

refuge

WEEK TWO: HELP FOR MY UNCERTAINTY

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April 15, 2012

This week, we learn that if we are believers, we are “the called” and “the chosen.” Nothing we can do can kill the eternal nature we receive when we chose Christ as Savior and Lord. Let’s look at what the Bible says: do we really have everlasting life or just long-lasting life?

Where Am I Today?

- 1) When have you faced doubts? Was it because of a situation or trial? Was it about the reality of God or about your personal assurance of eternal life? Would you say you have overcome most of these doubts or are you in a doubt and guilt cycle?

Into the Bible

Read Ephesians, chapter one several times this week. This passage deals with the theology we call “predestination” and the inheritance we gain in Christ. Paul also talks about the promise and seal of the Holy Spirit and the incredible, strong power of God that raised Christ from the dead and is “for us who believe.”

- 2) There are many verses that speak to our “chosen” status as believer in addition to Ephesians, chapter 1. Look at these verses a little deeper and longer than you had a chance to study them during the weekend message.
 - a. **John 6:30 and John 3:16.** When you believe, what does God give you?

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- b. **2 Peter 3:9 and Matthew 18:14.** What do these verses tell us about God's desires for you, your friend, or your family member's salvation?

 - c. **1 Peter 2:9.** This verse speaks more to us about our position, relationship and future. How does this encourage you, give you purpose, or give you direction for living?
- 3) What is our responsibility, and God's responsibility, in the salvation process?
- a. **Ephesians 1:7-8**

 - b. **1 Corinthians 6:19-20**

 - c. **Ephesians 2:8-10**

 - d. **Philippians 1:6**
- 4) What is predestined for us? **Read Ephesians 1:4-5 and 11.**

How Does This Apply?

- 5) One quote from this weekend reminds us of the importance of knowing—for sure—about our eternal futures. "Settle the issue...so you can begin to grow and enjoy your salvation!" This is so important to our daily living! Check out these scriptures:
- a. **Hebrews 10:19-23**

 - b. **1 John 1:9**

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- c. **1 John 5:13**
- d. **1 Corinthians 1:8-9**
- e. **Ephesians 1:13-14**

Digging Deeper: Going Further on Your Own

6) “Predestination” is a huge theological controversy within the Christian church. I don’t mean between Christianity and other religions or quasi-Christian groups or cults. Mainline, godly, Christian denominations disagree strongly on this issue. At The Cove Church, what we believe about the theology of “predestination” is not on our list of “Essential Beliefs.” This means that we can worship and serve together with other believers, even if we disagree. In fact, in our Cove 101 class, we say:

- In essential beliefs—we have unity. (Ephesians 4:4-6)
- In non-essential beliefs—we have liberty. (Romans 14:1,4,12,22)
- In all our beliefs—we show love. (1 Corinthians 13:2)

Check out www.covechurch.org/beliefs for a look at “What We Believe.”

However, you need to delve deep and discover what you believe the Bible says and what you personally believe. It’s part of moving on to the meat of the Gospel and leaving behind the baby’s milk (Hebrews 5:12-13).

The following link from *Relevant Bible Teaching* lays out both sides of the discussion about predestination. The author then goes on to see issues with both. It is as balanced a view as is possible to find on one website and should be a good starting place for your research and this aspect of your spiritual journey!

<http://tiny.cc/predestination>

For an interview between two modern champions of the faith—on different sides of this issue—check out this link of a discussion between John Piper and Rick Warren.

<http://tiny.cc/piper-warren>