

CONGREGAÇÃO CRISTÃ
NO
BRASIL

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2024 ASSEMBLY

GOD'S ELECTION

31/March/2024



Circular nº 181/2024

Dear brethren,

The Peace of God.

God granted every human being the right to make choices. This free will is a permanent characteristic of every intelligent being – of angels as well as humans. It is the reason that some are saved and others are lost.

God doesn't desire that any should perish, but rather that they would repent from their evil ways and be converted, as it is written:

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:4)

"And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts 10:42-43)

When Adam and Eve chose by their free-will to disobey God and instead listen to the lies of the serpent, they were expelled from the Garden of Eden and separated from God. Their corruption extended to all mankind, bringing condemnation and death to everyone. Since that time, the forces of evil prevail upon the earth, and man remains under the influence of darkness and sin.

Sin dominated the earth until the coming of Jesus Christ, who atoned for our sins and reconciled us with God. Through the sacrifice of the Lord, Christians received power over evil, and the gifts and virtues of the Holy Spirit, restoring man's relationship with God.

God desires that everyone would repent, but He does not force them to do so; He leaves everyone free to decide (2 Corinthians 3:17).

That is why it is written:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." (Matthew 12:31)

Everyone who sins, if he repents and changes his ways, not continuing in sin can receive divine forgiveness as recorded in (1 John 1:9).

In this context, we need a brief explanation of the heavenly election, which we understand, firstly, as being collective, referring to the faithful and universal Christian church, also figuratively known as the body of Christ, whose election is unconditional.

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The election of the human being, as an individual, occurs only when he professes Christianity through faith, thus becoming a member of the body of Christ — “The Church” (Acts 20:28). Through faith, the Christian receives the Holy Spirit which resides within him, strengthens him and helps him to become an integral part of the body of Christ—thus making him one elected by God.

From then on, reciprocal responsibilities arise from this election -- God has responsibilities to the faithful and the faithful have responsibilities to God (Romans 8:29 and 2 Peter 1:1-11).

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”
(2 Timothy 2:19)

Again, we read:

“But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.” (2 Timothy 2: 20-21)

The unconditional election for the salvation and sanctification of the Church of Christ refers to the spiritual body of Christ, that is, the universal group of all sanctified believers. It is determined by God and is permanent, unchangeable and irrevocable. However, for any individual to be a part of this election depends on his personal conduct in faith. He must maintain absolute faith in Jesus Christ and be always united with Him, never deviating, and always maintaining his position as a living member of this spiritual body.

This doctrinal truth is based on Biblical teachings. The scriptures show us two types of apostasy. The first is doctrinal; this is when a person rejects the teachings of Christ or of the Apostles. The second is moral, when a Christian returns to sin, without repentance, leaving a chaste and pure life, and thus becoming a slave to sin (Isaiah 29:13, Matthew 23:25-28, Romans 6:15-23, and Romans 8:6-13).

The eternal plan of God for His Church is that we would be morally upright, with a spotless character, clean hands, and a pure heart, being blameless and holy.

To be blameless before God, we must remain firm and steadfast in faith, and unmovable in our blessed hope of the Gospel (Col 1:22, 23).

The strength that overcomes evil and leads to sanctification comes from the Lord. But it is up to us to choose, desire and seek to serve Him with a sincere heart. Holy works come from the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Scriptures teach us that eternal condemnation results solely from the bad choices that some people make— from their inclination toward sin, their lack of real repentance, and by never experiencing the wonderful pardon offered by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Human perdition is not a selective determination, or a discriminatory sentence imposed on specific individuals. Rather, it results



from life choices made by each person. It is not an irrevocable decree from the Almighty over a predetermined group of people who are marked for condemnation,

It is important to emphasize that a simple confession of faith is not enough for salvation. It is no use for a person to say that he believes that Christ is his Savior, if he lives a life detached from holiness. True faith involves abstaining from sin and being sanctified through the Word of God. It begins the moment the Christian accepts Jesus Christ as his only and sufficient Savior, and it must continue to grow throughout the entire life of the convert. (John 1:12). As we see:

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7:21-23)

A person can even lose the little they have received from God, by living a sinful life.

“For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.” (Mark 4:25)

We fully understand:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2: 8-9)

However, once saved by faith, we must flee from sin, dedicating our Christian life to the holiness required by the Lord, and always striving to grow in the truth and in divine grace.

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.” (Hebrews 12:14)

We are constant victims of spiritual attacks that tempt and try us. But by resisting the temptations and remaining firm in the trials, we show our personal faithfulness to the Lord.

The evil forces that attack us and work to make us renounce our Christian faith inadvertently give us the opportunity to show that our faith and our love of God are true and irrevocable.

Through faith, God gives us strength to overcome evil and be victorious. But the one who sins becomes a vessel of dishonor. His fall doesn't happen because God failed to protect him. It happens because in the depth of his heart, there was not a firm desire to resist sin, or the fear to avoid wickedness; instead, there was a willingness to sin.

Holiness or being Christlike is the standard that God requires. It is the example man should seek to imitate with the strength he receives through faith in Christ. Holiness is not seeking salvation through works, rather, it is faith that generates the works of salvation in the true Christian. Without holiness, no one will see the Lord.



If faith does not move the believer toward holiness, if it doesn't produce any significant interior change in the person, that faith is dead. It has no power to save, but only produces an appearance of holiness and deception.

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (James 2:26)

Everyone should live in holiness, purity, and firmness of faith, and avoid being deceived by reassuring words that promise unconditional salvation to everyone who once believed in Jesus Christ. The apostle Peter warned about the risk of a fall that could impede our walk to eternal life (2 Peter 3:17). The apostle Paul also exhorted the church in Corinth to be careful not to receive the grace of God in vain.

"...we...beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." (2 Corinthians 6:1)

Here the apostle points out the risk of losing grace, and thus losing salvation since we are saved by grace through faith. If grace is received in vain, is unproductive and useless, it will not result in salvation. He also warns of the danger of losing the indwelling of the Holy Spirit:

"Quench not the Spirit." (1 Thessalonians 5:19)

The Bible abounds with warnings about the risk of losing salvation. It compels the Christian to understand this and leave the comfortable place of spiritual complacency, where sin lies in wait. It exhorts the believer to a life of purity and holiness, desiring:

"... that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Ephesians 4:24)

God commands us to be holy:

"For it is written: 'Be ye holy,' for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:16)

Since it is a commandment, we must strive to obey it, having a genuine abhorrence of the sin that so closely surrounds us. The Word of God commands us to be blameless in holiness:

"... that ye may be blameless in holiness before our God and Father..."
(1 Thessalonians 3:13)

It is not enough to say "I believe in God". It is necessary, but not enough, just to believe in the existence of God, because even the demons believe (James 2:19). Christianity is not merely a theory based on knowledge of historical biblical facts. It is a living, transformative practice. In addition to knowing the scriptures, we need to live the Word of God in such a way that it transforms and purifies our entire being.

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“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.”
(1 Peter 1:15)

We warn the believers in Jesus that they must walk in the holiness and righteousness of the Word of God and not rejoice in the sinfulness of this fallen world.

Consider the letter to the Hebrews (2:1, 6:4-8, 10:26 and 10:32) because the text is clear and objective. It warns of the seriousness of the condemnation for Christians who fall back into sin after they have been enlightened, have tasted the celestial gift, participated in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted of the good Word of God and the virtues of the world to come.

Those who do so cannot repent of their sins and therefore cannot be regenerated, since repentance is doctrinal, essential and unquestionable for salvation (Mark 2:17, and 6:12, Luke 5:32 and 13:3-5, Acts 3:19, 11:18, and 17:30, 2 Corinthians 7:10, Hebrews 6:6, Revelation 2:5, 2:16, 2:21, 3:3, 3:19, 9:20, 16:9 and 16:11).

We conclude by urging the brethren to purify themselves from all that contaminates and all that stains their spiritual garments, reminding our dear brethren of the biblical calling:

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service.” (Romans 12:1)

“....but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.” (Hebrews 12:10)

Your Brothers in Christ,

Council of Senior Elders