

# RUMINATIONS OF A FORMER HEATHEN

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**Election and Free Will**

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Everything was made by him and without him there was not anything made that was made. And the cross is included in all the things that he made. He gave himself up for us. What a deal! A way out of Death and Hell? I'm grabbing onto that. A person would have to be completely insane to let that go. Yet, insanity is the most prevalent condition in the world today, a fact proven by the rejection of Christ. Here we go into the bottomless subject of election and free will. There is so much I don't know about it that, for the most part, I can only ask questions. I realize that there are people out there who know everything. There are experts out there who know exactly what God was thinking all along. My problem is that I am very undecided on which expert to pick. There are so many different opinions among experts, that I would need another expert to tell me which one of those experts is right. Once in a while I get a letter from somebody who is trying to teach me something, but I am so stubborn, so cynical, so opinionated, so suspicious of men, that it's useless to try to tell me anything. Only God can make me heel. As far as the opinions of men is concerned I'm not sure that anybody knows completely the whole subject of election and free will. And really, why should that be surprising? Why should it be surprising that many of the things of God are past finding out? But there are a few things I know, directly from the Bible and from my own experience. There is definitely election on the part of God, and there is definitely free will on the part of man. How and when, election and free will interact, what is their connection, is very intriguing to me.

One of the most important of these questions is, is everybody who is going to be saved, saved only from before the foundation of the world? Or, to put it another way, are there some people who were *not* elected at the time before the foundation of the world but who have a chance to be saved, anyway? And I don't want to argue about the fact that before the foundation of the world there was no time. Whether there was time or not, as we understand it now, there was a point when God existed and we did not. There was a point before the creation and before there was time, and at that point God was already there, making certain choices about those whom he was going to save.

The question is: Does God keep track of the number of people born? Did God look into the future and know exactly how many people would be born for all

time? Did he choose everyone who was ever going to be saved at that point? Is the number of people to be saved locked up for all time from the foundation of the world? Or did God choose not to keep tabs on how many people would be born, therefore giving himself the opportunity to save people as new people are born? After all, he has chosen to throw our sins behind his back and remember them no more. Obviously, it's not that he couldn't bring them back to mind if he wanted to. But he is choosing not to. When we are under the covering of Christ, he treats our sins as if they had never happened. So, maybe God could be choosing not to know the whole number of all the people who will be born. Though he can know how many hairs there are on a person's head, he can know that without keeping track of how many of us are here. Maybe there will be more people saved as the world goes along, I wouldn't know. I cannot be sure about these things, but that's what I want to believe. Otherwise, it makes no sense to spread the gospel. Of course, we have standing orders to spread the Gospel, he told us to do it, so we have to do it. That ends the discussion as far as spreading the Gospel is concerned. But why do it if the outcome has already been determined? If God has already chosen all those who are going to be saved and this happened at, or before, the foundation of the world, what's the use of telling anything to anybody? If God has already made up his mind as to who is going to be saved and who is not, there is no need for us to be in the picture. If they were elected from the foundation of the world, they were saved before they were born. How are we going to make any difference?

God has promised he will lose none of his sheep, so, if he is going to save them no matter what, he'll figure out a way, there is no need to tell them anything. Those who are saved are saved and those who are not are not. The ones who were chosen to be saved will be saved so we don't have to tell them, and, those who were not chosen to be saved will not be saved so we don't have to tell them, either. That would be the logical conclusion if no one were going to be saved who was not chosen to be saved from the foundation of the world. If those are right who say it is completely a matter of election and once elected you could not get out of it, well then, God has made robots. Spreading the Gospel is a charade. It's all an illusion and meaningless words. But he didn't make robots. Perhaps it would have been better, easier, to make robots from the beginning and avoid all this trouble of having people run off in every direction. Instead he gave us free will and a response. We have a very clear response to God. The response is that we reject him, push him away, despise his ways, we use free will to rebel. So, is it by election we are saved? Oh, yes, no question about it. How could it be otherwise? We don't have enough sense of the danger we are in without the covering of Christ. We don't have enough sense of our own need. We are blind people

dancing at the edge of a precipice. The Holy Spirit reveals to us who God is, we cannot know for ourselves.

The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. The man who is in rebellion cannot be enticed with gifts. But he will respond to brute force. I know this guy like my own face. The fear of God is a gift from God, it is a way to indicate where salvation is, in the blood of the Lamb, our Jesus.