

DOCTRINE OF "PREDESTINATION"

Request: "Recently you taught from Jn.6 and I realized I have questions about the doctrine of predestination and election. I had been listening to Christian radio and heard a pastor preaching the Calvinistic view of predestination and election and I didn't know how to refute it. Could you do a study of them?"

This is one of a cluster of doctrines associated with the package of "grace salvation" such as:

- Predestination and election (Eph.1:4-5)
- Foreknowledge (Rom.8:28-30)
- Free will (Rom.1:16)
- Faith and grace (Eph.2:8-9).

The problem in the debate of this cluster of doctrines of salvation is that the main point of the debate is either left out or misrepresented.

You always know when a doctrinal debate is promoted by *cosmos diabolicus* (worldly thinking) because the person and/or the work of Jesus Christ is taken out of the central position of the debate (Matt.16:21-23; 1Jn.4:1-3).

The issue of predestination and election is not just between man and God but between man, Jesus Christ, and God.

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.'" (Jn.14:6)

"Who (God our Savior) desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony borne at the proper time." (1Tim.2:4-6)

This lesson will study five aspects of PREDESTINATION.

If you put this doctrine through the faith cycle under the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit, you should become confident with this doctrine (Jn.14:26).

1. Predestination is looking at salvation from God's side through Jesus Christ.

Here is a simple illustration of predestination that may help: "By being in union with Jesus Christ, the believer shares in the destiny of Jesus Christ that was predestination in eternal past."

"Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." (2 Cor.5:17)

Here is another illustration of predestination: "An airplane sets on the runway ready to be boarded for departure with a predetermined destination. When the passengers board this plane, they enter into its predetermined destination."

"Just as He **chose us in Him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He **predestined us** to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will." (Eph.1:4-5)

2. **The Greek verb for predestination is proorizo (pro means beforehand) and (horizo means to mark out or determine).**

“Predestination is limited to believers and assures their present position and future destiny.”

(Basic Theology, Ryrie, pg.361)

“This man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.” (Acts 2:23-24)

The predetermined plan (horizo boule) is based on the omniscience of God. **Omniscience** is God’s ability to know everything knowable while **foreknowledge** is what God actually adopted and decreed in the plan of God.

3. **At the eternal life conference, God decreed to predestine those who believe the gospel of Jesus Christ.**

“To do whatever Thy hand and Thy purpose predestined to occur.” (Acts 4:28)

“But we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages to our glory.” (1 Cor.2:7)

“Predestination is that aspect of foreordination whereby the salvation of the believing one is taken to be affected in accordance with the will of God who has called and elected him in Christ unto eternal life.”

(I.S.B.E, pg.2435)

4. **God decreed to leave in just condemnation those who reject the gospel of Jesus Christ.**

“For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.” (1 Tim.4:10)

The Greek word proorizo is never used in the NT to state that some are predestined to hell.

“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patience toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.” (2 Pet.3:9; Titus 2:11)

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” (Jn.3:36; Rom.5:12-21; 8:1)

“And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” (Rev.20:15)

5. **Unlimited Atonement is an important doctrine associated with predestination.**

Unlimited Atonement teaches that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the entire human race:

“And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.” (1Jn. 2:2; Heb.2:9)

Unlimited Atonement is unlimited in scope, but limited in application because of free will of man.

God chose Christ. When we choose Christ, we are the chosen of God (Eph.1:4-5).

In the plan of God, God decreed and predestined Jesus Christ to represent redemptive history. By being in union with Jesus Christ, the believer shares in this decreed and predestined redemptive history (2 Cor.5:17-21).