

THE WHOLE STORY  
2 Thess. 2:13, 14

Intro: Our text is a prayer.

The whole Epistle has prayer running through it from beginning to end. See:

- 1) 1:3, 4.
- 2) 1:11, 12.
- 3) 2:13, 14.
- 4) 2:16, 17.
- 5) 3:1, 2.
- 6) 3:5.
- 7) 3:16.
- 8) 3:18.

The unique thing about our text is that it tells the whole story of salvation. There are some details that we would need to find elsewhere, but the basic ingredients are here!

It is amazing how much the Spirit of God often enables the writers of Scripture to compress into a very small space with just a few words.

Let us notice the doctrinal aspects of these verses first, and then look at the verses as a prayer.

I. THE CONTRASTING PARTS OF THE STORY OF SALVATION.

There is:

- 1) That which is done in eternity, and that which is done in time.
- 2) That which is divine, and that which is human.
- 3) That which is perfect, and that which is progressive.

Note very carefully that there are two main verbs in the two verses:

- 1) "Hath . . . chosen."
- 2) "Called."

And "God" is the subject of them both.

Everything in these two verses is related to these two verbs with God as the subject -- even the things which seem to be on the human side of salvation! Keep this in mind.

Now we are ready to look at:

- A. That which is done in eternity (past), and that which is done in time.

God chose us, sovereignly, individually, for Himself --  
"from the beginning."

We will never understand salvation until we understand this. We cannot explain it. We certainly cannot prove it beyond the fact that it is definitely revealed to us in the Word of God.

Cf. 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:9.

We were chosen in eternity past, but called in our lifetime.

So this eliminates the idea held by some that what was done in eternity past is all that God does.

This leads to our second point in this story of salvation:

B. That which is divine, and that which is human.

In v. 13 we have the expression, "belief of the truth."  
In v. 14 we read that God has called us by what Paul calls, "our gospel."

Again, keep in mind that this is what God is doing! But He is bringing it into effect through "the truth" of the "gospel" (to put the two expressions together).

The Bible knows nothing of a salvation which is not based upon personal faith in the Gospel. The proof that we have been chosen is that we will believe.

In the third place:

C. That which is perfect, and that which is progressive.

The fact that we can talk about being saved is the side that is perfect, complete. We have been "called . . . to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." The goal is so certain that we can speak of it now as an accomplished fact.

See what Paul does in Rom. 8:30,

"Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

But there is also the progressive side.

We see this in the term, "through sanctification of the Spirit." This is a purification, being set apart from sin, set apart unto God, cleansed, made holy -- which only "the Spirit" can do for us.

It would be very difficult to add anything to what we have here.

But there is another aspect to this verse that we need to see.

## II. THE WORD OF CONTRAST WITH WHICH THE VERSES BEGIN.

Do you see the word, "But"?

Do you know that this word suggests a contrast with that which has gone before?

What has gone before?

Paul is talking about those in v. 10 who

"received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."

And in v. 12 he speaks of those

"who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Not everybody believes the Gospel. And so -- not everybody will be saved!

We all know this to be the case.

We may not be able to explain why some do and why some don't but it is a fact nevertheless -- and Paul emphasizes this with the word, "But." Whatever may have been the case with those who did not believe, the fact remains that there were those in Thessalonica who did believe!

Why is this so?

There is just one answer: "God." Nobody would believe if it were not for what "God" has done!

Don't focus your attention on what is NOT happening, but upon what IS happening!

## III. THE EFFECT THAT THIS HAD UPON THE APOSTLE.

The doctrine of salvation, when properly understood in all of its aspects, from eternity to eternity, will make you realize that you have a debt of praise to give to God which you will never be able to pay.

And this goes for the doctrine of election -- which is a vital part of the whole scheme of salvation.

And not only will it make you thank God for your salvation, but it will make you thank God for the salvation of every believer you know.

But there is one other part that remains. I still have not

concerned myself with 5 words in v. 13. It has to do with this:

IV. THE TWO RELATIONSHIPS INTO WHICH SALVATION BRINGS US -- ONE, HUMAN; THE OTHER, DIVINE.

Let's take the human first.

A. The human relationship: "brethren."

What a wonderful word that is. It puts us all on the same footing in the family of God. We have the same heavenly Father, and that is what makes us brethren.

How wonderful to see Paul using it!

Even our Lord "is not ashamed to call" us "brethren" (Heb. 2:11b).

B. The divine relationship: "beloved of the Lord."

This was true before we were saved, but how much more apparent it is after we are saved.

Cf. Jer. 31:3,  
 "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying,  
 Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love;  
 therefore, with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."

Cf. also Rom. 8:35-39.

Concl: Do you see why I have called this, THE WHOLE STORY? It is all here.

What do we need to do about it?

- 1) Obviously, for those of us who know the Lord, this should mean a new day in our praise to the Lord.
- 2) It can mean a new day for others who may be here tonight without salvation. This is what God has done for your salvation. God has been working from all eternity to bring you to Himself. The fact that you feel drawn to Him is evidence of His call. All you need do is open your heart in faith to Him -- trusting His Son to save and keep you.