

I sent Rob Bentz, Pastor of Small Groups, a question concerning our discussion about election in Chapter 1 of Ephesians. Here is his email response.

Alan,

Thanks for your question. Honestly, I don't mind at all.

Let's dig in:

1. The doctrine of election is clearly biblical. You cannot read the New Testament writings without the phrases, God's "chosen" or "elect" people popping up. It's all over the place--Rom 8:33, Eph. 1:11, Col. 3:12, 1 Peter 1, 1 Peter 2:4, etc. The question to consider is not does election occur--but how does election occur?

2. Most contemporary evangelicals do not engage with the original debate on election--the whole Arminian vs. Calvinism issue. The contemporary church has wrongly moved to a debate on either God elects, or man chooses God. That's a false argument. The traditional Arminian position suggests that God elects based on His foreknowledge of who will respond to the Gospel. Calvinism suggests that God elects--because He's God. His election is not based on fore-knowledge; rather His election is rooted purely in His sovereignty. (The Calvinistic position is very difficult for many Americans to handle who have been raised on democracy.)

3. Woodmen does not have an "official" position on this issue. Our leadership would land on both sides of the debate--some on the side of Calvin, and some on the Arminian side. Frankly, this is one of the benefits--and challenges--of being a non-denominational church. We will sometimes land in the middle on the interpretation of issues like this. To summarize, I would say that WVC believes election to be a clear Bible truth. Yet the interpretation of how it occurs is not clearly stated in any of our "official" doctrinal statements.

Let me know if this helps--or doesn't.

Grace & Peace,

Rob