

But the second part of v.3 is as equally important: “that they know you... *and* Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” God the Father cannot be known apart from Jesus Christ. Not *only* because Jesus reveals to us who the Father is (**John 1:18**)¹⁰, but because of His atoning death on the cross. Sin requires punishment. Every sin, including the sins you have committed today must be punished. The sin of doubting God’s provision for tomorrow, the sin of overeating, the sin using your Biblical knowledge to look down on others, the sin of not *loving* to show kindness,¹¹ the sin of not denying yourself, the sin of disobeying your parents, the sin of not having God at the center of every

⁸ There are not multiple truths, nor is their multiple paths of salvation.

⁹ Jeremiah 10:10 “But the Lord is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King. At his wrath the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure his indignation.” 1 Corinthians 8:5-6 For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”—yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.”

¹⁰ “No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.”

¹¹ Micah 6:8

thought, deed, and action, MUST all be punished. And that is what Isaiah felt when He saw the LORD sitting on His throne in Isaiah 6. He saw the white hot holiness of God and He cried out ““Woe is me! For I am *lost*; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; *for* my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!” (Isaiah 6:5) We can so easily forget how holy God is. Take your kids through a walk in a cemetery sometime. I walked around in Morris Hill Cemetery on Friday, I was struck by the thousands of gravestones. Cemeteries exist to testify to one all-suffocating truth: ‘God is holy and the wages of sin is death.’ That’s what Isaiah felt in the core of his being: death. He needed God to send a burning coal from the altar to take away His sin.¹² And that is what God did in Christ for you dear congregation. I **John 4:10** “In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be *the* propitiation for our sins.”

Those two truths: there is only one true God and Jesus Christ was sent for sinners are the the two wings of eternal life. Take either one away and there is no eternal life.

The love of a hypocrite vs. the love of a saint

The problem is that many people can hear and affirm and even be *greatly affected* by these truths yet not be saved. King Herod *gladly* heard John the Baptist preach. **Mark 6:20** “When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him *gladly*.” In the parable of the sower, the hearers who were characterized as “rocky ground” received the word with *joy*, but fell away when trials began (**Matthew 13:20-21**). In **Hebrews 6:5** we read of those who had at one time had “tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come” and yet fall away to their own harm. In **2 Peter 2:20** we read of those who “have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,” but then become entangled in them again, and their last state is worse than the first. The Bible is full of those who looked like

¹² Isaiah 6:6-7

they possessed eternal life but did not.¹³ False conversions are par for the course in the Bible.

That's why Jonathan Edwards wrote *Religious Affections* during the Great Awakening. During his day, a great move of God swept over and shaped the entire continent. But there was also a counterfeit movement happening at the same time.¹⁴ To be a bit anachronistic, it would be the equivalent to our Moralistic Therapeutic Deism. So Edwards labored with his pen to distinguish between the love of a hypocrite (a false convert) and the love of a true saint.

This is how Edwards says it "The hypocrite rejoices in himself; self is the *first foundation* of his joy...they first rejoice that they are made so much of by God; and *then on that ground*, [God] seems in a sort lovely to them."¹⁵ Edward's argument rests on a Scripture from **Luke 6:32** "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? *For even sinners love those who love them.*" Sinners, meaning the unsaved here, will extend love to those that make much of them. John Piper says it like this

"When the love of God is preached (with a man-centered emphasis) they hear it to mean simply that God makes much of us. They may even have a strong affection for God as long as they see him as the endorsement of their delight being the foundation of their own happiness. If God can be

¹³ See Iain Murray's *Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography*, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint 2008), pg. 255

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False conversions were par for the course in Jesus' time. "For this seems to be the very case of the Jews of that generation that Christ speaks of (Matt. 12.43-45). They had been awakened by John the Baptist's preaching, and brought to a reformation of their former licentious courses, whereby the unclean spirit was as it were turned out, and the house swept and garnished; yet, being empty of God and of grace, full of themselves, and exalted in an exceeding high opinion of their own righteousness and eminent holiness, they became habituated to an answerable self-exalting behavior. They changed the sins of the publicans and harlots for those of the Pharisees; and in the issue, had seven devils and were worse than at the first." *ibid*, pg. 256

¹⁴ The devil always counterfeits God's most excellent works. "The devil," Edwards argues, "does not trouble to counterfeit valueless things—'there are many false diamonds and rubies, but who goes about to counterfeit common stones?'" *ibid*, pg. 255

¹⁵ quoted in John Piper's *God is the Gospel: Meditations on God's Love as the Gift of Himself*, (Wheaton, IL.,: Crossway, 2005), pg. 150

seen as the enabler of their self-exaltation, they will be happy to do some God-exaltation. If God is man-centered, they are willing to be, in a sense, God-centered.”¹⁶

And this is exactly the type of gospel that is preached from so many pulpits today “God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.” When the emphasis of our gospel is entirely on God making much of the sinner, with no emphasis on the greatest and excellency of God Himself, we are aiming at false conversions. The natural unsaved man loves to be made much of. And he will rejoice in a god who orbits around him. Dear congregation, this is not eternal life.

II. The Proofs of Love Towards God

How can you know if you’re a true Christian? How do you know if v.3 is your reality? “And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” I believe Jesus is praying this to give His true saints assurance that they belong to Him. Are their proofs (or marks) that our love towards God is the real thing?¹⁷

To learn the true nature of anything, view it in its purity¹⁸

Yes. And to learn what those marks look like we must view them in their perfection. If we want to know what real money is, we don’t study the counterfeit. When Paul taught us about marriage, where did He turn? He

¹⁶ *ibid*, pg. 149-150

¹⁷ Paul thought so. 1 Thessalonians 1:2-5 “We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly[a] mentioning you in our prayers, remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers[b] loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.”

¹⁸ Edwards argued “If we would know the nature of true gold, we must view it, not in the ore, but when it is refined. If we would learn what true religion is, we must go where there is true religion, and nothing but true religion, and it its highest perfection” which is heaven. Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Vol. 1*, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprinted 2009), pg. 242

turned to the ultimate and real marriage between Christ and the church (**Ephesians 5:32**).¹⁹ Therefore, to see what the true marks (or proofs) of loving God are, we need to ask: what will the saints be like in heaven? Because this grace in heaven, begins down here. I see 5 marks of what it means to truly know God and Jesus Christ.²⁰ 5 marks as to what Jesus means in **v.3** 5 marks that all true saints will inevitably enjoy perfectly and that begin in this life.

1. Experimental Christians worship God because He is worthy in Himself

The saints in Heaven will first and foremost worship God because He is worthy in Himself *independent* of anything He has done. God is their chief good in heaven. He is their portion, their food, their drink, their breath, their everlasting joy. **Psalm 73:25-26** “Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

This is the type of Christianity that the great missionary to the Indians David Brainerd had. Two months before his death, he wrote this in his journal:

“My heaven is to please God, and glorify him, and give all to him, and to be wholly devoted to his glory. — That is the heaven I long for; that is my religion; and that is my happiness; and always was, ever since I supposed I had any true religion: and all those that are of that religion, shall meet with me in heaven. I do not go to heaven to be advanced, but to give honor to God. It is no matter where I shall be stationed in heaven, whether I have a high or low seat there, but to love, and please, and glorify God. If I had a thousand souls, if they were worth anything, I would give them all to God: but I have nothing to give when all is done.

¹⁹ This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

²⁰ Great help here by David Brainerd’s Detached Papers—Third Paper: Some signs of godliness, found in Jonathan Edwards’ *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Vol. 2*, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprinted 2009), pg. 441 Also see Iain Murray’s *Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography*, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint 2008), pg. 234

It is impossible for any rational creature to be happy without acting all for God. God himself could not make me happy any other way.”²¹

2. Experimental Christians grow in their admiration for Jesus Christ

False converts stop hungering and thirsting after Christ.²² They cease striving. They stop looking for more ways to admire Him. That’s why we have the parable of the ten virgins. The five foolish ones fell asleep at the prospect of the Bridegroom’s arrival. They grew bored with Him (**Matthew 25:5**).²³ But true saints continue to strive to admire Jesus Christ more and more.²⁴ The business of their lives is spent on discovering who is the Son of Man. They continue to be amazed that He would spill His blood for them. They continue to be amazed that He would cover them with His righteousness. And this admiration only intensifies in eternity. The song of Heaven is “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you

²¹ David Brainerd as quoted in Jonathan Edwards’ *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Vol. 2*, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), pg. 35

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Nothing else can satisfy the hearts of the saints. John Newton when writing to John Ryland Jr. about the joy of good books, quickly qualified “Whatever we can see with our eyes, and touch with our hands, shrinks upon trial, and will not fully answer the expectations which the prospect raised. It quickly ceases to be new, and then we secretly say to ourselves, Is this all?” John Newton, *Wise Counsel: John Newton’s Letters to John Ryland Jr.*, Ed. Grant Gordon, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint 2011), pg. 127

²² In contrast to the hungering and thirsting of the saints: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.” Matthew 5:6

²³ This is the great difference between true and false conversion, between the church and the world, between the devil and the angels, between the sheep and the goats.

²⁴ “The Scriptures everywhere represent the seeking, striving, and labor of a Christian, as being chiefly after his conversion, and his conversion as being but the beginning of his work. And almost all that is said in the New Testament, of men’s watching, giving earnest heed to themselves, running the race that is set before them, striving and agonizing, wrestling not with flesh and blood but principalities and powers, fighting, putting on the whole armor of God, and standing, pressing forward, reaching forth, continuing instant in prayer, crying to God day and night; I say, almost all that is said in the New Testament of these things, is spoken of and directed to the saints. Where these things are applied to sinners seeking conversion once, they are spoken of the saints’ prosecution of the great business of their high calling ten times.” Jonathan Edwards in Iain Murray’s *Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography*, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint 2008), pg. 260

ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,”
(**Revelation 5:9**)

3. Experimental Christians see holiness as a delight

The greatest trick that Satan has played on the carnal mind is to convince it that holiness is sour and morose and undesirable. But nothing is more delightful than holiness. Holiness is being made more into to the image of Christ (**Eph. 4:24**) To think that holiness is undesirable is to think that Jesus is undesirable. The Apostle Paul’s great lust in life was become as much like Christ as he could. **Philippians 3:8-9** “For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that *I may gain Christ* and be found in him...[v.10] *becoming like him* in his death.” Do you hear what Paul is saying? ‘I am willing to lose all, in order that I may become holy like Him.’ Holiness was the passion of Paul’s life, because He saw it for what it was. Holiness is the heart set free to love God, and to love your neighbor. Holiness is why the saints are happy in heaven.

4. Experimental Christians see sin as their greatest enemy

Why do experimental Christians hate sin mainly? Not primarily because it hurts them. But primarily because it lies about God. Sin makes God look like He is not worth worshipping. Sin makes other things look more valuable to the world than God. When Paul was rebuking the Jews in **Romans 2:23-24**, he says “You who boast in the law dishonor God *by breaking the law*. For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.” God is blasphemed by the world when they see Christians engaging in sin. Because sin says that something else is more valuable than the Living God. That’s why we see the Psalmist say in **Psalms 97:10** “O you who love the Lord, hate evil!”²⁵ This is an essential mark of those who have eternal life. They hate sin mainly because it makes God look bad.

²⁵ Proverbs 8:13 says “The fear of the Lord is hatred of evil.”

5. Experimental Christians treasure God's law and His Word

When the Spirit of God causes men and women to be born again, they no longer see obedience to God's law as a slavish-joyless duty, but as a sheer delight. This doesn't mean that they do not ever disobey. There is much corruption left in the most eminent saint on earth. But their disposition has changed towards God's law. Now they can agree with the Psalmist "I find delight in your commandments which I love" (**Psalm 119:47**) "The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces." (**Psalm 119:72**) "More to be desired are then than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter than honey and drippings of the honeycomb." (**Psalm 19:10**)

The reason why true saints love God's word is because God's word is a window to God's worth. Looking into the Word of God is looking into God Himself.

Summary

These are the proofs of possessing eternal life. Experimental Christians are those that worship God because He is worthy in Himself; they are those that grow in their admiration of Christ, they are those that count holiness as a delight, they count sin as their greatest enemy, and they treasure God's law and His Word.

Application

Our Doctrine: Christians must be experimental otherwise they are not Christians

When Jesus prayed v.3 into existence, He gave us *the definitive picture* of what it looks like to be a Christian. "This is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." There is no other type of Christian. There are only experimental Christians—meaning only those who

personally experience Jesus Christ in their heads, and hearts, and hands are truly Christians. That's why Paul can say with such boldness "If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed." (1 **Corinthians 16:22**) Paul uses the word *phileō* for love here. *Phileō* emphasizes a deep caring affection, a personal attachment, a heart tenderness. Paul is saying that if anyone doesn't have a deep caring affection, a personal attachment, a heart that is tender for Christ, He is accursed—ἀνάθεμα anathema. To be anathema is the greatest curse imaginable.²⁶ It means to be devoted to destruction without the hope of redemption. It is the strongest word that he could have used. Paul said those words to *the church*. He warned *the church*—those professing to be Christians—that a lack of love for the Lord would result in their destruction. If someone were to say that "but we are not saved by loving Christ, we are saved by faith in Christ." The Scripture says that "faith [*works*] through love" (**Gal. 5:6**) "Wherever there is no love, there is also no faith."²⁷ It's impossible to be a Christian and not have an affectionate and tender heart for Christ. Christianity is "Jesus is my life."

That's our doctrine: Christians must be experimental otherwise they are not Christians. Therefore...

Our Duty: We ought to examine our own hearts

Is v.3 a reality for you? There is no greater question that you could ever answer. Who should you marry? What career should you pursue? Where should you live? Who should you be friends with? None of those questions matter compared to this one: Do you *know* the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He sent? Do you love God because He is worthy in Himself? Are you

²⁶ Brakel says "It is the greatest curse imaginable." Wilhelmus A Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service, Vol. 3: The Law, Christian Graces, and the Lord's Prayer*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Reformation Heritage Books, 1994), pg. 280

²⁷ *ibid*, pg. 279

growing in admiration for Christ? Do you desire to be more holy? Do you hate your sin, and love God's word?

Now *true Christians* can hear those types of questions and begin to fear that they do not truly love God. Perhaps you are one of those people. You hear the a message like this, and you can begin to doubt their salvation. Perhaps you feel a lack of passion for Jesus and you reason that if you really loved Christ, that passion should always be present.²⁸

So let's consider this *carefully*. Sometimes you will feel as dead as a stone towards God. Read the book of Job. Job felt like committing suicide. Job felt cut off from the land of the living. Job felt utter despair. He felt. He felt. He felt. The first thing, to recognize here is that our feelings can often be our greatest deceivers. First, think about the pattern that King David showed us: he didn't trust his feelings. He didn't trust His self-assessment. So he prayed "Search me, O God, and know my heart!" (**Psalm 139:23**) He depended upon God to tell Him the truth, and so He went to prayer and the Word.

But the other thing to recognize is that Jesus Himself said that one of the marks of a true Christian is that they mourn over their falling short. Jesus said in **Matthew 5:4** "Blessed are those who *mourn*, for they shall be comforted." Mourn over what? Your own sin. Your own lack of passion for the Savior. Jesus says 'Blessed are you *if you feel* this way.' Feeling that you don't have a strong enough passion for Jesus *is* what you ought to feel. Beloved, you will never have a strong enough passion for Jesus. He is infinitely great, and infinitely holy, and therefore deserves infinite passion. That's something you can't give. Christ died for your lack of passion. Christ died for your lack of zeal, your lack of tenderness, your lack of love. But that's why Jesus says you're blessed. That's why Jesus says you will be comforted. Because salvation doesn't depend upon you. It depends on Christ. His blood, His righteousness. Saving faith is saying 'Yes Lord, I surrender to you. I can't do it. I fall helplessly in to your arms, and I hope in you alone.' That is eternal life!

²⁸ *ibid*, pg. 280-281

Trusting in Jesus Christ to save you completely, entirely, comprehensively, because you could never save yourself.

Our Delight: The gift of eternal life is the gift of knowing God

Let's look at the logic of Jesus' prayer. Look down at Jesus prayer one more time in John 17. v.1 "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." Now follow the logic of Jesus' prayer.

1. **Jesus' gift to the elect is eternal life** (v.2) — *"to give eternal life to all whom you have given him"*
2. **Eternal life is intimately knowing God** (v.3) — *"this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."*

Therefore Jesus gives the elect the gift of intimately knowing God

When Jesus grants eternal life to God's elect, He guarantees that they will love Him. If you have believed in Christ, then v.3 will invincibly happen to you. God doesn't elect you, and then leave it up to you to figure out how to love Him on your own. **Hebrews 13:21** says that God "equip[s] you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing to His sight." **Philippians 2:13** says "God...works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure." Election means that God implants the very love of Him in your heart. **Romans 5:5** "hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." The gift of eternal life *is* the gift of knowing, and treasuring, and loving the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He sent.

