

Saved



Saved

- Election
- Eternal security
- Ending life by suicide
- Eternal conscious torment vs. annihilation

2026Jan18 Dan Fisher - Saved - Election (Pt 2)

Election

**Pt 2: How Calvinists misinterpret
the sovereignty of God**



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Other than to theologians
arguing the “finer points” of the
Christian faith in dusty seminary
libraries, why should this
debate matter?

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“For God so loved the **world**, that he gave his only Son, that **whoever** believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” **Jn 3:16**

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that **any** should perish, but that **all** should reach repentance.” **2 Pet 3:9**



Do people have a free will and can resist or submit to the will of God, or is everything predetermined by God and human will is essentially a moot point?

“Creatures are so governed by the secret counsel of God, that nothing happens but what He has knowingly and willingly decreed.” John Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, Book 1, Chapter 16, Paragraph 3





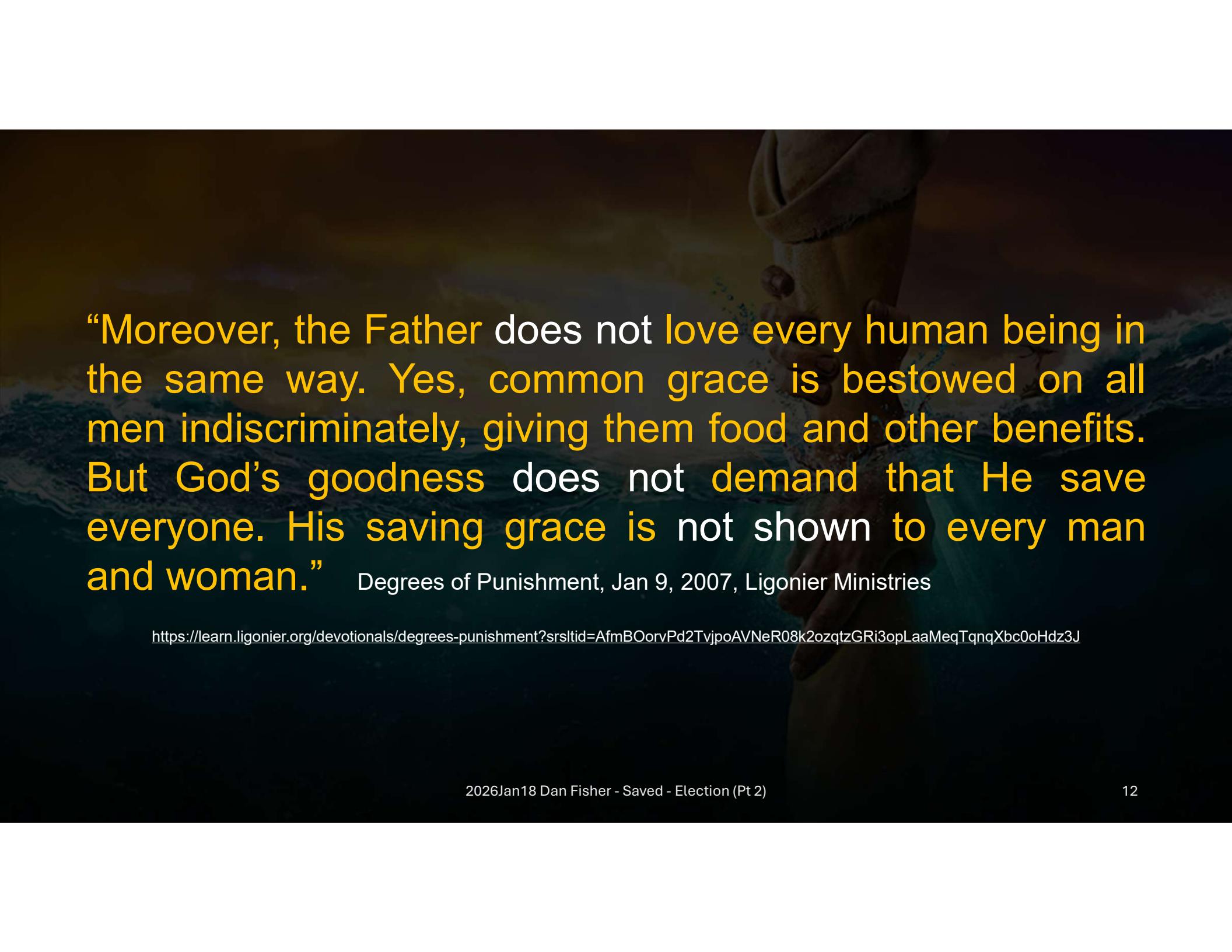
If God is *all loving*, then He must *love all*
However ...

Calvinists do not believe God loves all
enough to save them

A black and white portrait of Arthur Pink, a man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a suit and tie. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera. The background is dark and indistinct.

“When we say that God is sovereign in the exercise of His love, we mean that He loves whom He chooses. God does not love everybody.” Arthur Pink

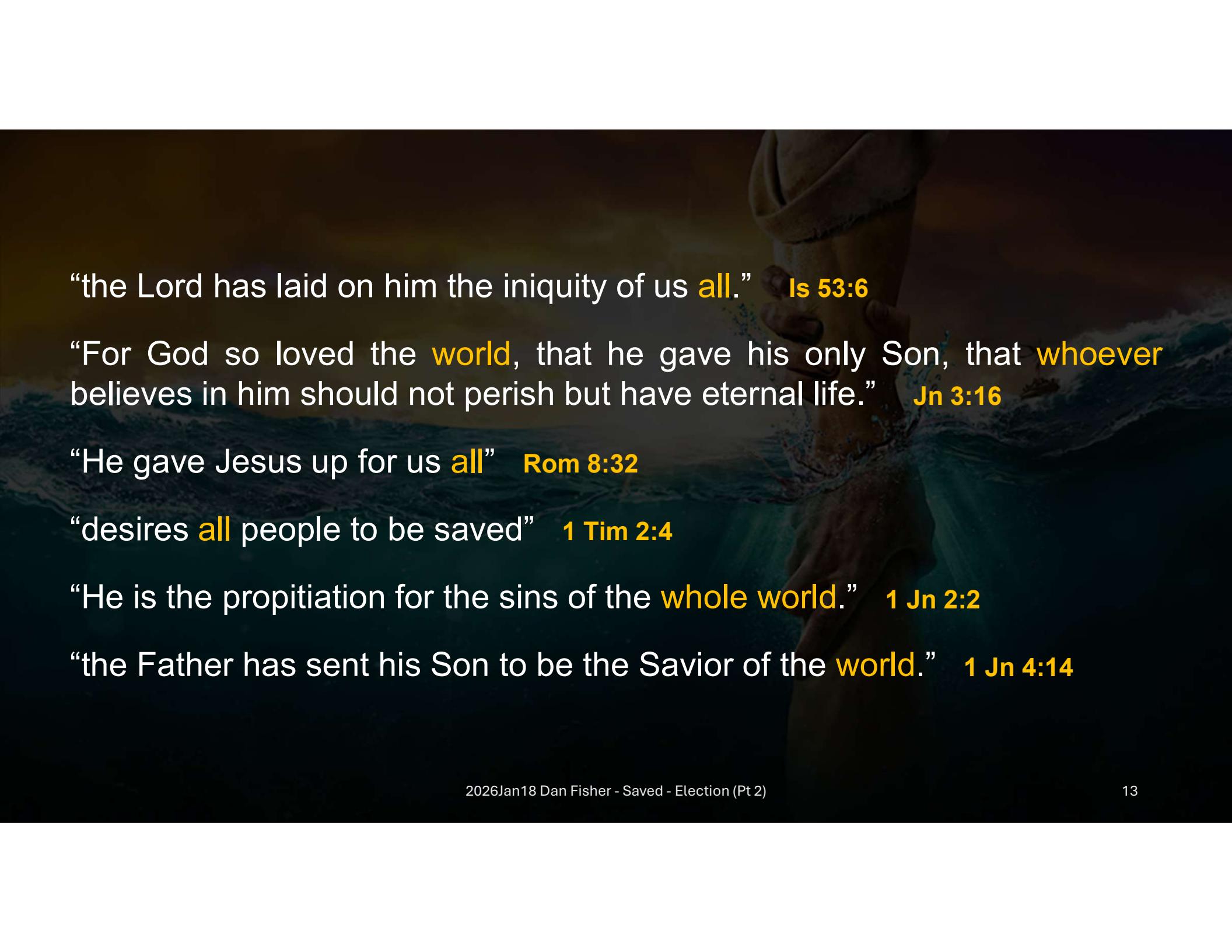
Jerry Walls, “What’s wrong with Calvinism?,” Part 1
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Daomzm3nylg>



“Moreover, the Father does not love every human being in the same way. Yes, common grace is bestowed on all men indiscriminately, giving them food and other benefits. But God’s goodness does not demand that He save everyone. His saving grace is not shown to every man and woman.”

Degrees of Punishment, Jan 9, 2007, Ligonier Ministries

<https://learn.ligonier.org/devotionals/degrees-punishment?srsltid=AfmBOorvPd2TvjpoAVNeR08k2ozqtzGRi3opLaaMeqTqnqXbc0oHdz3J>

A hand holding a small cross over a dark, stormy sea.

“the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us **all**.” **Is 53:6**

“For God so loved the **world**, that he gave his only Son, that **whoever** believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” **Jn 3:16**

“He gave Jesus up for us **all**” **Rom 8:32**

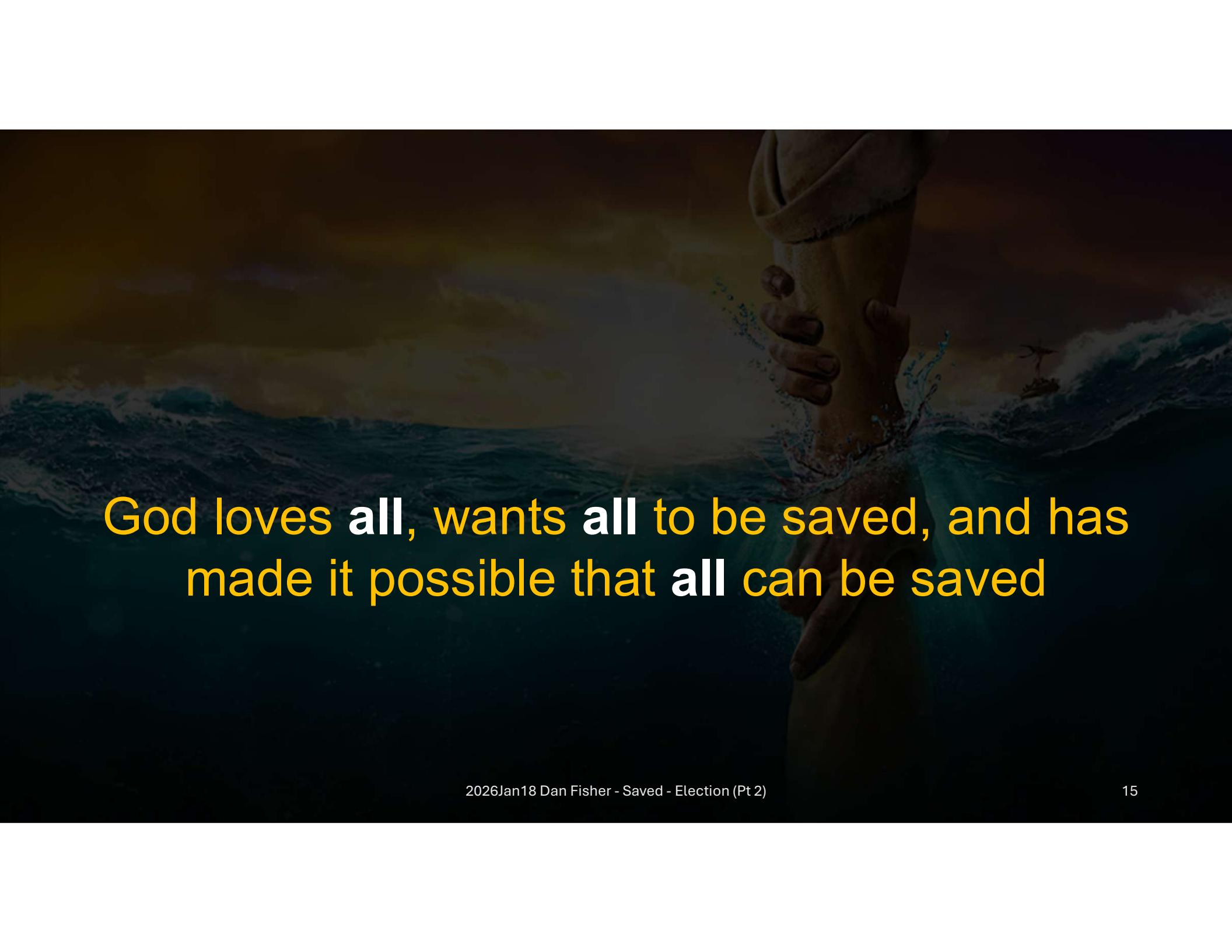
“desires **all** people to be saved” **1 Tim 2:4**

“He is the propitiation for the sins of the **whole world**.” **1 Jn 2:2**

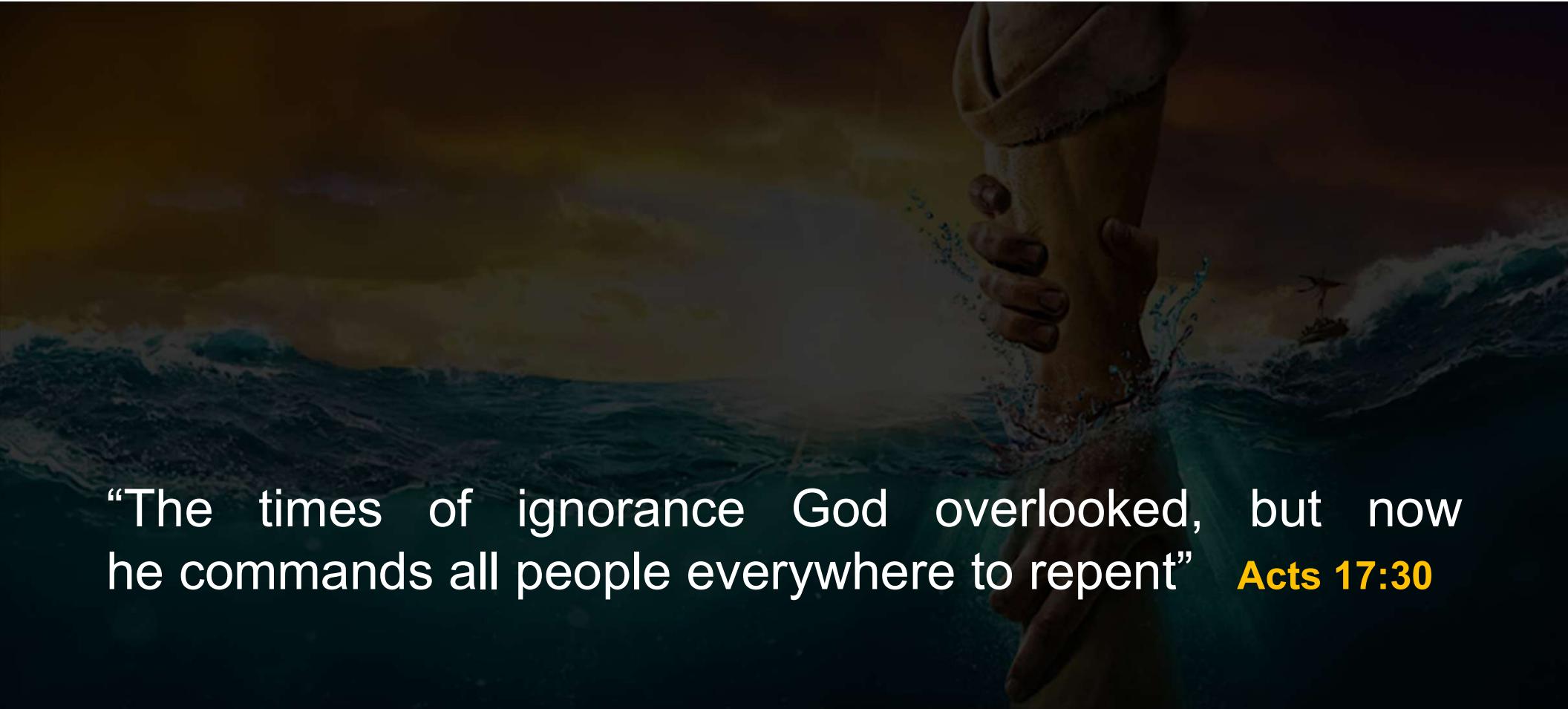
“the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the **world**.” **1 Jn 4:14**

The Calvinist Conundrum

- We desire the best for those we love
- The very best for all is to be right with God
- If God determines who will be saved, He could save all
- God loves all
- Therefore, all will be saved



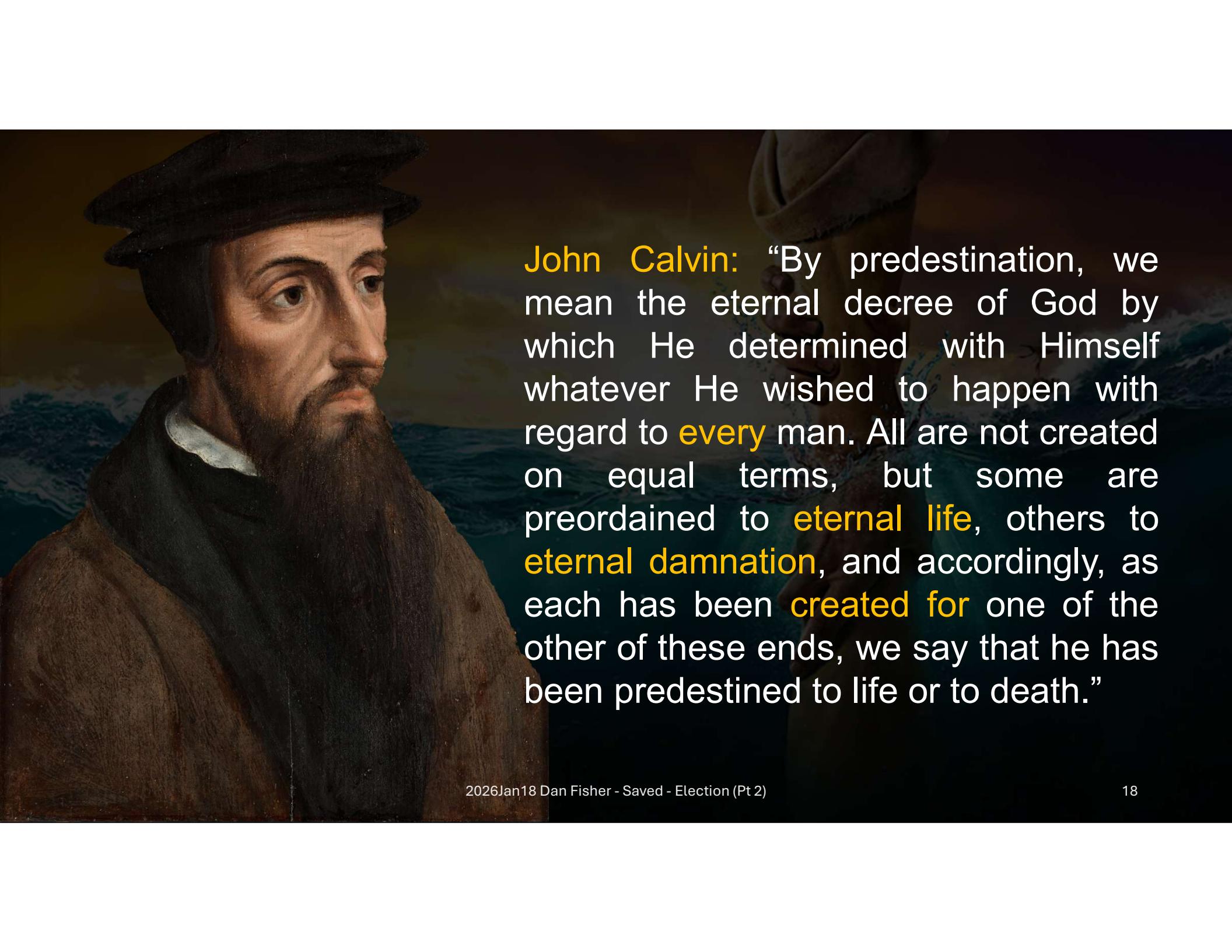
God loves **all**, wants **all** to be saved, and has made it possible that **all** can be saved



“The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent” **Acts 17:30**



What does the Calvinist mean when they say that God is sovereign over all things?

A portrait of John Calvin, a French theologian and a prominent figure of the Protestant Reformation. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark, textured robe and a dark beret. He has a full, dark beard and is looking slightly to his left with a thoughtful expression. The background is dark and indistinct, suggesting an indoor setting.

John Calvin: “By predestination, we mean the eternal decree of God by which He determined with Himself whatever He wished to happen with regard to **every** man. All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to **eternal life**, others to **eternal damnation**, and accordingly, as each has been **created for** one of the other of these ends, we say that he has been predestined to life or to death.”

A dark, dramatic illustration of a hand reaching out of turbulent, greenish-blue waves to hold a small, wooden boat. The hand is weathered and appears to be that of a man. The boat is tilted, with water splashing over its side. In the background, a small sailboat is visible on the horizon under a dark, cloudy sky.

Total depravity
Unlimited election
Limited atonement
Irresistible grace
Perseverance of saints

A dramatic illustration of a hand reaching out from dark, churning waves. The hand is gripping a yellow life preserver. A small, distant sailboat is visible on the horizon. The scene is set against a dark, cloudy sky.

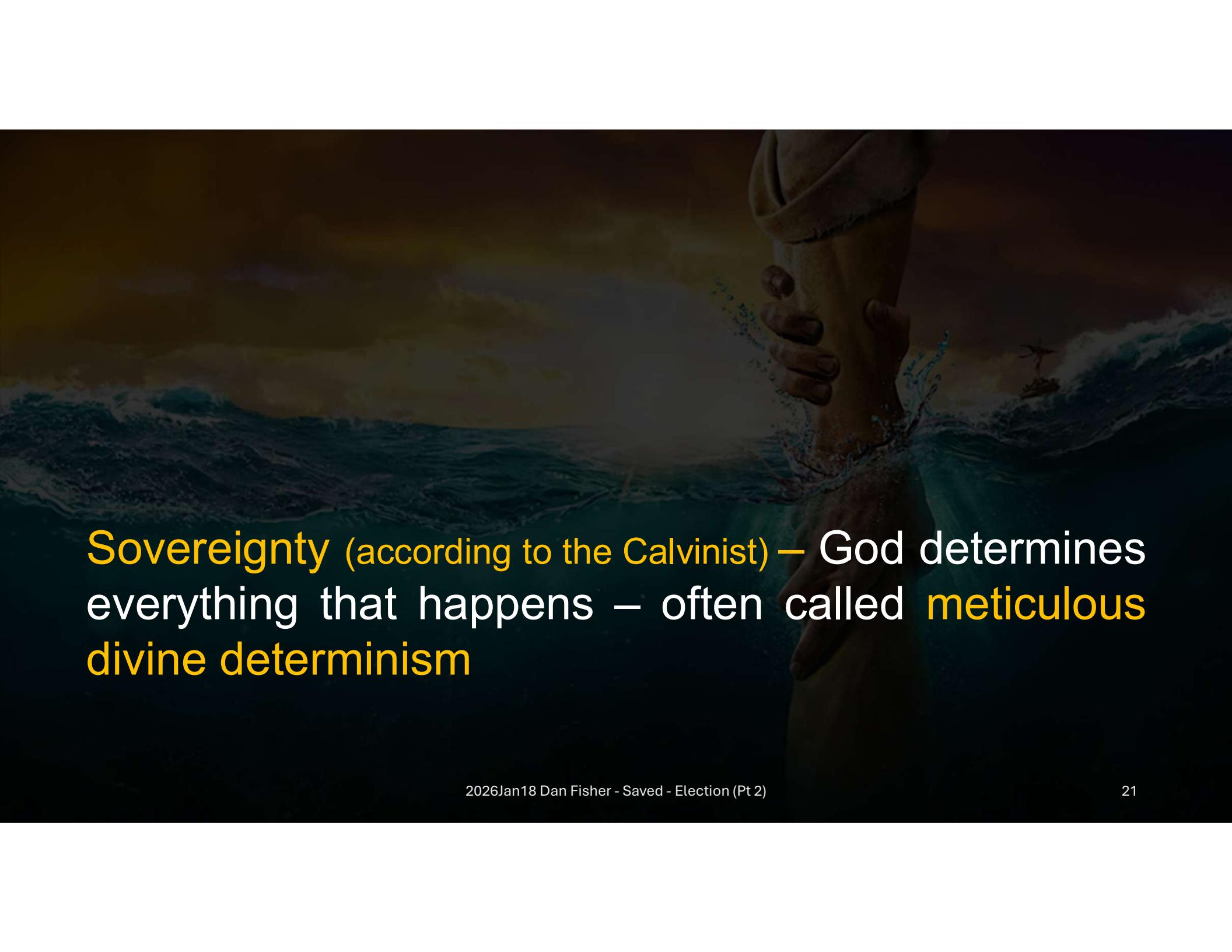
Total depravity

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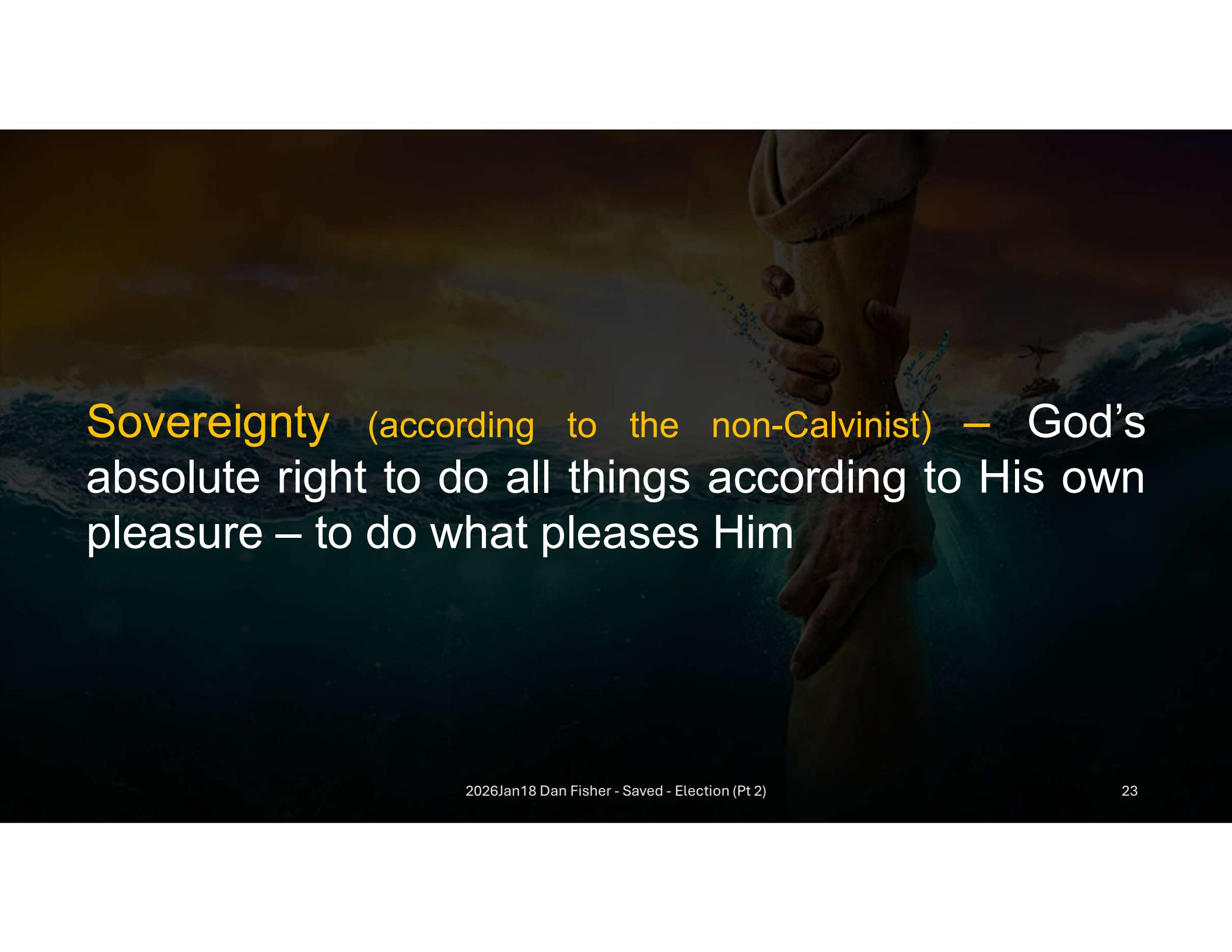
Sovereignty (according to the Calvinist) – God determines everything that happens – often called meticulous divine determinism

A portrait of R.C. Sproul, an elderly man with grey hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and blue patterned tie, smiling. He is positioned on the left side of the slide, with a dark, textured background.

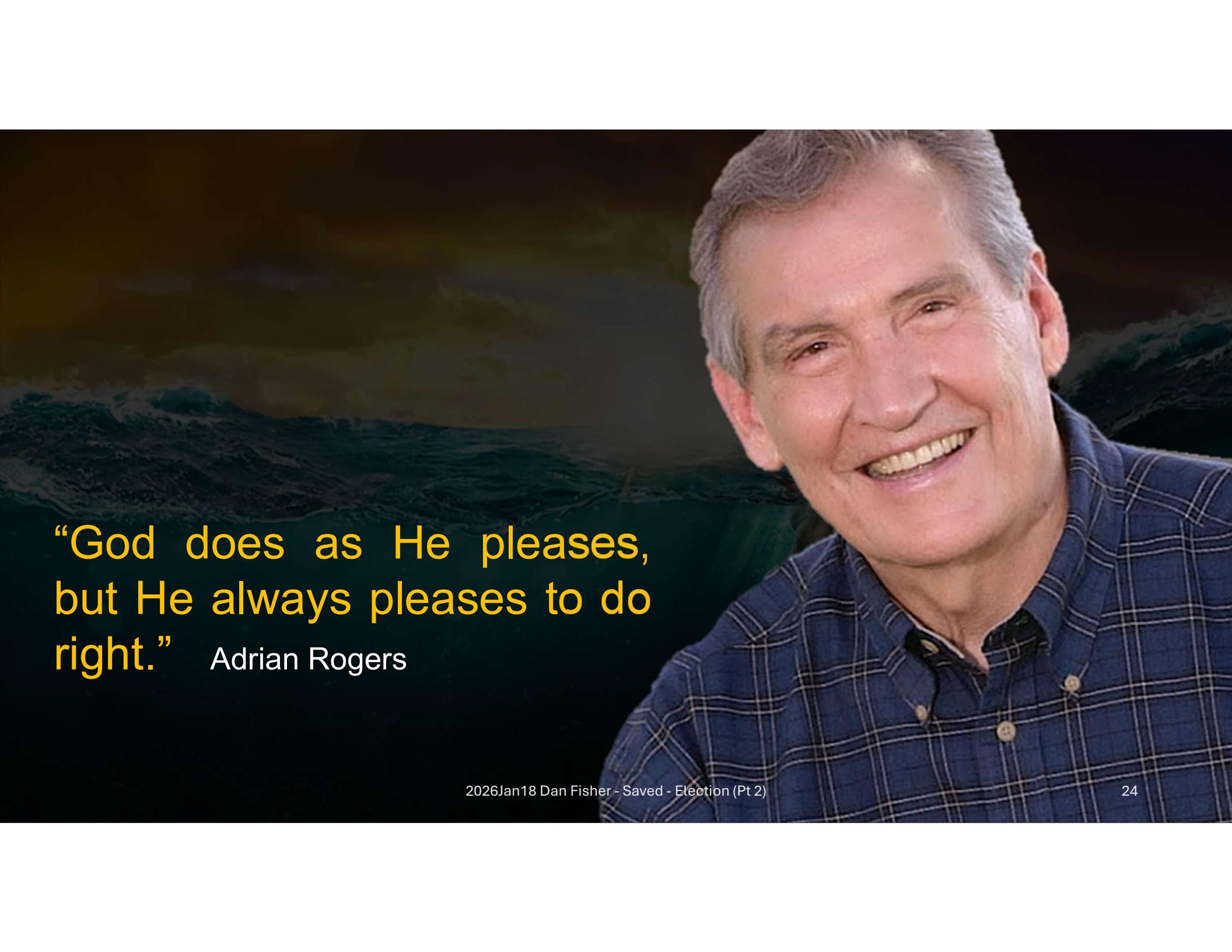
R.C. Sproul:

“If there is one maverick molecule in the universe, one molecule running loose outside the scope of God’s sovereign ordination, then ladies and gentlemen, there is not the slightest confidence that you can have that any promise that God has ever made about the future will come to pass.”

“No Maverick Molecule,” R.C. Sproul,
<https://learn.ligonier.org/podcasts/ultimately-with-rc-sproul/no-maverick-molecule>



Sovereignty (according to the non-Calvinist) – God's absolute right to do all things according to His own pleasure – to do what pleases Him

A portrait of Adrian Rogers, a man with grey hair and a warm smile, wearing a blue plaid shirt. He is positioned on the right side of the image, with a dark, textured background that suggests a landscape or sea. The lighting is soft, highlighting his face and the texture of his shirt.

“God does as He pleases,
but He always pleases to do
right.” Adrian Rogers

“... far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” **Gen 18:25**

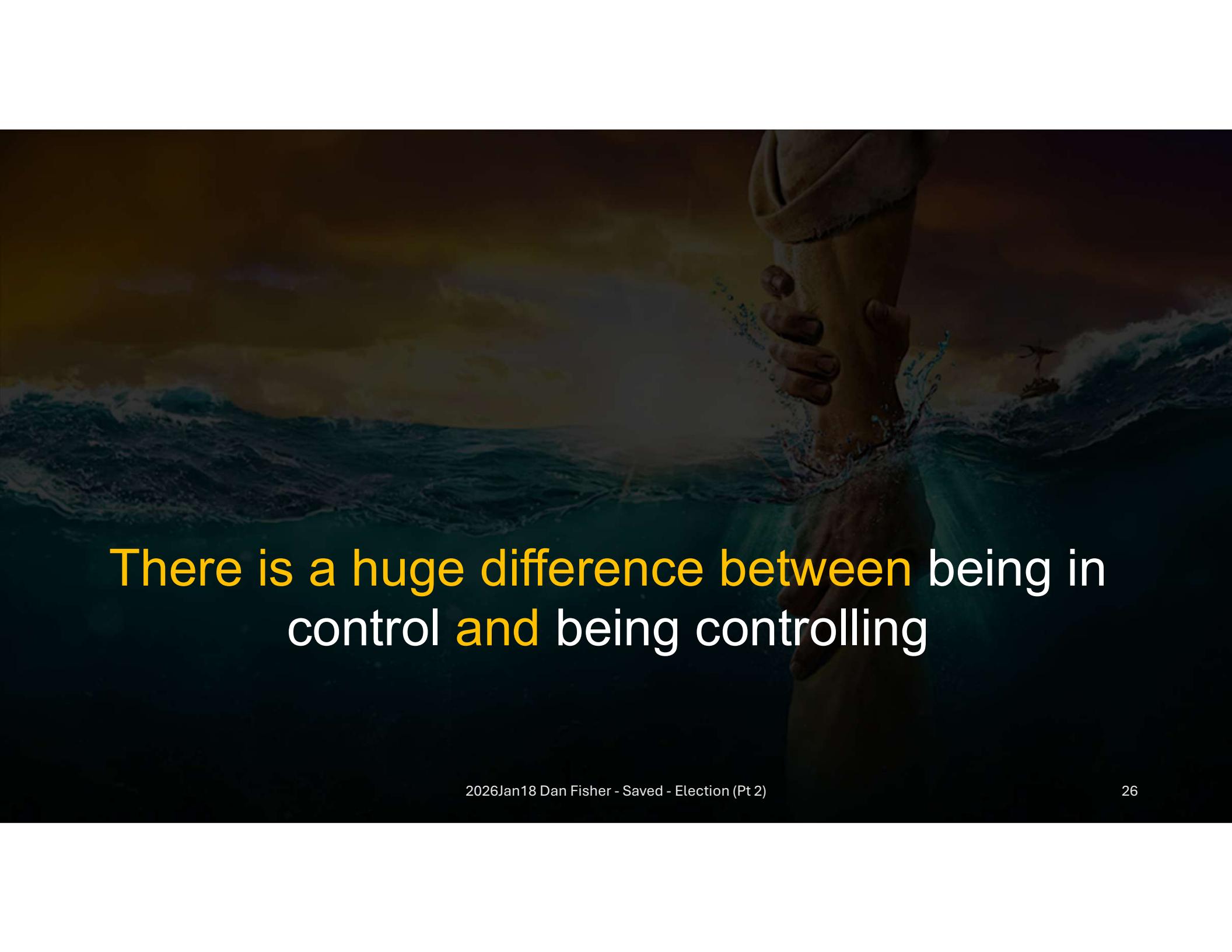
“The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is He.” **Deut 32:4**

“The Lord is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works.” **Ps 145:17**

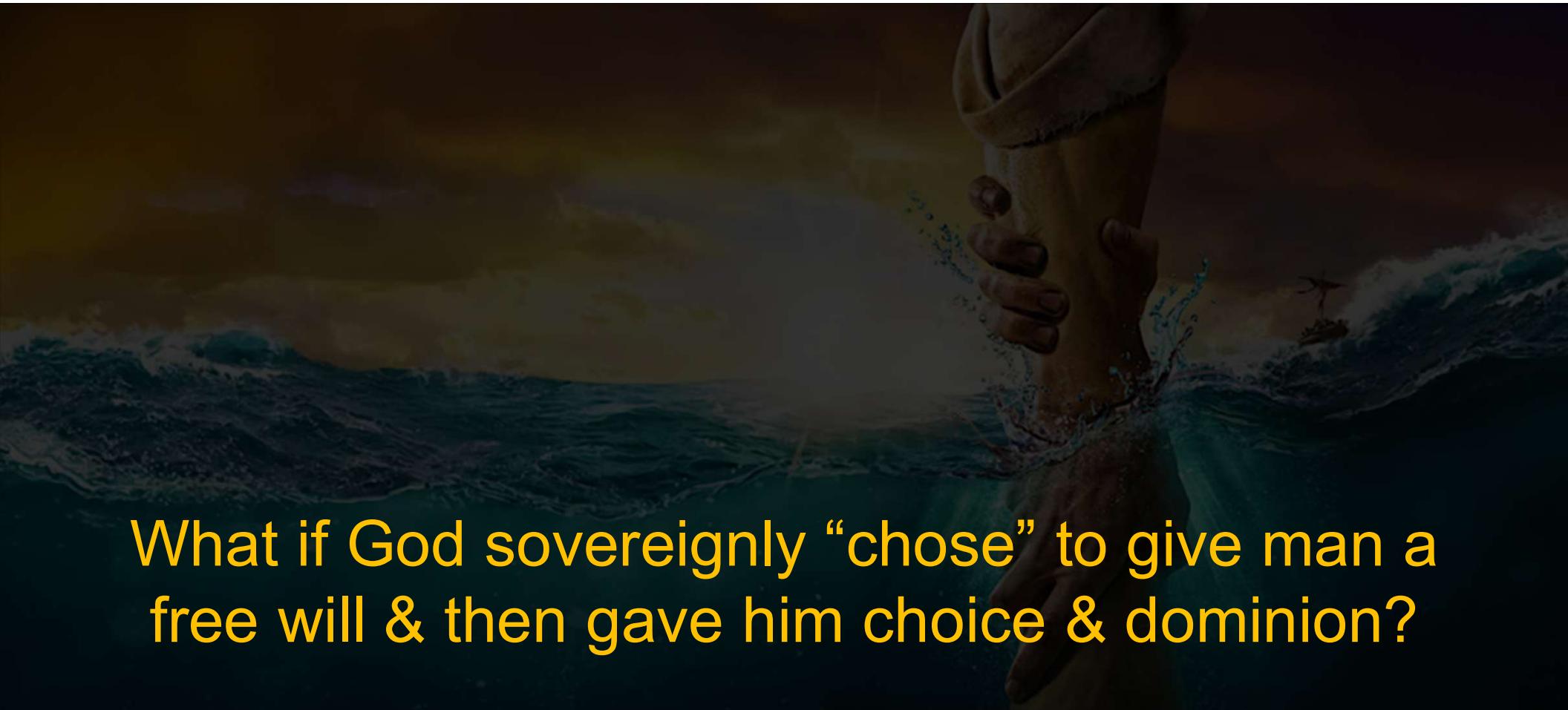
“Keep justice, and do righteousness, for My salvation is about to come, and My righteousness to be revealed.” **Is 56:1**

“For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, ...” **Heb 6:10**

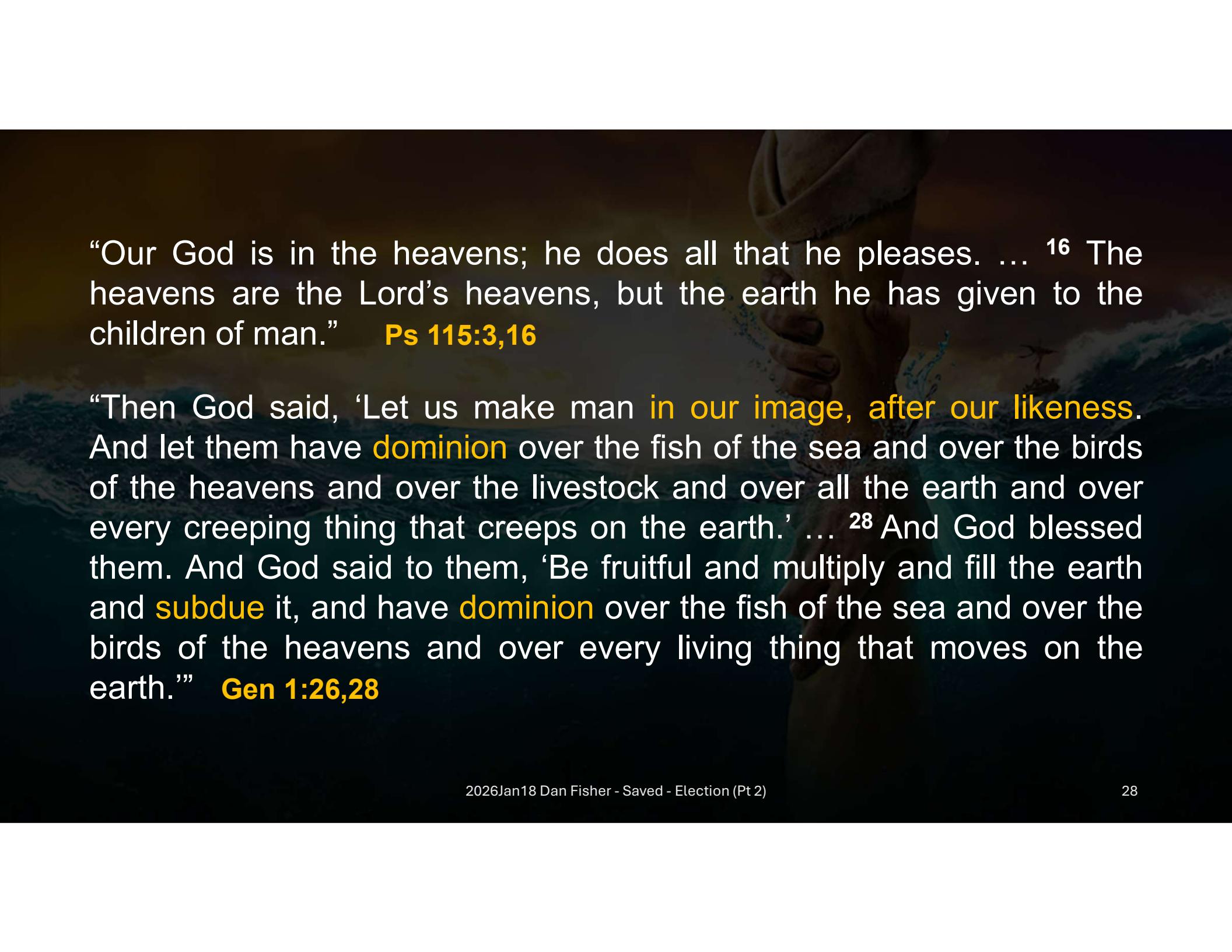
“If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.” **1 Jn 2:29**

A hand is shown pouring sand from a漏斗 (dowser) into the ocean. The sand is falling in a small stream into the dark, choppy water. The background is a dark, cloudy sky.

There is a huge difference between being in control **and** being controlling

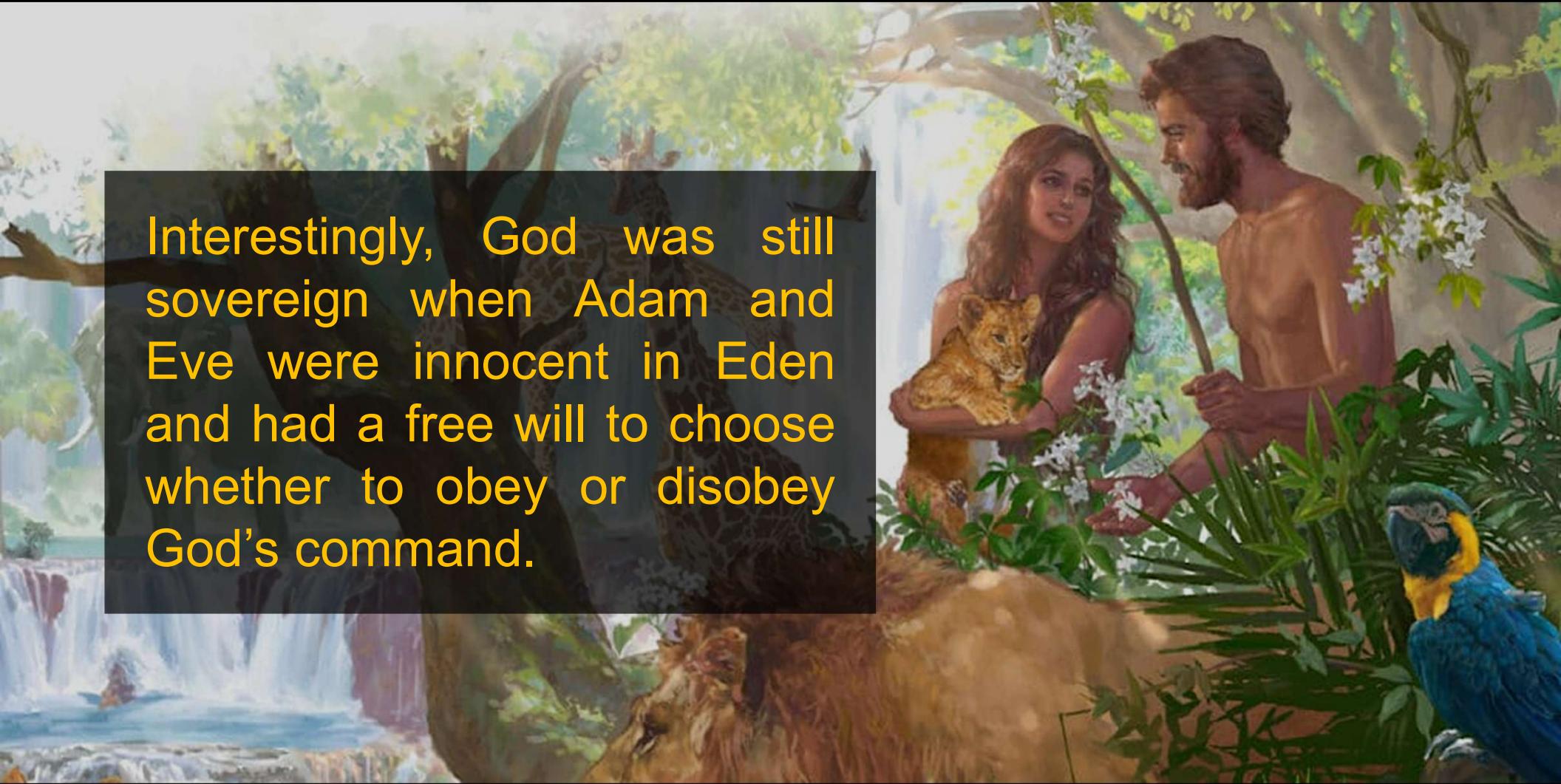


What if God sovereignly “chose” to give man a free will & then gave him choice & dominion?



“Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases. ... ¹⁶ The heavens are the Lord’s heavens, but the earth he has given to the children of man.” **Ps 115:3,16**

“Then God said, ‘Let us make man **in our image, after our likeness.** And let them have **dominion** over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ ... ²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and **subdue** it, and have **dominion** over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” **Gen 1:26,28**

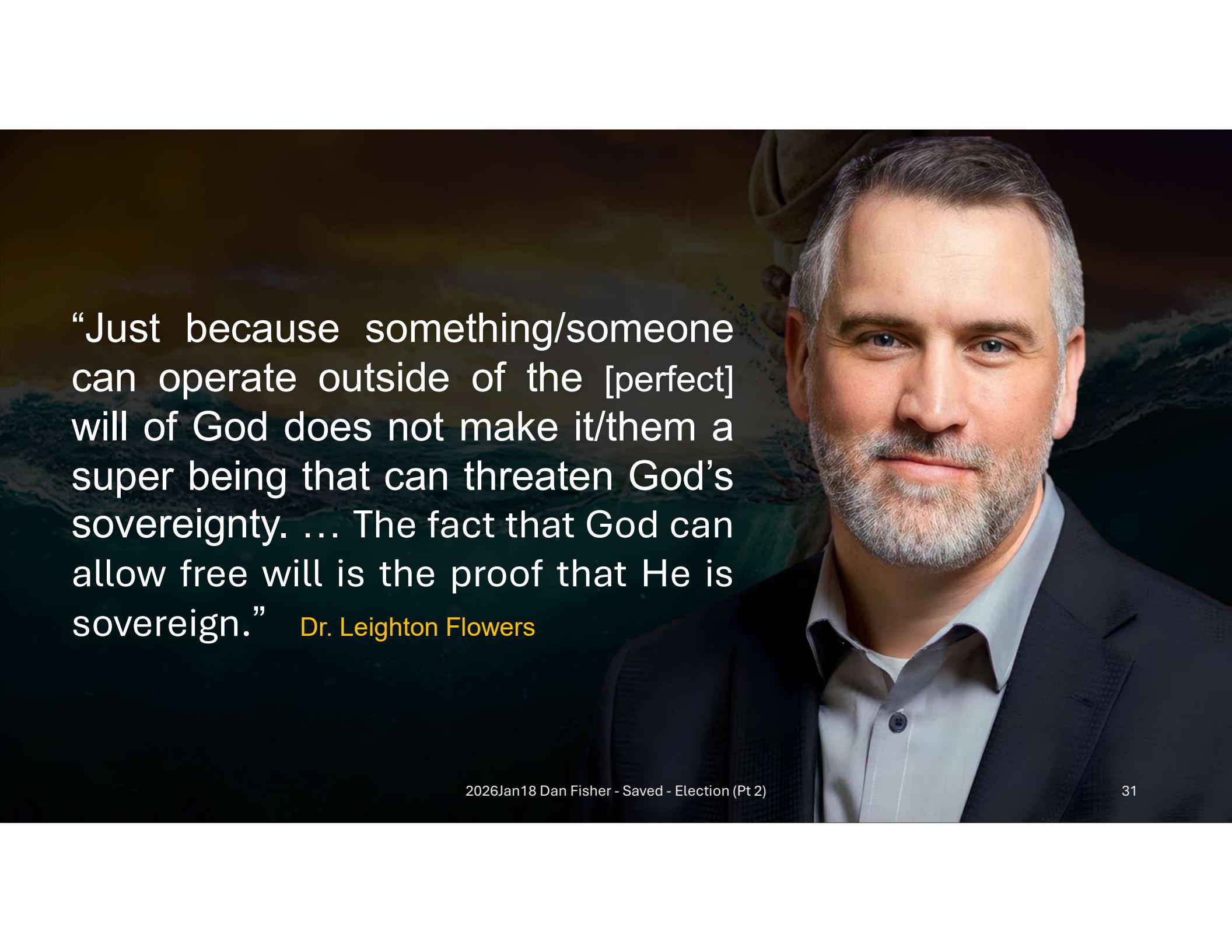


Interestingly, God was still sovereign when Adam and Eve were innocent in Eden and had a free will to choose whether to obey or disobey God's command.

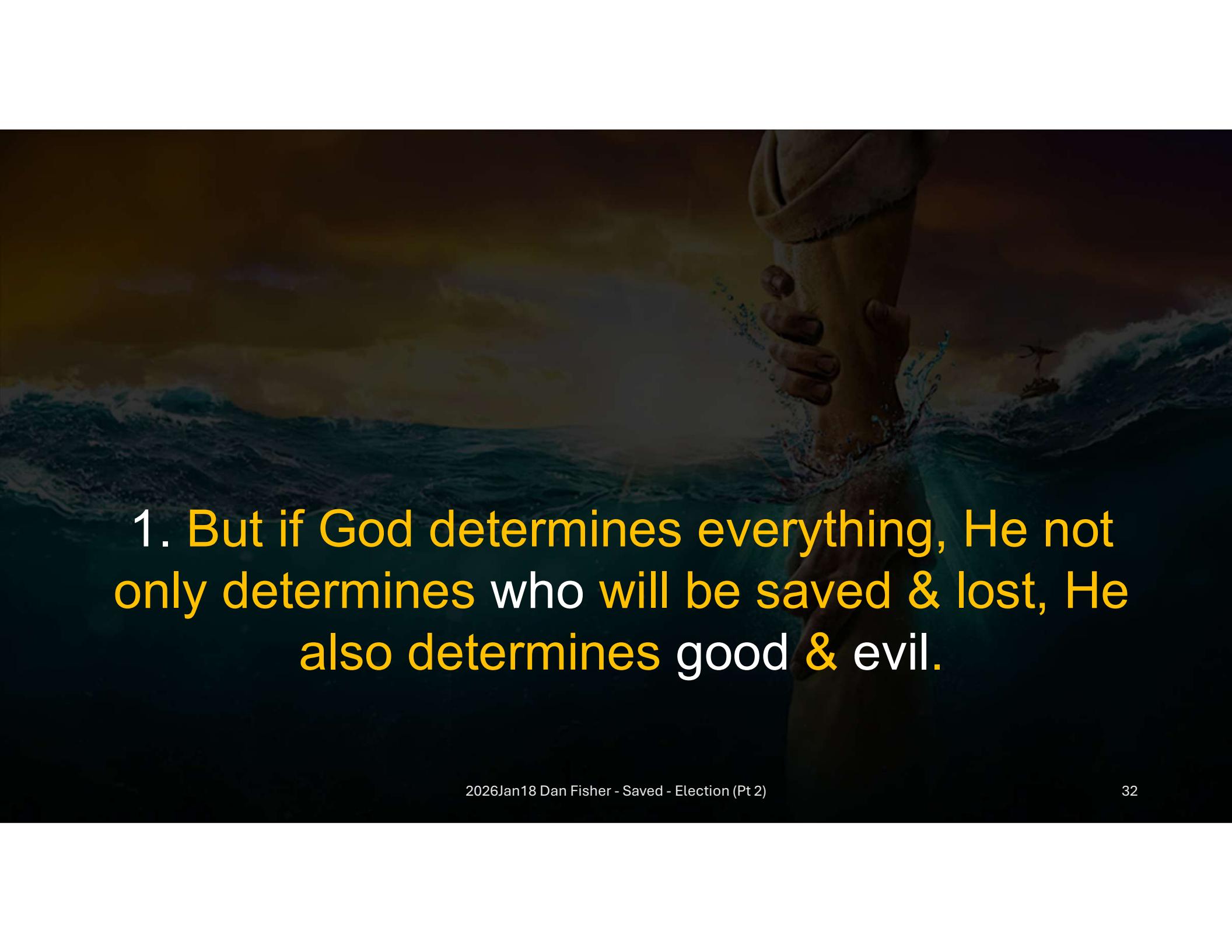
A hand is shown from the right side of the frame, holding a small, light-colored object, possibly a seed or a small piece of fruit, over a dark, turbulent sea. In the distance, a small ship is visible on the horizon. The overall atmosphere is dramatic and symbolic.

Man having a free will does not give him superpower to thwart God's sovereignty.

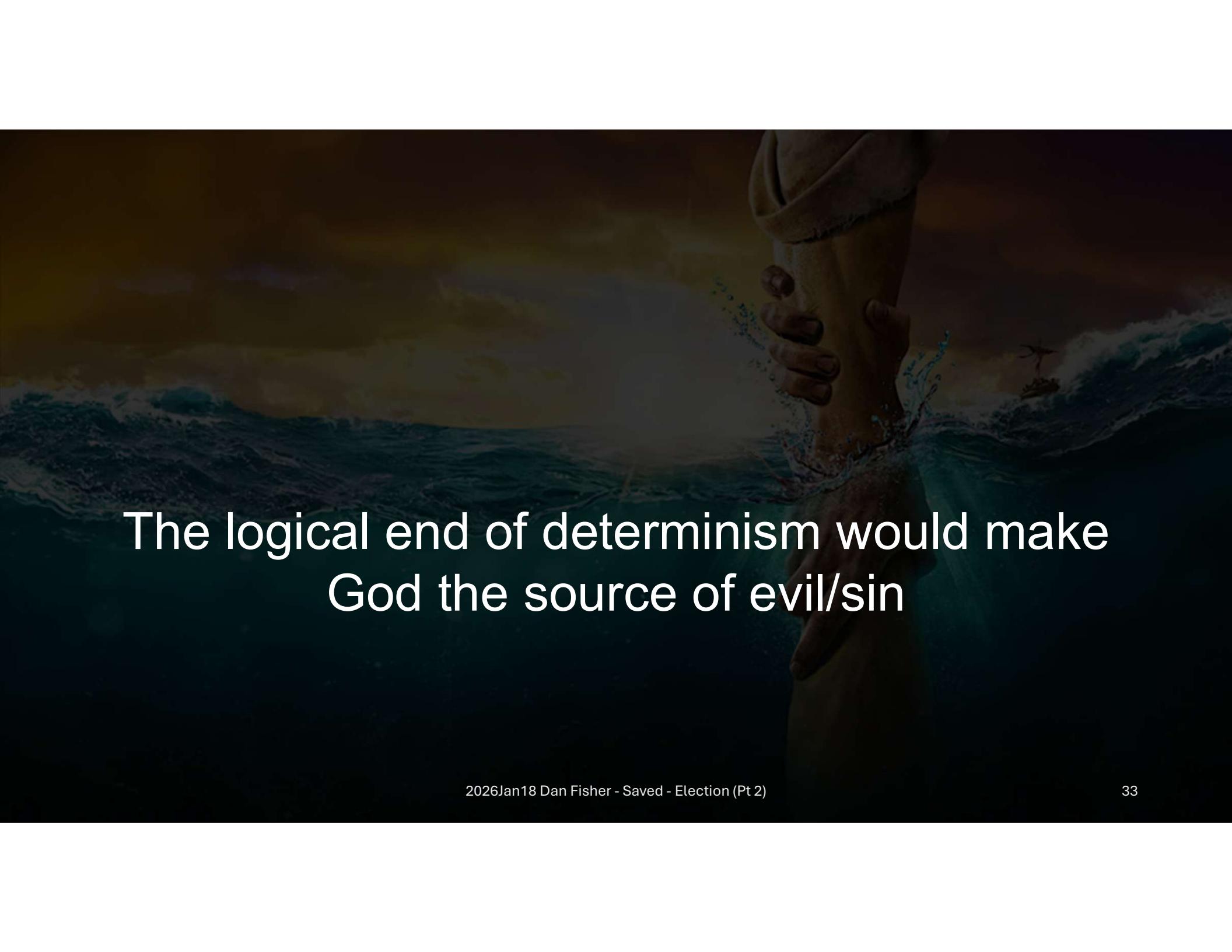
God is sovereign and omnipotent and is therefore superior to every angel, faithful & fallen, and every human, lost & saved.

A portrait of Dr. Leighton Flowers, a man with a beard and short hair, wearing a dark suit and light shirt, set against a background of a stormy sea with a lighthouse.

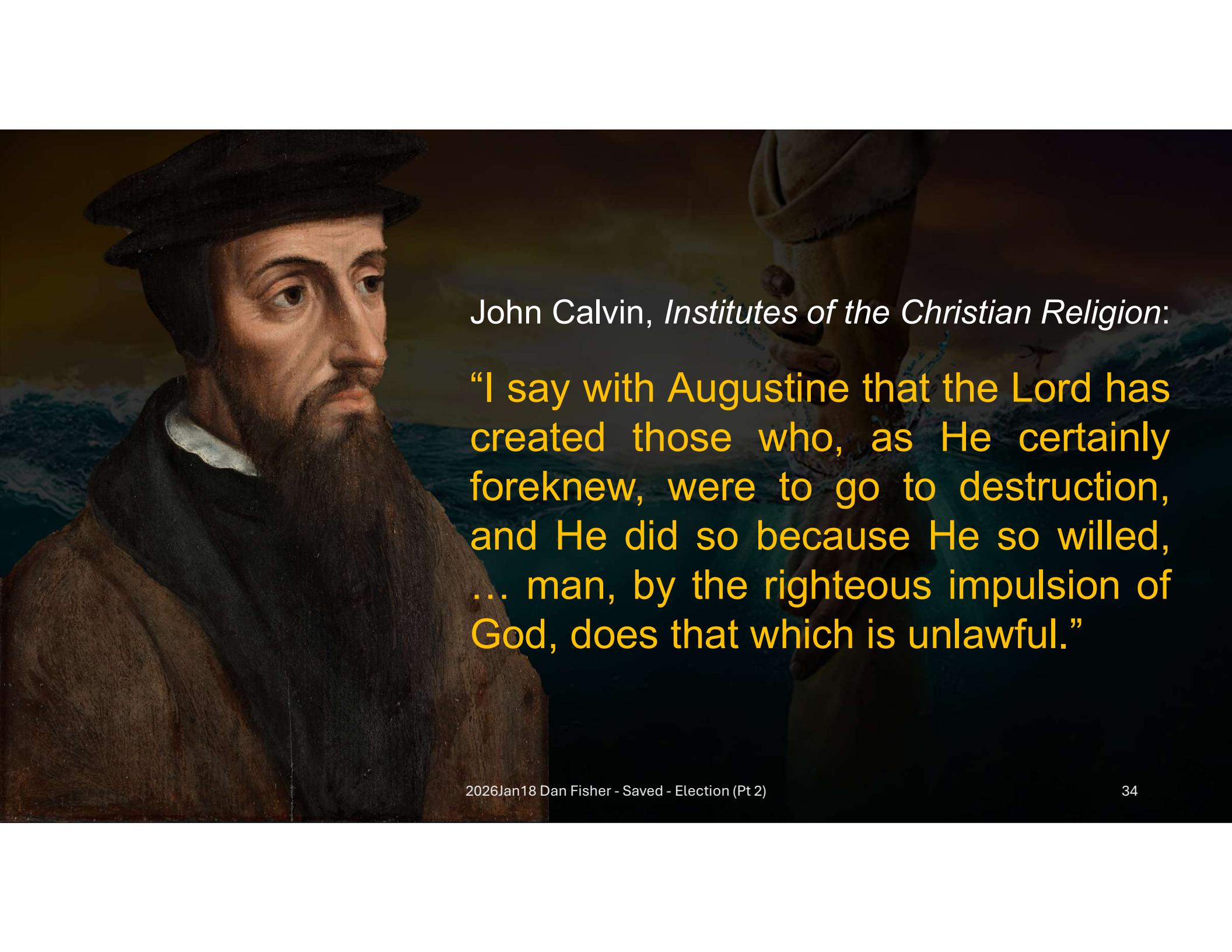
“Just because something/someone can operate outside of the [perfect] will of God does not make it/them a super being that can threaten God’s sovereignty. ... The fact that God can allow free will is the proof that He is sovereign.” Dr. Leighton Flowers



1. But if God determines everything, He not only determines who will be saved & lost, He also determines good & evil.

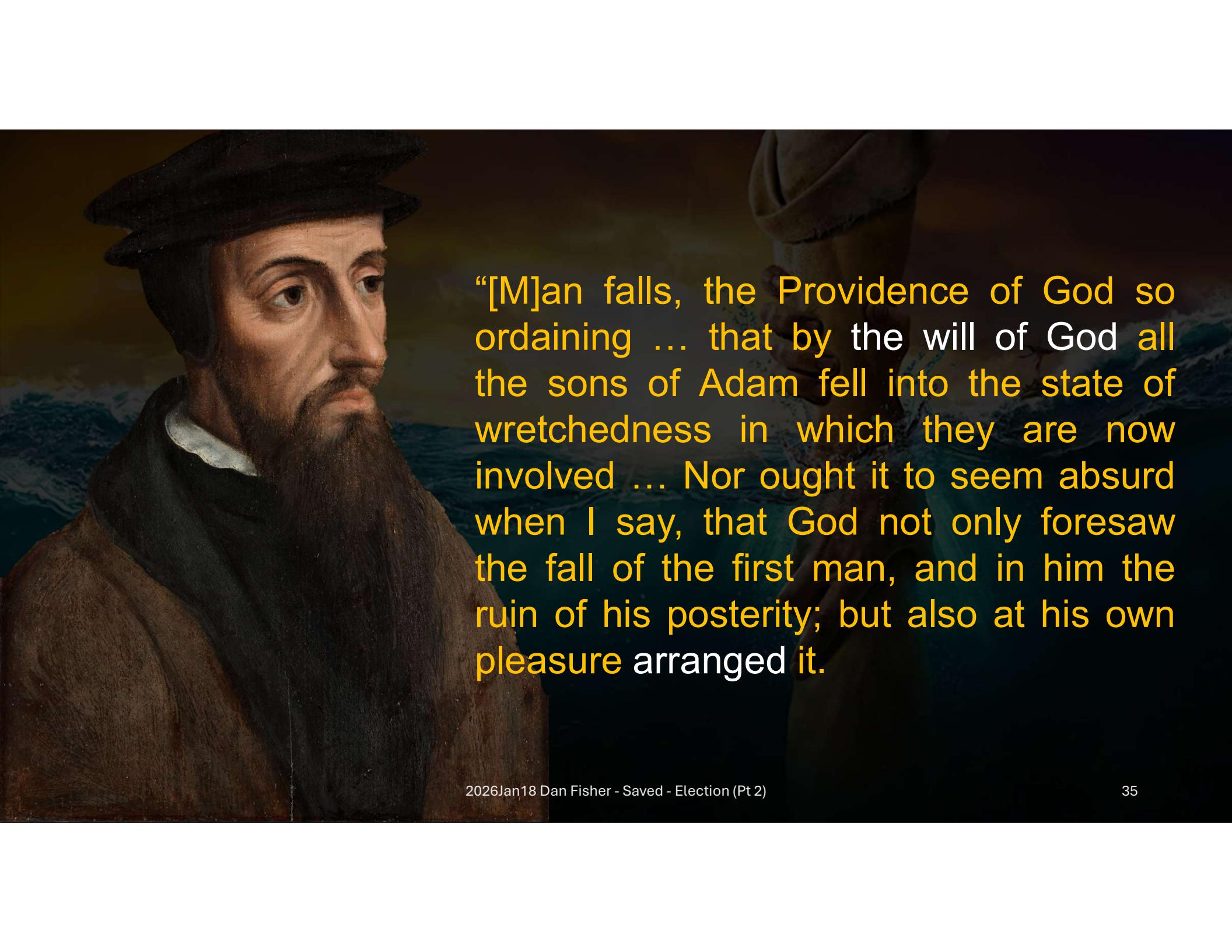


The logical end of determinism would make
God the source of evil/sin

A portrait of John Calvin, a French theologian and a prominent figure of the Protestant Reformation. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark, textured robe and a dark beret. He has a full, dark beard and is looking slightly to his right with a thoughtful expression. The background is dark and indistinct, suggesting an indoor setting.

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*:

“I say with Augustine that the Lord has created those who, as He certainly foreknew, were to go to destruction, and He did so because He so willed, ... man, by the righteous impulsion of God, does that which is unlawful.”

A portrait of Martin Luther, a German monk, reformer, and ecclesiastical reformer. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark brown monastic habit and a dark cap. He has a full, dark beard and is looking slightly to his left with a thoughtful expression. The background is dark and indistinct, suggesting an indoor setting.

“[M]an falls, the Providence of God so ordaining ... that by the will of God all the sons of Adam fell into the state of wretchedness in which they are now involved ... Nor ought it to seem absurd when I say, that God not only foresaw the fall of the first man, and in him the ruin of his posterity; but also at his own pleasure arranged it.

A portrait of John Calvin, a French theologian and a prominent figure of the Protestant Reformation. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark, textured robe and a dark beret. He has a full, dark beard and is looking slightly to his left with a thoughtful expression. The background is dark and indistinct.

... Some attempt to evade this dilemma by saying God permits the sin instead of willing it but the Bible says He does it. ... Men do nothing save at the secret instigation of God and do not discuss or deliberate on anything but what He had previously decreed with Himself and brings to pass by His secret direction is proved by numberless clear passages of Scripture."

<https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/orthodoxyandheterodoxy/2014/01/10/why-i-stopped-being-a-calvinist-part-2-calvinism-destroys-gods-justice/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3v3PSMgDXo>

R.C. Sproul, Jr.: “I am suggesting that he [God] created sin ... I must ask, does the law of God forbid the creation of evil? I would suggest that it just isn’t there. ... since God is sovereign, even those things which are not as they ought to be really are just as things ought to be. ... there are ultimately no ‘bad’ things since God is completely sovereign.”

“Why I Stopped Being a Calvinist (Part 2): Calvinism Destroys God’s Justice,” Robin Phillips, Jan 10, 2014

<https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/orthodoxyandheterodoxy/2014/01/10/why-i-stopped-being-a-calvinist-part-2-calvinism-destroys-gods-justice/>

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A person in a yellow raincoat and hat stands in a dark, stormy sea, holding a lantern that illuminates the water. The scene is dramatic, with dark clouds and waves crashing around the figure.

2. Scripture teaches that God does not desire
nor design **evil**.

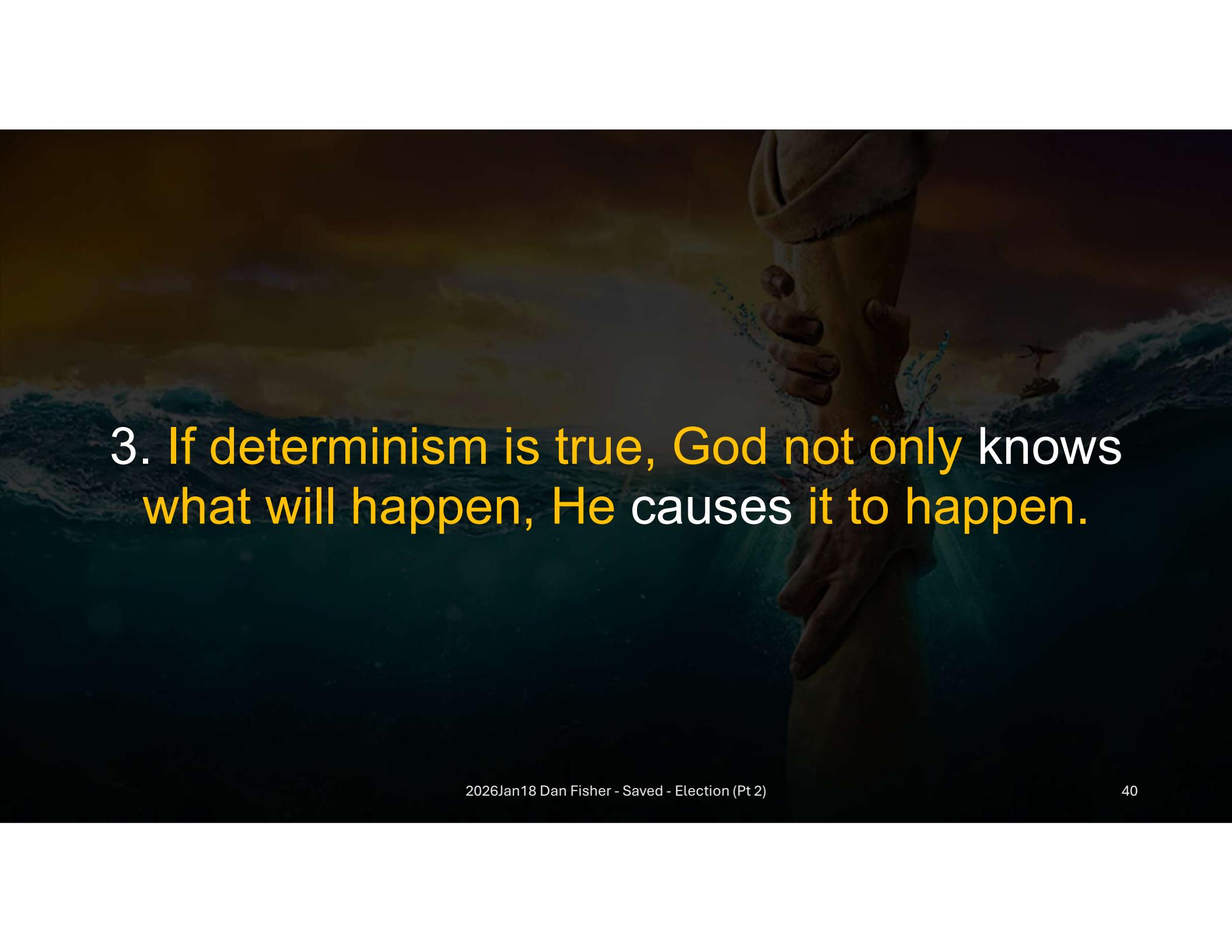
“For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, nor shall evil dwell with You. ⁵ The boastful shall not stand in Your sight; You hate all workers of iniquity.” **Ps 5:4-5**

“My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent.” **Prov 1:10**

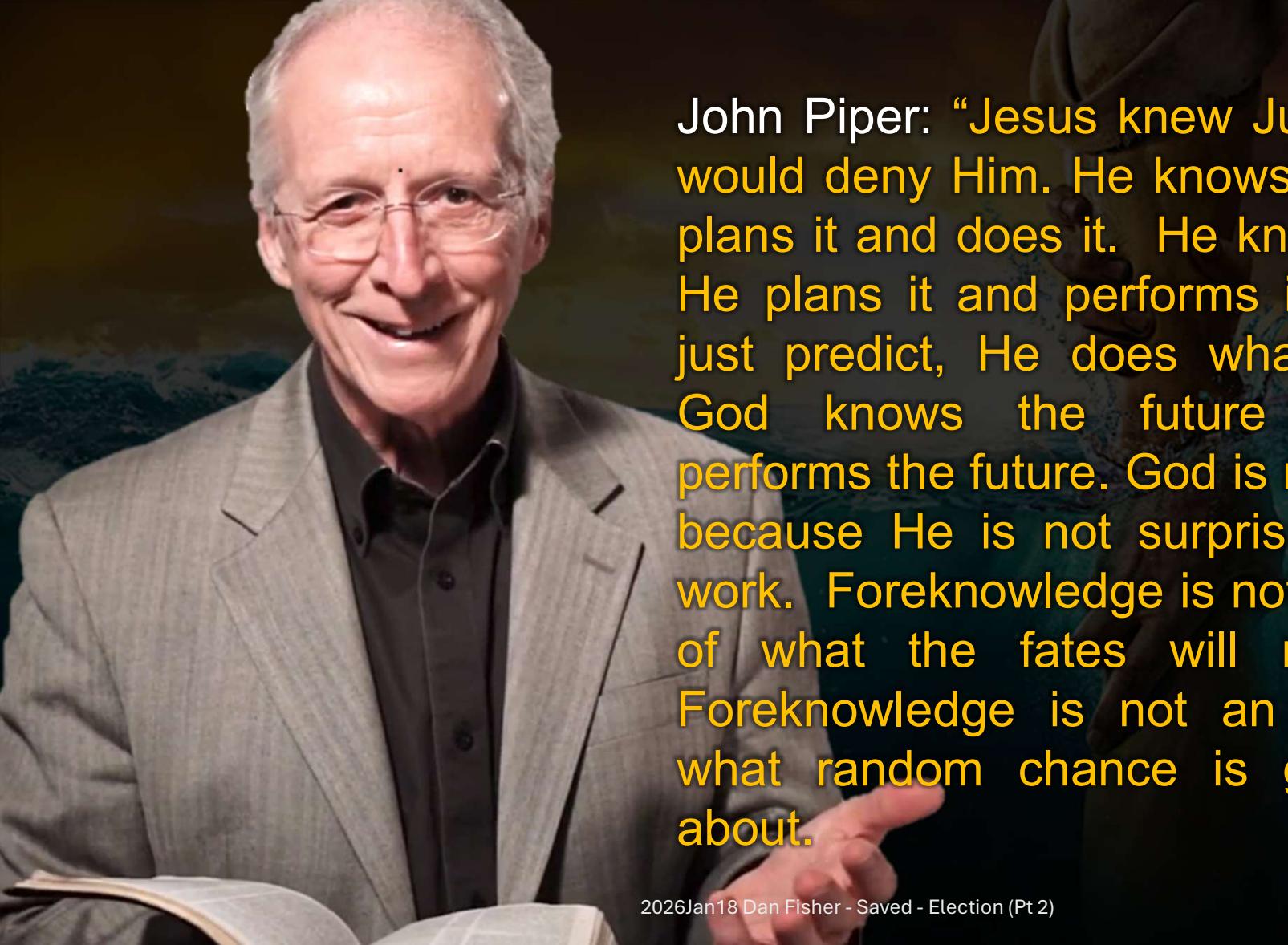
“A heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil,” **Prov 6:18**

“An ungodly man [man of Belial] digs up evil, and it is on his lips like a burning fire. ²⁸ A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer separates the best of friends. ²⁹ A violent man entices his neighbor, and leads him in a way that is not good. ³⁰ He winks his eye to devise perverse things; he purses his lips and brings about evil.” **Prov 16:27-30**

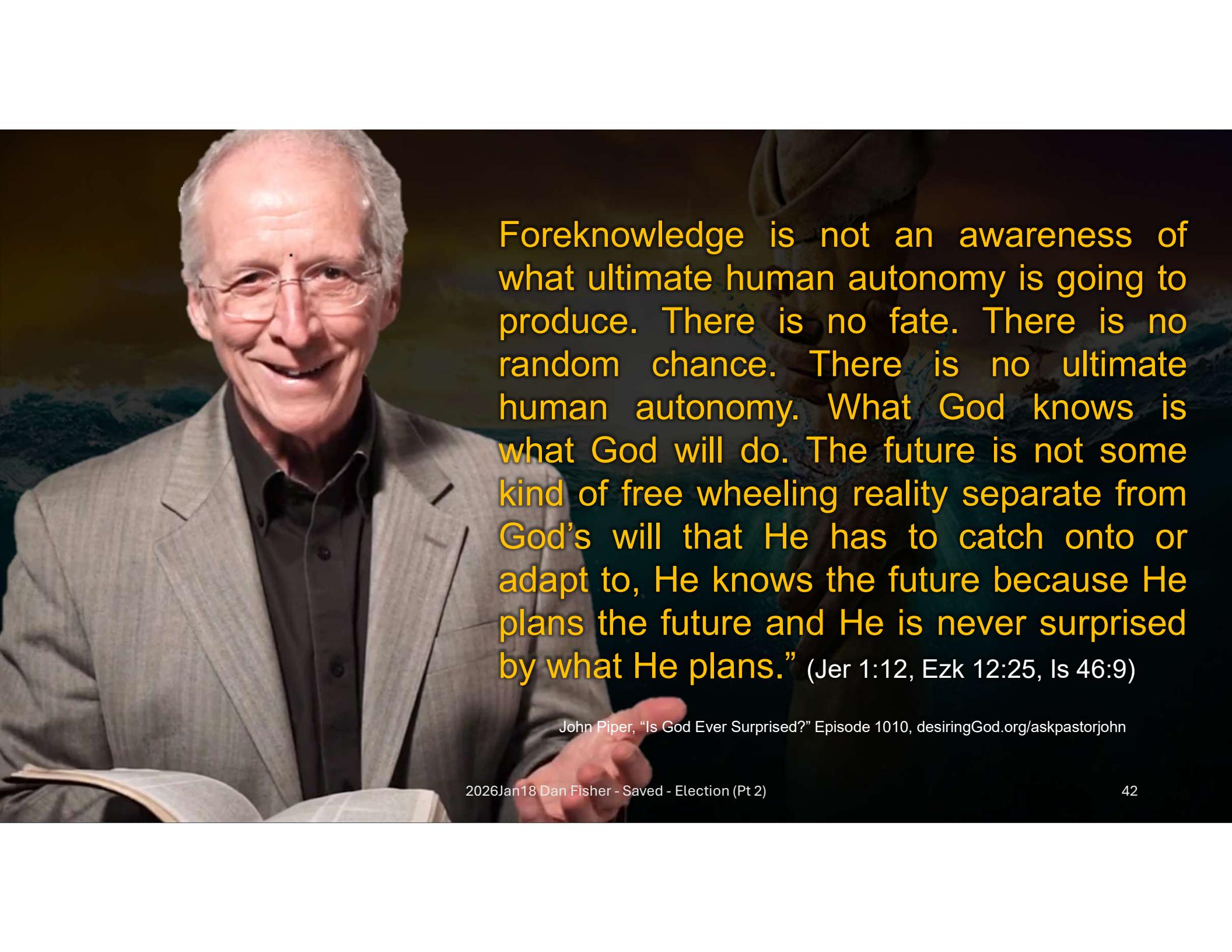
“Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am being tempted by God,’ for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.” **Js 1:13-14**



3. If determinism is true, God not only knows what will happen, He causes it to happen.



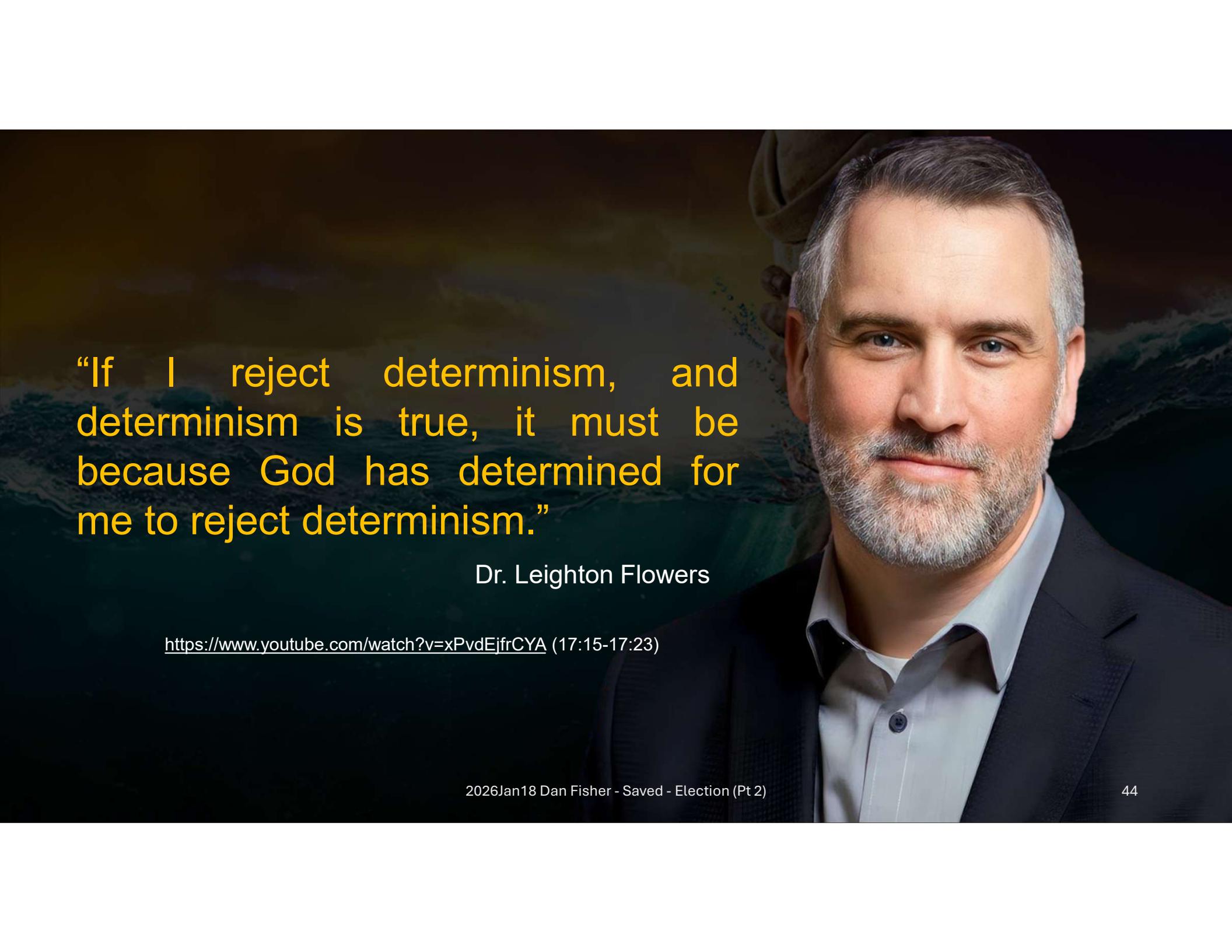
John Piper: “Jesus knew Judas and Peter would deny Him. He knows it because He plans it and does it. He knows it because He plans it and performs it. God doesn’t just predict, He does what He predicts. God knows the future because He performs the future. God is never surprised because He is not surprised at His own work. Foreknowledge is not an awareness of what the fates will make happen. Foreknowledge is not an awareness of what random chance is going to bring about.



Foreknowledge is not an awareness of what ultimate human autonomy is going to produce. There is no fate. There is no random chance. There is no ultimate human autonomy. What God knows is what God will do. The future is not some kind of free wheeling reality separate from God's will that He has to catch onto or adapt to, He knows the future because He plans the future and He is never surprised by what He plans." (Jer 1:12, Ezk 12:25, Is 46:9)

John Piper, "Is God Ever Surprised?" Episode 1010, desiringGod.org/askpastorjohn

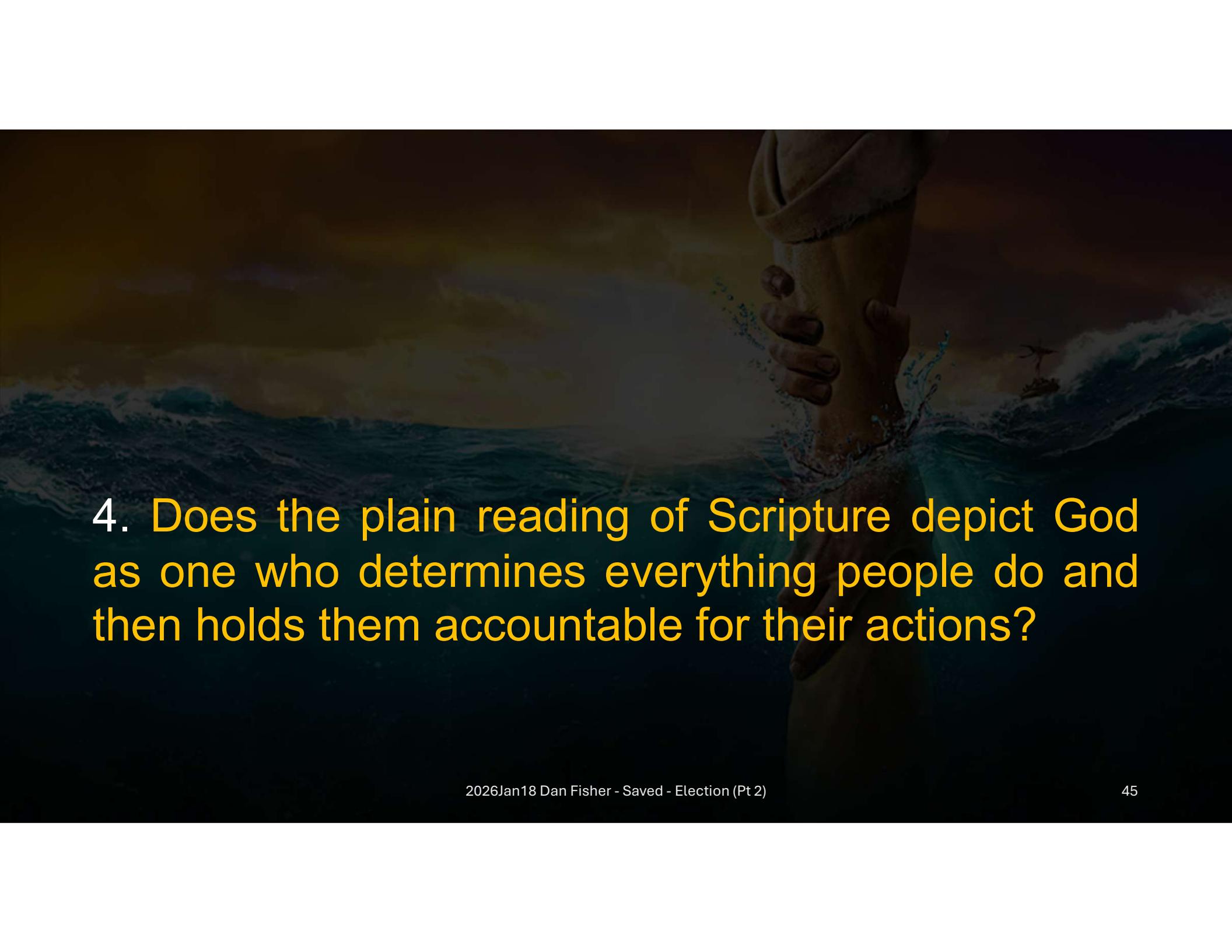
- If determinism is true, then everything we are is of God's making
- Sinning Christians can look to God's determinism as the cause
- Terms like "humble yourself" & "repent" – make no sense if determinism is true
- God even determines who will be a good and bad Calvinist

A portrait of Dr. Leighton Flowers, a man with a beard and short hair, wearing a dark suit and light shirt, set against a background of a stormy sea with a lighthouse.

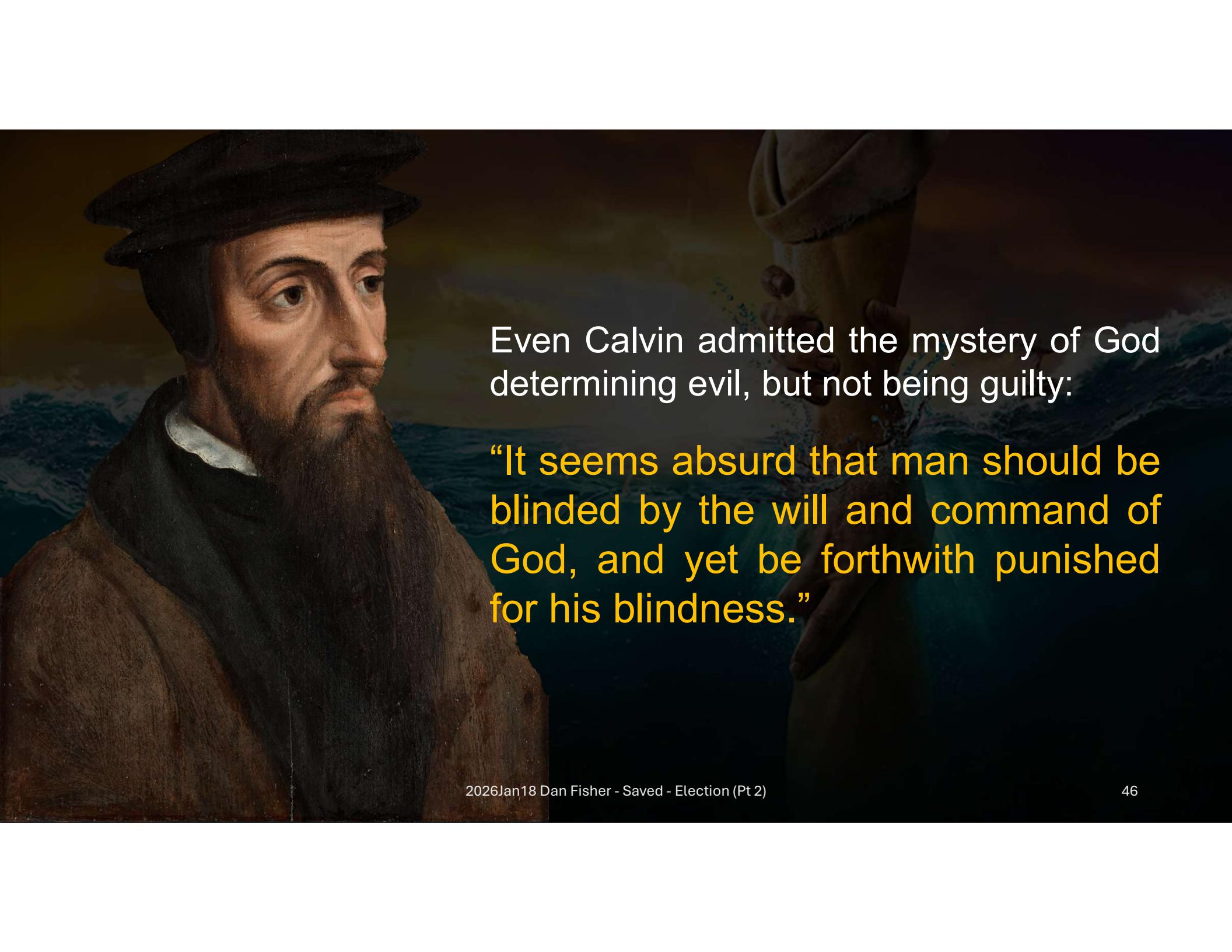
“If I reject determinism, and determinism is true, it must be because God has determined for me to reject determinism.”

Dr. Leighton Flowers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPvdEjfrCYA> (17:15-17:23)

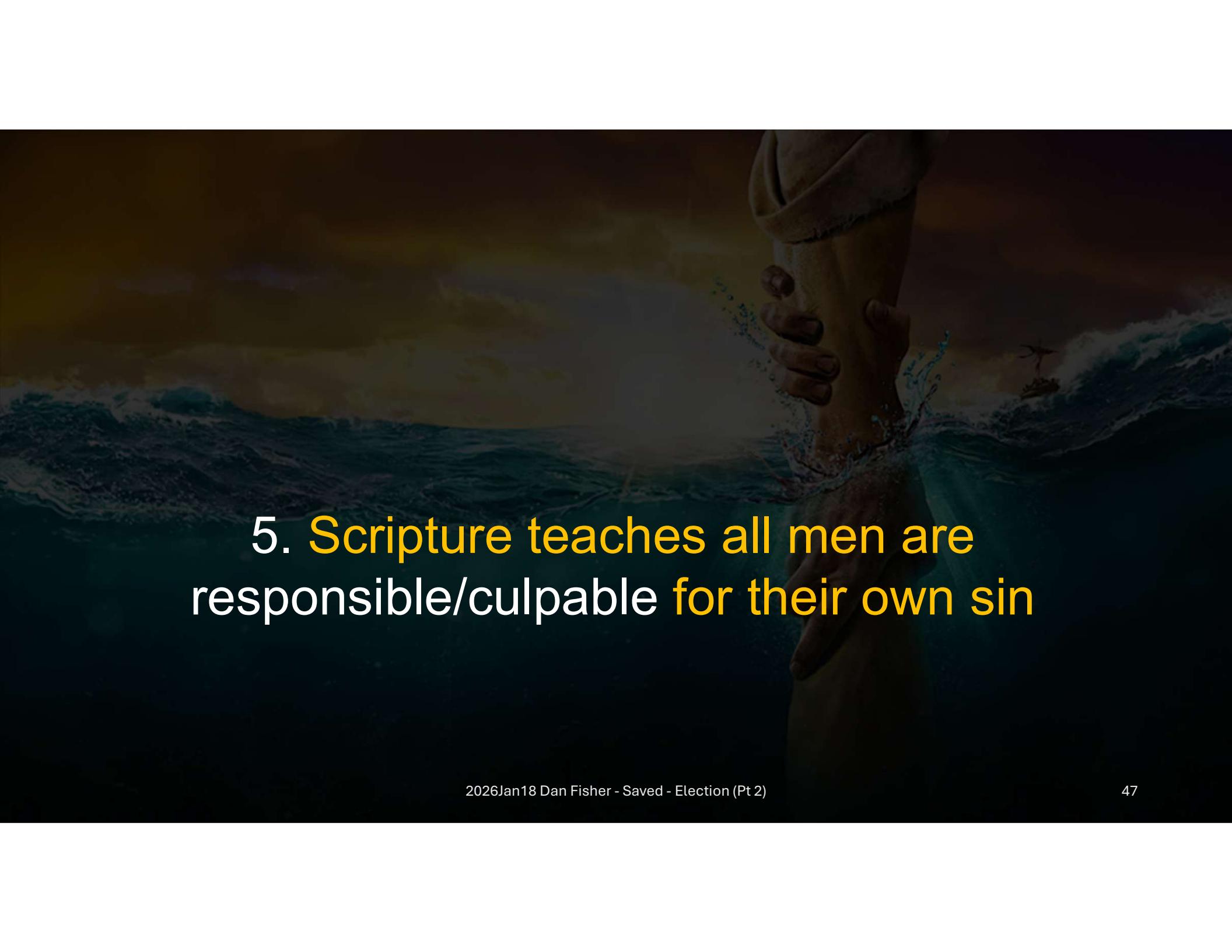


4. Does the plain reading of Scripture depict God as one who determines everything people do and then holds them accountable for their actions?

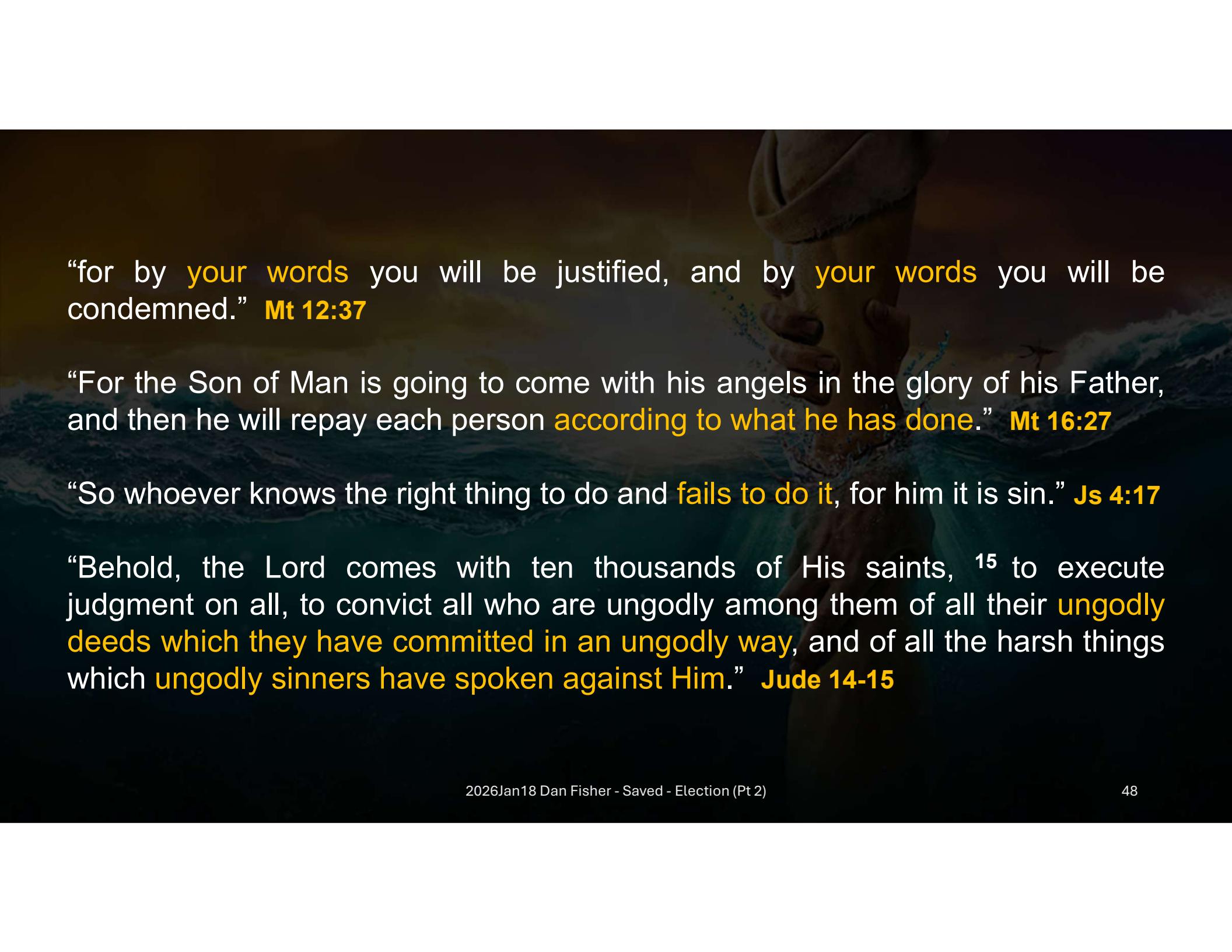
A portrait of John Calvin, a French Protestant reformer, historian, and theologian. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark, textured robe and a dark beret. He has a full, dark beard and is looking slightly to his right with a thoughtful expression. The background is dark and indistinct, suggesting an indoor setting.

Even Calvin admitted the mystery of God determining evil, but not being guilty:

“It seems absurd that man should be blinded by the will and command of God, and yet be forthwith punished for his blindness.”

A person wearing a yellow life vest is holding a small, blue and white boat. The person is standing in a dark, choppy sea with white-capped waves. The background shows a dark, cloudy sky.

5. Scripture teaches all men are responsible/culpable for their own sin

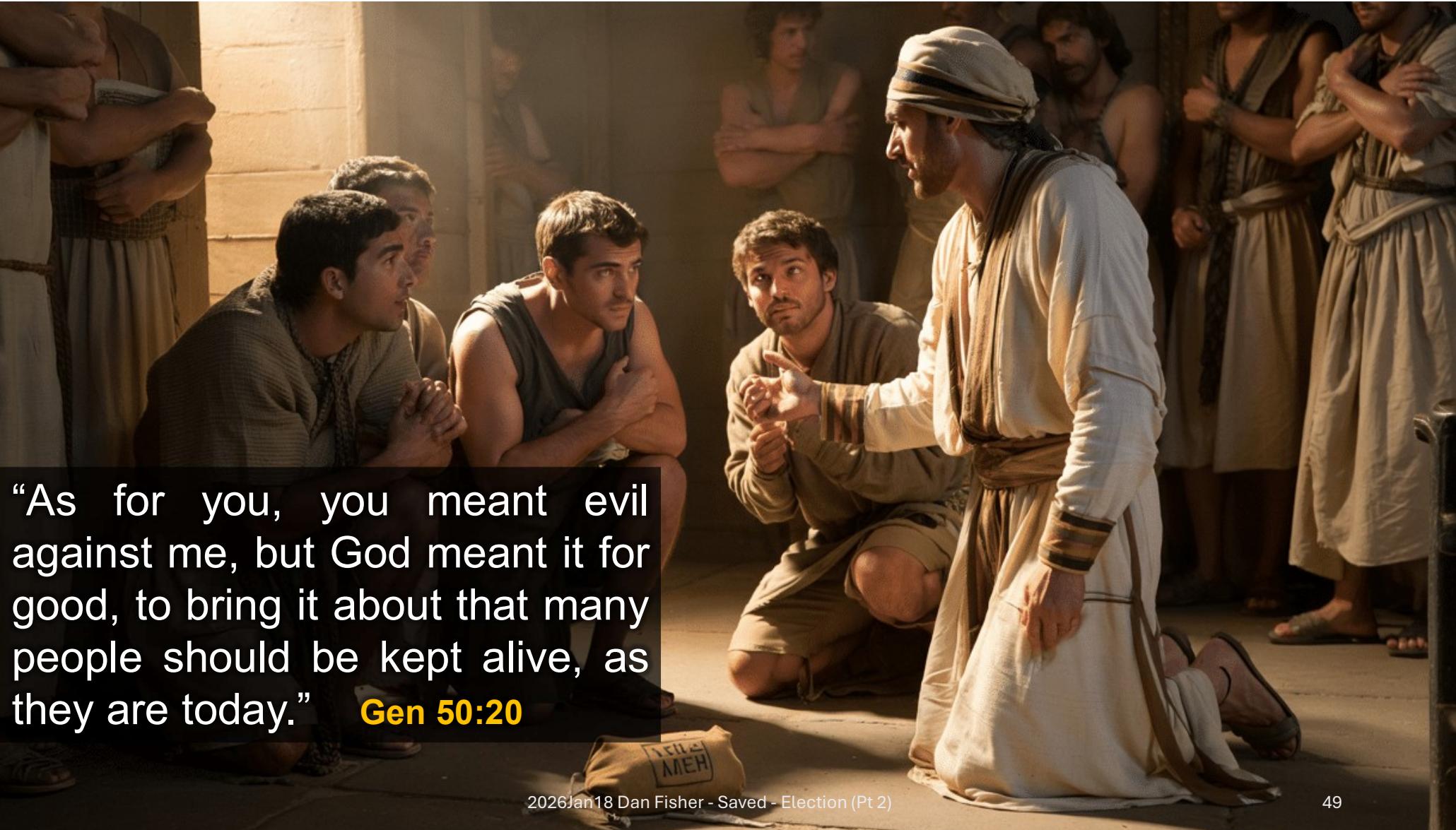


“for by **your words** you will be justified, and by **your words** you will be condemned.” **Mt 12:37**

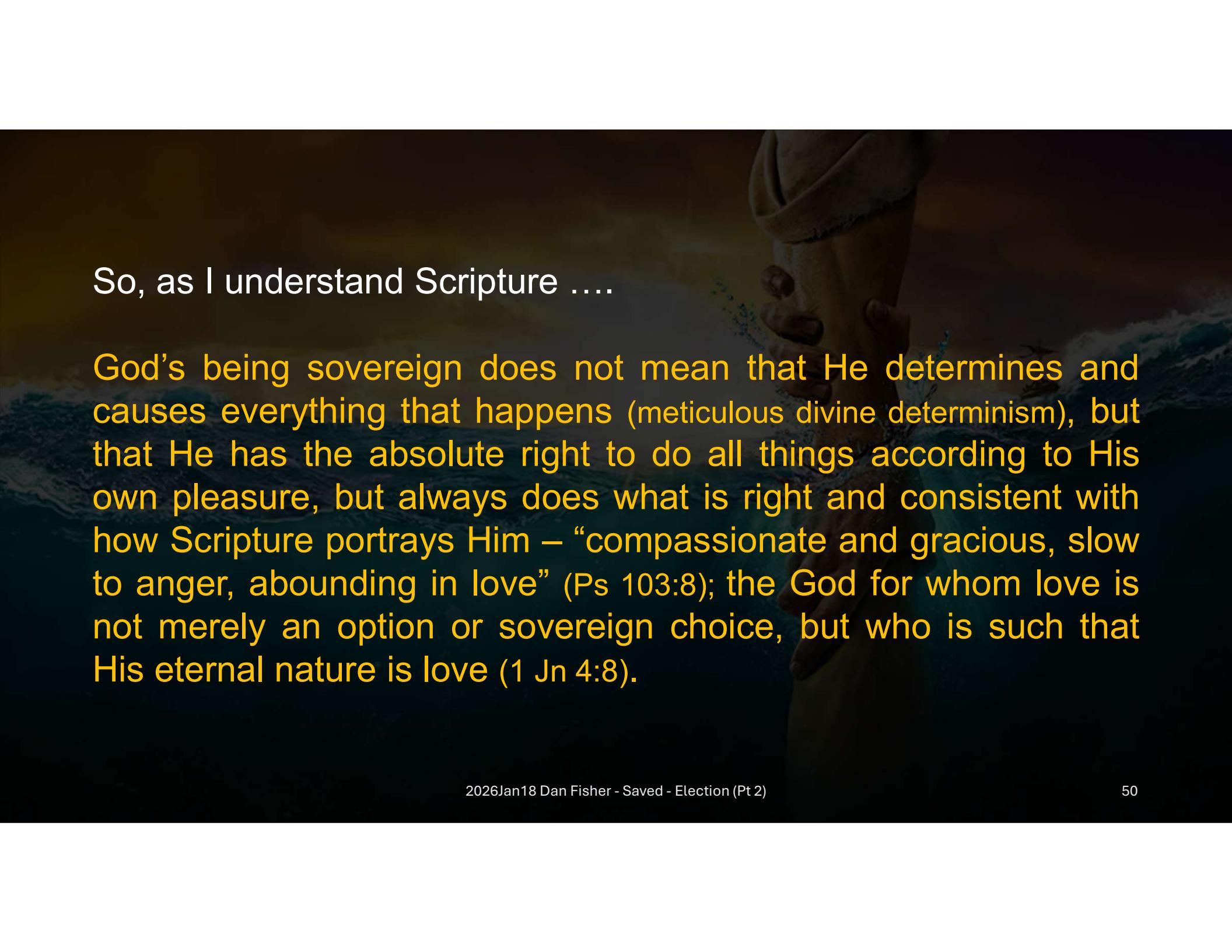
“For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person **according to what he has done.**” **Mt 16:27**

“So whoever knows the right thing to do and **fails to do it**, for him it is sin.” **Js 4:17**

“Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their **ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way**, and of all the harsh things which **ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.**” **Jude 14-15**

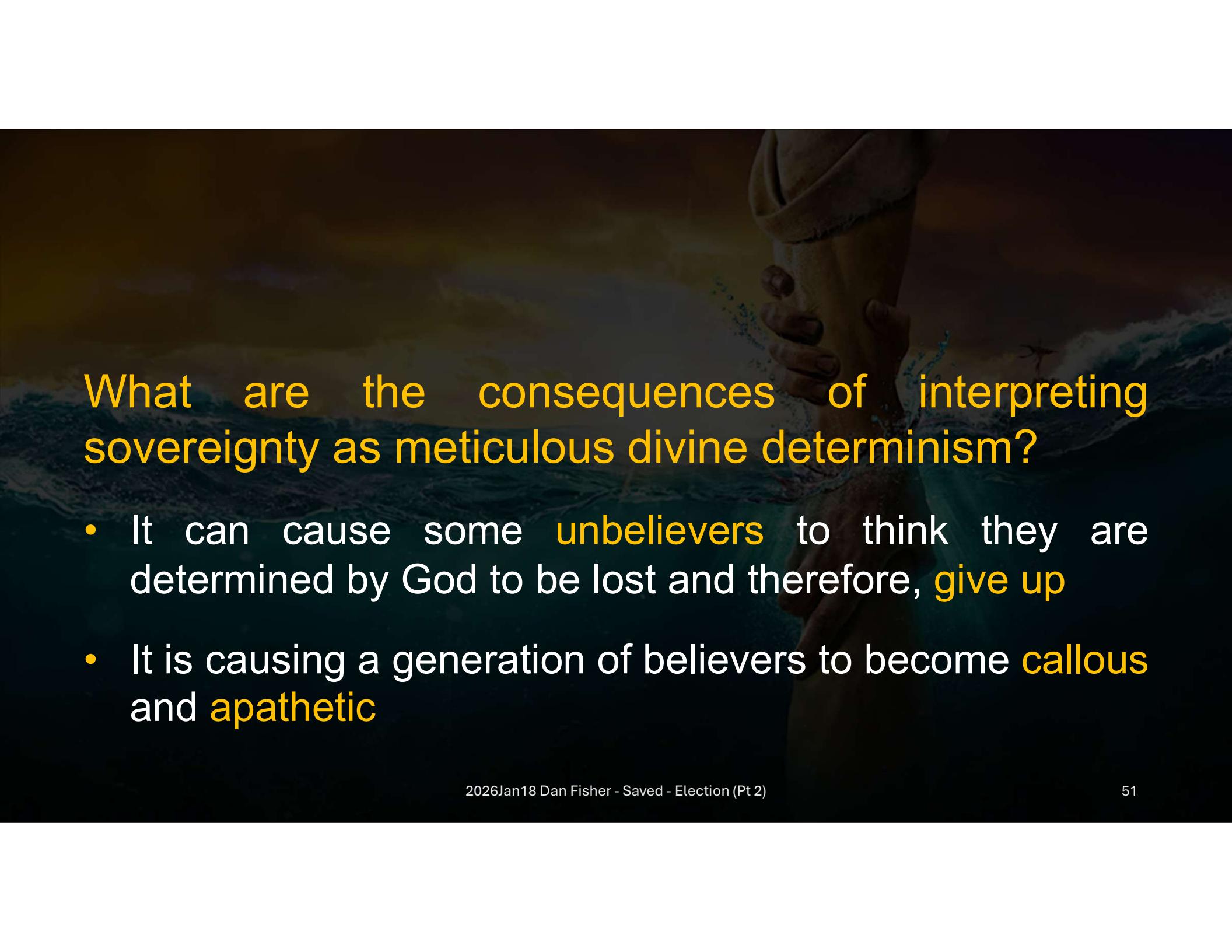


“As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.” **Gen 50:20**



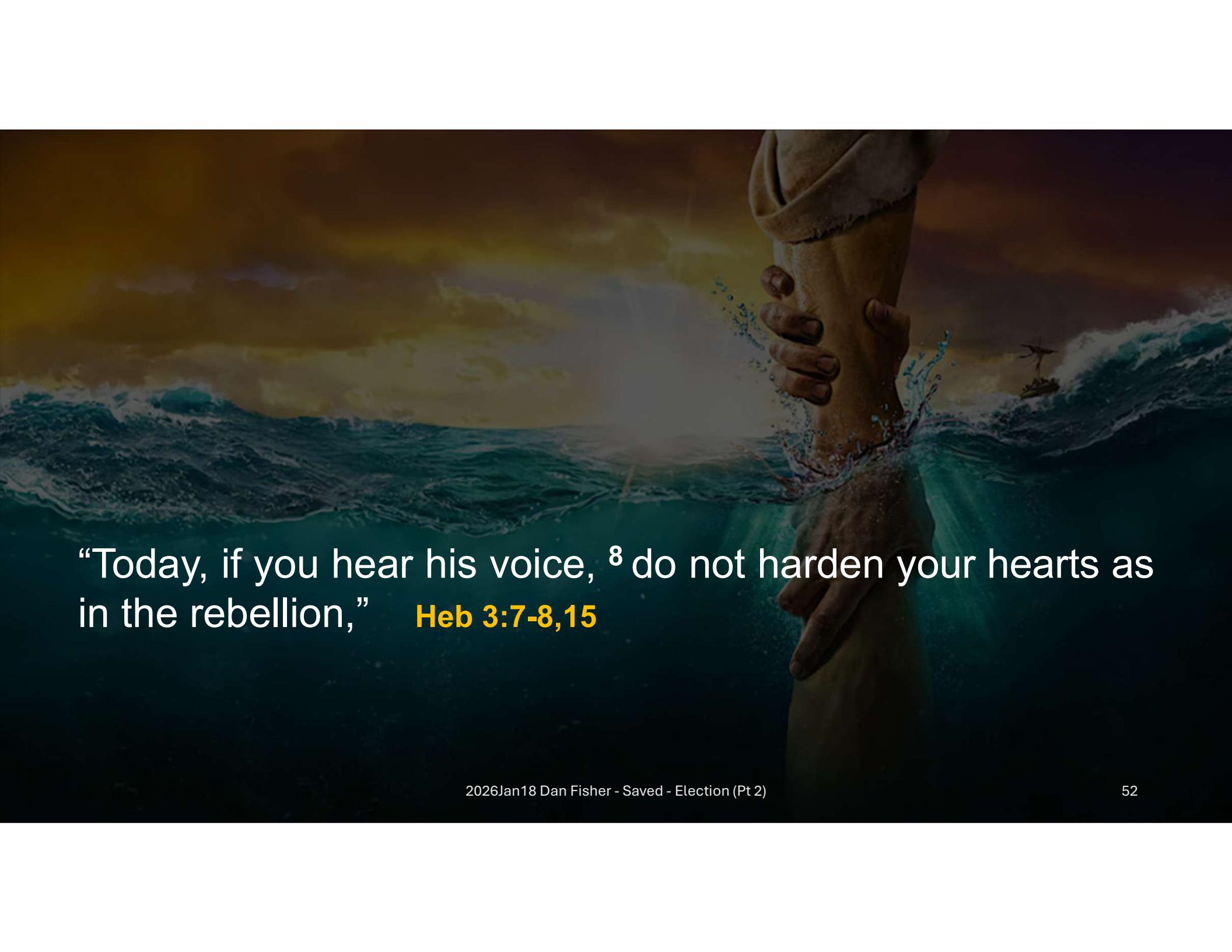
So, as I understand Scripture

God's being sovereign does not mean that He determines and causes everything that happens (meticulous divine determinism), but that He has the absolute right to do all things according to His own pleasure, but always does what is right and consistent with how Scripture portrays Him – “compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love” (Ps 103:8); the God for whom love is not merely an option or sovereign choice, but who is such that His eternal nature is love (1 Jn 4:8).

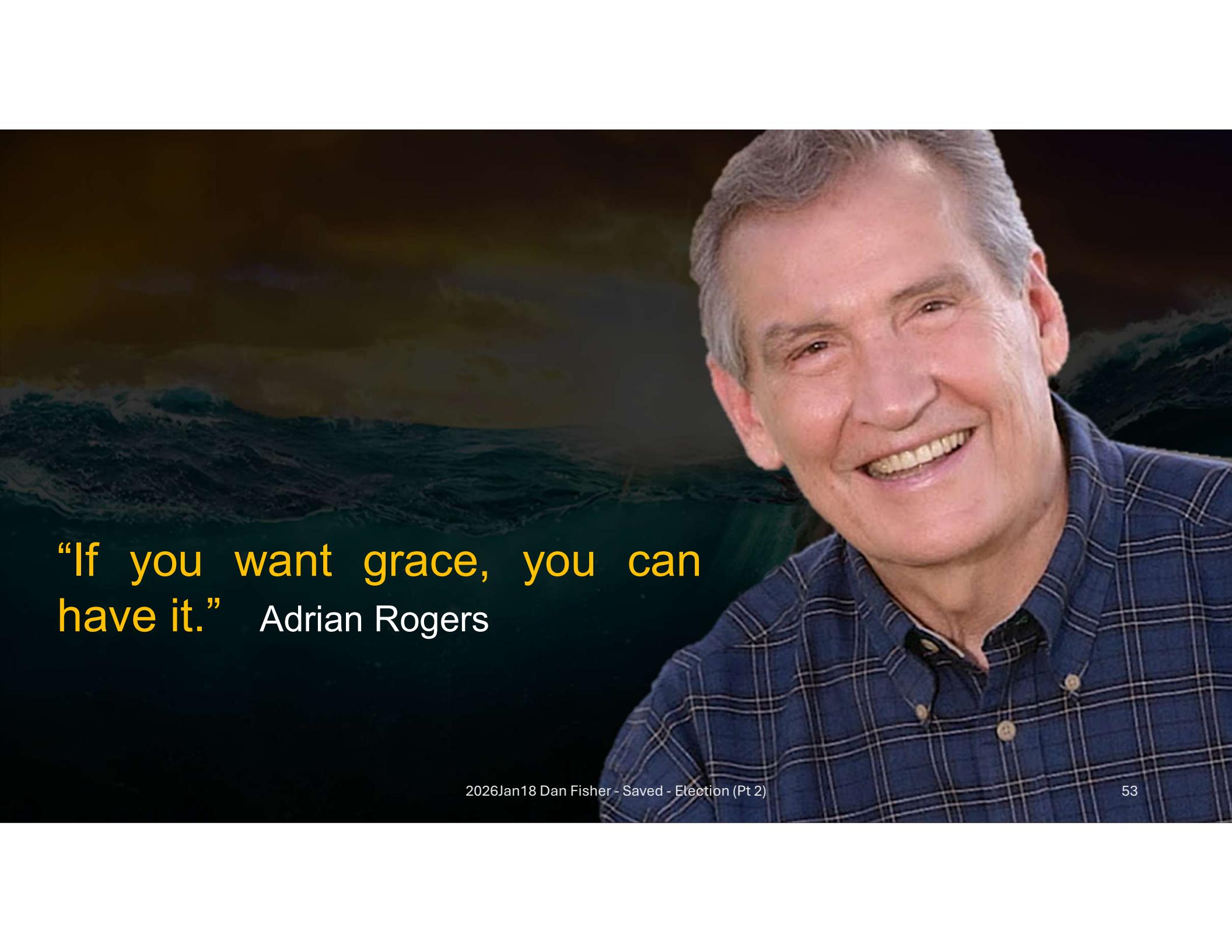


What are the consequences of interpreting sovereignty as meticulous divine determinism?

- It can cause some **unbelievers** to think they are determined by God to be lost and therefore, **give up**
- It is causing a generation of believers to become **callous** and **apathetic**



“Today, if you hear his voice, ⁸ do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,” **Heb 3:7-8,15**

A portrait of Adrian Rogers, a man with grey hair and a warm smile, wearing a blue plaid shirt. He is positioned on the right side of the image, with a dark, textured background that suggests a landscape with hills or mountains. The lighting is soft, highlighting his face.

“If you want grace, you can
have it” Adrian Rogers