

SOME GOOD QUALITIES PRODUCED BY A FIRM BELIEF IN THE DOCTRINES OF TOTAL INABILITY & UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION¹

1. HUMILITY. Anyone who properly understands these doctrines will possess a profound humility due to the realization that “*I am nothing and God is everything*” and that “*I neither sought Him nor do I deserve Him.*” (I Cor. 1:26-31; Jn. 6:37, 44)

2. THANKFULNESS. One who believes in total inability and unconditional election will possess a deep gratitude to God, because He sought me even though I was not seeking Him. (Ps. 115:1; Mt. 18:11-14).

3. FEARLESSNESS. A proper biblical view of self will also produce fearlessness in the believer. He will realize that he is simply a servant of God, and that “since God sought me and saved me, He will keep me as long as He has need of me, since He is sovereign and in control over everything” (Prov. 16:33; 21:1; I Kings 22:28, 44; Gen. 50:20; Ps. 76:10; etc.). When a person realizes God is in control and that no one can do anything to him without God’s permission, and that no one can take him home before God is finished with him, he will fear no one and nothing (Prov. 29:25). Consider for instance biblical examples such as Stephen (Acts 7); the three Hebrew youths (Dan. 3); John the Baptist (Mt. 14:1-5); etc. **The doctrine of predestination “gives great security and courage to those who believe it...those that live and move in God and know that He sovereignly controls every atom of this universe, these people are filled with good courage and confidence. Predestination extinguishes fear and it is interesting to note that those who held to it were afraid of no one. It brings men low before God but it lifts Him high, and makes them strong before kings.**

*Thus Mary Queen of Scots could say that she feared the face of John Knox more than ten thousand ships.*² At Knox’s death, the one giving the eulogy famously said, “**Here lies a man that neither feared nor flattered any flesh.**” *Where did he get his fearlessness?* From an unshakeable belief in God’s sovereignty and His predestinating will.

4. SOLIDLY BIBLICAL EVANGELISM (Ps. 3:8; 37:39 & Jonah 2:9). One who believes God does the converting of souls will not be tempted to modify the gospel message or eliminate truths that are offensive to an unsaved person, in order to “trick” them into becoming “Christians”—usually in order to achieve outward results. A couple of real-life examples: the practice of “planting” people in a church audience and teaching them to come forward at the invitation in order to “prime the pump” & get others to come forward³ &/or deliberately ending sermons abruptly in order to allegedly “catch” sinners off-guard and unaware, so that they will not “have time to prepare themselves to resist the invitation”⁴; etc. Instead there will be no trimming off of essential truths such as repentance, hell, etc., in order to make the gospel more appealing to the unsaved (cf. Campus Crusade for Christ’s “4 Spiritual Laws” booklet and their evangelism teaching and procedures). There will be no forcing of “decisions” in order to get a big “head count” & inflate the number of professions. False professions are thus greatly cut down. As a friend once perceptively wrote, “**Better an honest rejection than a false profession.**” (I Cor. 2:4-5)

¹ Written by Mike Edwards, Goroka, Papua New Guinea, September, 1995, revised August, 2011, St. Vincent, West Indies & July 2016, Madison, Ohio.

² D. James Kennedy, *Truths that Transform* (Fleming H. Revell Co.: Old Tappan, NJ, 1974), p. 40

³ I am personally aware of and have witnessed this actual practice.

⁴ Quote from a book on preaching by a well known Baptist pastor who is now deceased.

5. STEDFASTNESS & FAITHFULNESS. A Christian who understands that salvation begins with God not man and that it is a work of the Holy Spirit, will not tend to get discouraged if he doesn't see as many conversions as he would like to when witnessing. He realizes that salvation is ultimately "*of the Lord*" and so will continue to faithfully sow the seed and trust God for the increase, in His perfect time and in the lives of those whom He wishes to call to Himself. (**I Cor. 3:6**)

A FINAL THOUGHT: Believing in total inability and unconditional election does *NOT* deaden evangelistic zeal, if properly understood. The vast majority of the greatest soul winners of all of church history have been believers in these doctrines e.g. Charles Spurgeon, George Whitefield, William Carey, Jonathan Edwards, John Knox, Martin Luther, George Mueller, etc. Belief in these doctrines in no way lessens our responsibility to reach others for Christ through personal evangelism, the passing out of tracts, the conducting of street meetings & church services, etc.

Neither is it an excuse for presenting the gospel in a sloppy, uncaring, unenthusiastic manner! We must always remember that God has ordained the *means* as well as the *ends*, and that we are the means God uses to give the gospel to others so that His ends (salvation) may be accomplished (**Rom. 10:14**). We should remember the fact that what God demands of us is faithfulness, not "success" as the world understands and defines it i.e. number of converts. (**I Cor. 4:2**)