

## REFLECTIONS

*Thoughts on nature and the Christian faith - 7/16/18*

***"I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy."***

***- Rom. 9:15-16***



It's hard to think of a more adorable animal than a fawn. Whitetail deer often have twins, so it was no surprise to Jo and I to see these two appear together on our property. It was impossible for us to choose which one we liked the most. In fact, it was hard to tell them apart since they were twins. Scripture uses the illustration of the twins Jacob and Esau to teach us something about God's choice of those to whom He will bestow mercy. Jacob received mercy and Esau received justice. The amazing fact is that God made His choice before the twins were even born. It is crushing to human pride to know that our supposed goodness contributes nothing to God's choice of those to whom He grants mercy. Salvation is all of grace, and it is only when we come to understand this fact that God is most glorified. That God would choose to have mercy on anyone is cause for amazement. If we cry that this is unfair, it is only because we do not understand what fairness means. It means we are asking God to give us what we deserve. And what we as a sinful race deserve is condemnation. But doesn't God choose us because we have chosen to follow Jesus? In other words, isn't our choosing God the reason that God chooses us? Scripture is clear on this point, the only reason we have chosen Him is because He has first chosen us. Our faith is the response of God's choosing, not the cause of it. Whenever we hold onto something we have done as a reason for God's acceptance of us, we take some of the glory that belongs to God alone and put it on ourselves. Fawns are adorable and innocent. We are not. If you are a follower of Jesus, it is only because God has chosen to give you what you do not deserve - mercy. - John

