

Matthew 11:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.

Analysis

'Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.' Jesus continues His prayer with remarkable statement: 'Even so, Father' (ναὶ ὁ πατήρ/nai ho patēr)—affirmation and acceptance. He doesn't question or apologize for God's sovereign choice to hide truth from some and reveal it to others. Instead, He affirms it: 'for so it seemed good in thy sight' (ὅτι οὕτως εὐδοκία ἐγένετο ἔμπροσθέν σου/hotī oūtōs eudokia egeneto emprosthen sou). The word εὐδοκία (eudokia) means God's good pleasure, will, purpose. This verse establishes that divine election flows from God's sovereign good pleasure, not human worthiness or foreseen faith. God chooses according to His own criteria and purposes, which are inherently good because He is good. Reformed theology sees this as foundational: God's sovereignty in salvation isn't arbitrary cruelty but wise, purposeful, good. We may not understand all reasons, but we trust God's character. Jesus models proper response to divine sovereignty: not objection but worship, not questioning but trust.

Historical Context

This affirmation follows Jesus's thanksgiving for divine election (v.25). In contemporary Judaism, election was understood corporately (Israel chosen) and conditionally (obedience required). Jesus reveals election as individual, gracious, and according to God's pleasure rather than human merit. This teaching contradicted rabbinical emphasis on study and works as earning divine favor. The phrase 'seemed good in thy sight' echoes Old Testament language of divine sovereignty (Psalm 115:3, 135:6, Daniel 4:35). Jesus affirms what Scripture

consistently teaches: God acts according to His own good pleasure, and His pleasure is by definition right and good. Early church fathers (especially Augustine against Pelagius) defended this teaching: grace is sovereignly given, not universally offered and humanly chosen. Reformation recovered this emphasis against medieval works-righteousness. Every generation must reaffirm: salvation depends entirely on God's sovereign grace, not human will or effort (Romans 9:16).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do you respond emotionally and theologically to the reality that God's choices flow from His good pleasure rather than human merit?
2. What does Jesus's worship of God's sovereignty (rather than questioning it) teach about proper response to divine election?
3. How does understanding that God's will is inherently good help you trust His sovereignty even when you don't understand His choices?

Interlinear Text

ναί,	ό	πατήρ,	ὅτι	οὕτως	ἐγένετο	εὐδοκία	ἔμπροσθέν
Even so	G3588	Father	for	so	it seemed	good	sight
G3483		G3962	G3754	G3779	G1096	G2107	G1715

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G4675

Additional Cross-References

2 Timothy 1:9 (Parallel theme): Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

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