



**1 Peter 1:20-21 “He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”**

God's people are to be primarily missional. The church should not be defined by the number of people we can get in one room at one time but by the number of people on Mission. God told his people to scatter; to fill the earth. In Genesis 11 they said, “nope, we will stay together.” This happens in the church today all the time.

At Element, we don't call our community group SMALL GROUPS (we call them GOSPEL COMMUNITIES). In small groups, no one wants to scatter and spread God's name, but we believe the biblical mandate to scatter. Many people do not like to scatter, so God scatters them (as He does in Genesis 11 at the tower of Babel). God is not being mean, He is loving all people. God loves those we don't and cares for those we don't. We are exclusive people, but God is an inclusive God.

Sometimes we don't get what we want, but what we need. Babel reminds us that God takes care of everyone (His choice)...and He will do this by now by blessing a guy named Abraham.

God chooses to USE Abraham; we call this ELECTION. Throughout the scriptures there are various words to talk about this, such as predestination, choose, elect, ordain...all of which indicates that the decision of who is saved and how they become redeemed is/was determined by God before the foundation of the world (Eph 1).

**The means by which people are connected to Jesus is described by various theologians in two general categories:**

- Monergism – mono meaning one,
- Synergism - meaning many, or two.

*Isaiah 53:1* “To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” Metaphorically speaking, “To whom has God reached down for the purpose of saving?”

- The monergistic position is a 1 handed position, God reached down and grabbed some people and saved them through Jesus.
- The synergistic position is that God reached down His hand to lost sinners. They reached back to Him and took hold of God's invitation. In so doing, God pulled them out of death and damnation, but He did so by their partnership with Him.

The apostle Paul most passionately and personally understands election, because apart from it, there was no way in the world that he would ever experience the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

Some people wrongly think, “If I hold a one handed position, I don't have to do anything. I'm just going to take a nap.” Those who end up acting in this way miss the heart of Paul, and God, because they overlook the life of Paul and what Jesus called us to. In Romans 8-10 Paul says his whole life is about proclaiming Jesus, so that as many people as possible would become Christians. The IDEA of Election and predestination fuels evangelism. It does not dampen it.

Apart from God changing our heart, you and I are all just like the Pharaoh in Exodus. God comes to us through conscience, through the Holy Spirit, through Scripture. He convicts us of sin. He calls us to repentance. And apart from a new heart, our old heart just becomes increasingly more hardened, more stubborn, more religious, and more self-righteous. It is why Paul says in *Romans 2:4* “*God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance*”.

We are called clay, and God is the potter. The distance between us and God is akin to the distance between a chunk of clay that is used for the making of various vessels and the potter who makes them. The big idea is, God is God, and we are not. We have no right to tell God that He's not doing a good job at being God (the potter). The Apostle Paul is arguing for humility; he says, “Who are you to think that you would be a better God than God?”

Ambrosiaster, “*It is a great indignity and presumption for a man to answer back to God, the unjust to the just, the evil to the good, the imperfect to the perfect, the weak to the strong, the corruptible to the incorrupt, the mortal to the immortal, the servant to the Lord, the creature to the Creator.*”

**There are only three options in salvation.**

1. Satan chooses who has sin forgiven and eternal life granted.
2. Sinners choose who is to be saved. (The problem is we have chosen sin.)
3. God would choose, in undeserving mercy and grace, to save some.

God did choose to save. Not only that, but He came into human history as Jesus Christ. He lived on this earth in humility, to be tempted as we are, yet without sin. He goes to the cross, and He substitutes Himself in our place, for our sins. That our God would die and would, Himself, endure the penalty and punishment for sin is incomprehensible.

Then Jesus rose from the grave and has given salvation as a gift, not dependent upon pursuing Him, desiring Him, choosing Him, or yearning for Him because though He invites us, none of us take Him up on that offer. So, He pursues us vigilantly, mercifully, compassionately, lovingly, and continually.

Predestination is the love of God in action.