



Introducing Our Faith
The Living God

Week 6

God's Electing Grace and Our Free Will



Sampling Scripture

- ❖ God's providence
 - Genesis 50:7-26; Psalm 139:1-18; Isaiah 45:1-19; John 15:1-17; Matthew 6:25-33; 2 Cor 4:11-18; 1 Peter 1:3-9
- ❖ God's grace – He chooses!
 - Isaiah 44:1-2; Psalm 78:67-71; Genesis 12:1-3; Ephesians 1:3-6; Romans 8:29-30,33; 9:9-18
- ❖ Our free will – We choose!
 - Genesis 3:9-10; Joshua 24:15; Matt 23:37; John 1:12; 2 Peter 3:9; John 3:16; Rev 22:17;
- ❖ A key, and often misread, verse – Ephesians 2:8-9
 - "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God – not the result of works, so that no one may boast."
 - "this" (neuter in the Greek) refers to the gift of salvation, not to "faith" (feminine in the Greek)



Election?

- ❖ The “elect” are God’s chosen
- ❖ Equivalent statements
 - God chose Israel = the Israelites were God’s elect
- ❖ God himself is the object of election
 - God chooses others to be in communion
 - God chooses to be God for the world; God chooses to be Emmanuel, God with us!
 - Jesus is the Elect of God! Jesus is also the Rejected!
- ❖ We can better see the glory and goodness of God’s election by looking at Jesus – the concrete expression of God’s free love.
- ❖ The goal of election is about the creation of God’s people, not, initially, individual salvation.
 - We are saved, individually, because we are part of God’s people – those who place their faith and trust in Jesus.



Our Free Will

- ❖ Our decision to put our trust in God – to return God’s love -- is freely made. It must be! Love is only love when it is freely given.
- ❖ But we need to be modest when thinking about what that freedom means.
 - How free are you? Are you capable of doing anything at any moment? Every action you take results from a pre-existing preference.
 - What happens in this world or life without a cause? Our world seems very “deterministic.” Enough so, that many philosophers hold that our freedom is an illusion. The Bible holds otherwise.
- ❖ The biblical view is that however you define freedom or liberty, we are free enough to be morally responsible for our choices!



The Trickiness of Time

- ❖ Time seems very commonsensical to us – but it isn't.
 - It seems nearly impossible to define. Physicists and philosophers have as much trouble as you and I.
- ❖ Time is created. It is some sort of thing; not just a concept.
- ❖ Time is relative.
 - High speeds and strong gravity slow it down.
 - Yes . . . Time passes more slowly on the space shuttle than at mission control center!
 - Time slows as you get close to a black hole.
- ❖ Many of the toughest parts of the doctrine of election revolve around our understanding of time!
 - *Predestination* and *foreknowledge*
- ❖ For C.S. Lewis, God “lives” in an eternal now, with no before or after.

