

Instructions & Guidelines for
Reflective-Research Paper on

Election

REL 321
Spring 2010
Dr. Neal

Note: If you do not like this topic I apologize, but it was inevitable; I mean unavoidable; I mean predestined. I was chosen to give this topic before the foundation of the world. And apparently you were chosen to write this paper.

Due: Wed 4/21, 11am. Turnitin.com submission is mandatory.

These questions should *guide* your paper.

Do not treat these questions as briefs, with separate (and separated) answers in your paper. The paper should be a coherent piece of writing.

Scholars have used Romans (specifically: 8.28-30; 9-11) and Ephesians (especially: 1.1-2.10) to “prove” election: God chooses, elects, predestines some for salvation and others for damnation.

Note: You may, of course, refer to a wider context for discussing these texts.

Based on your understanding of Paul’s writings and theology, answer these questions:

What is Paul’s view on election regarding salvation?

Does he generally agree with the reformed view of salvation? Why (not)?

Predestination, double predestination?

Substantiate/Prove

More specifically:

- 1) What does Paul teach regarding God “choosing” individuals for salvation?
Some relevant terms: elect(ion), chosen, predestine(d); foreknew/foreknow
- 2) What is the significance and/or purpose of the OT allusions and quotes in Rom 9?
Specifically look at Jacob-Esau (9.13); Pharaoh (9.17)
- 3) What, if any, is the theological significance in Eph 1 of the oft-used phrases “in Him/Christ,” “with Him/Christ,” and “through Him/Christ”; us, we, you,?

Substantiate/Prove

Please Note: you may refer to *any* of Paul’s writings to defend, develop, and/or explain your argument, but the focus should be on the assigned Rom & Eph passages. Also, you may contextualize Paul’s view in relation to other NT writings for clarification, etc. (For purposes of this class, you should presume that Hebrews is not Pauline.)

Content (85%):

See above

Your grade is determined by the way you craft your answer (clarity; support; relevance) and not your exact answer: Yeah Calvin! or yeah Arminius! does not matter ultimately. Substantiate, defend, and prove your reading of Paul is correct.

In other words, a reformed paper can make an A as equally as one who objects to reformed theology. *The devil’s in the details.*

Be sure to base your principal argument/answer on Paul and not Calvin, Barth, Dunn, Wright, etc.

DO:

Use rigorous critical judgment
Persuade
Seek objectivity
Evaluate, probe and question

DO NOT:

Plagiarize – cite all quotes, allusions, paraphrases.
Preach; sermonize; tell quaint stories about what your pastor said “one time” in church

Form (15%): Points will be deducted for repeat offenders**DO:**

- 11 pt font; Arial (the font used presently)
- 1 inch margins
- Use proper SBL *footnote* citation format.
- Quote the Bible and textbooks appropriately.
- Use proper English, grammar
- 1.5-spacing
- Specs: Maximum: 10pp.; Minimum: at your own peril
- Use a cover page
- Use online sources with a good dose of discernment (wikipedia should be avoided).

DO NOT:

- Use single-spacing
- Use double-spacing
- Use a folder or binder of any sort – simply staple it.
- Use colored paper.

Bibliography required. Feel free to use your textbook and any scholarly commentary. Our library has a good selection of Pauline material *on reserve*.

Grading scale:

A = Excellent
B = Good
C = Average
D = Poor
F = Consistently Unsatisfactory