

chosen & choosing

How God's life becomes ours

Week 2: Dead Man Walking

I find, then, that man was by God constituted free, master of his own will and power; indicating the presence of God's image and likeness in him.
~ Tertullian (155-225), *Against Marcion*

INTRODUCTION – Choose Life!

Deuteronomy 30:11-19; Joshua 24:15

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

Our free choice is an expression of being God's image bearers. This is weakened by our sin, but not lost, destroyed, or rendered inert. We are responsible to choose life.

- **PALAGIAN:** We are free to choose God or not.
- **SEMI-PALAGIAN:** If we want to believe, God will help us.
- **ARMINIAN:** God frees us all to choose.
- **AUGUSTINIAN (CALVINIST):** God must make us choose him.

Anabaptists

DINE IN – Total Depravity VS God's Image

THE DOCTRINE OF INABILITY:

If we are dead and cannot respond to God's call, then regeneration (rebirth, new life) must precede faith.

Ephesians 2:1-5; Colossians 2:13; Romans 3:10-12; 5:12; 8:5-8; 9:16; Acts 13:48; 16:14; Psalm 51:5; Isaiah 64:6; Ezekiel 36:26

But see Ephesians 4:17-18; Luke 15:17, 24, 32; Isaiah 59:2; Matthew 9:12; John 3:19

LOOK TO THE BOOK – Responding Freely to God

- *We are made in God's image, which includes the ability to choose...*
Genesis 1:26-27
- *We are still in God's image, even after sin effects us...*
Genesis 9:6; James 3:9
- *Free choice is still our privilege and our responsibility...*
Genesis 4:7; Deuteronomy 30:11-19; Joshua 24:15; 2 Samuel 24:12; 1 Kings 18:21; John 7:17; Acts 16:31; 17:30; 20:21
- *Biblical examples of godly choices and righteous people...*
Genesis 6:9; Job 1:1, 8; Luke 1:5-6; Acts 10:1-4, etc.

- *We respond to God's call, and God calls everyone...*
John 4:44 VS John 1:9; 12:32; 16:8; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 John 4:19
(Prevenient / pre-regenerating grace)
- *Faith is how we receive God's gift of new life...*
John 1:12-13; Acts 2:38; 16:31; Romans 10:13; Luke 11:9-13

TAKE OUT – I'll Have That to Go Please

1. We all have free choice within God's boundaries of **love**.
2. When we choose to break those boundaries, we separate ourselves from God's **life**.
3. When we admit our sin and come to Christ, he offers us his life as a **gift**. We are forgiven and reconciled with the God of love and life.

CONCLUSION – Thirsty?

John 7:37-38; Revelation 22:17

Q & Eh? Text 647.330.2789 or email ask@themeetinghouse.ca.

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS

Warming Up...

1. Have you ever experienced teaching that emphasized Total Depravity to an unhealthy extreme? What was its effect on you, and on others?
2. What is the danger of the opposite extreme – emphasizing being made in God's image and likeness without an honest admission of our sin and need of salvation? Have you ever experienced that kind of teaching?

Look to the Book...

3. Read **John 1:9-13**. A) What verse or idea stands out to you the most? Why? B) Why do you think John describes Jesus as the true light? C) In what ways do you think Jesus enlightens everyone, just by having come into the world? D) How do you think a parent would feel if their child grew up to disown them? How does that capture God's heart in verses 10-11? E) Why would Arminians stress verse 12 and Calvinists stress verse 13? F) Verse 12 speaks of *receiving* and *believing* Jesus. What do you think each of these ideas means? How do they take shape in your life?

So What?...

4. Compare tonight's passage with **John 3:19** from last week as well as **John 12:46**. Is there any sin in your life that make you love darkness instead of the light? Do you sense you have a choice to make in any area concerning light and darkness?
5. Let's listen to Scripture, closely. Take turns reading **Ephesians 5:1-20** aloud in different translations. Try reading with feeling, dramatically, like the Apostle Paul might plead if he were there in person. Then take time to pray prayers of confession, repentance, praise, requests for God's help, or anything else that comes to mind.

BONUS – My Mission Question: Think back to Tim's series, *The Great Co-Mission*. This month we are challenging ourselves to consider what it would mean to have a personal sense of mission in how we serve God. Do you think God has a plan for your life, no set plan but you just do your best to honour him in your choices, or a combination of both – he has some plans for you but he wants you to make kingdom choices too? What are the potential strengths or pitfalls of each perspective? Can you think of verses or Bible stories that seem to suggest one or more of these perspectives?

Notes are available online at themeetinghouse.ca/teaching