

The Apostle's Creed

Sunday School
August 6, 2023

Lesson Notes: WEEK 2 "I Believe" and Ephesians 2:1-10

1. Believing is a gift

- We are currently experiencing 2 Timothy 4:3-4.
- Believing must be deeper than simply saying, "I believe" = James 2:19.
- Faith is not something we initiated on our own and often we doubt = Mark 9:22-24.
- Faith is not an abstract idea in Christianity, but instead, faith is in a person: *Jesus Christ!* Faith helps us confidently say, "I am yours, save me" Psalm 119:94.
- Faith is not a singular moment in time, but a lifestyle = *sanctification*.
- **Ephesians 2:1-10**
 - We were once DEAD, and our instincts cause us to be "*children of wrath*."
 - "But God..."
 - Verse 8 shows us that faith is a gift initiated from God, otherwise, as verse 9 mentions, we would spend all day boasting about how we saved ourselves.
 - There's a distinct difference between having faith vs. practicing faith.

Discussion on God's election:

- Supralapsarianism—*supra* meaning "above" or "before" and *lapsum* meaning "fall"—God's decree to save is logically *prior* to His decree to create the world and permit the fall. Infralapsarianism insists that God's decree to save is logically *after* His decrees related to creation and fall (*infra* meaning "below" or "after")

SUPRA: Election	Creation	Fall	Redemption	(ECFR)
INFRA: Creation	Fall	Election	Redemption	(CFER)

- Both terms originated from Calvin's student: Theodore Beza (1519-1605). Both terms deal with the logical order of God's decrees. Infralapsarianism has the mentality of God covering up His "*mistakes*" from Genesis 1-6, whereas a Supralapsarian would say God made no mistakes from Genesis 1-6 & never has/will. Infralapsarians try to rationalize how a good & merciful God could do something like "*The Flood*."
- **I drew on the board two common views:** "*Will of Man is Free*" vs. "*We are Dead*." The former suggests man is swimming in the ocean and sees God's hand reaching out for him. Man is the one who grabs hold of God, whereas the latter on the "We are Dead" side teaches that man is on the ocean floor and only through God's Son, are we rescued and eternally redeemed.

2. Believing is a revelation

- General – common to everyone, everything around us: the sky, land, trees, animals.
 - Psalm 19:1-2
 - Can one become a believer if they are completely secluded from all other civilizations?
- Special – being exposed to God, particularly His Word to discover His plan of salvation.
 - The Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) is the only confession to immediately start with God's Word.
 - WCF Chapter 1, section 1 = WCF 1.1
- The Apostle's Creed acknowledges that God is the origin of all things and gives us the ability to say, "*I Believe!*"
- 1 John 1:1-4