

Predestination, Election, and The Sovereignty of God...

Romans 8:28-30

New King James Version (NKJV)

28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

These terms are little understood. One reason is Calvin's teaching on the subject is often confused with the false teachings of hyper-calvinism.

Here is predestination summarized: Ephesians 1:4

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

The believer was elected before he was even born or the world was made.

Ephesians 1:5

5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

The following verse is predestination which is God's SOVEREIGN eternal plan by which He foreordained all things to come to pass.

Ephesians 1:11

11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

This plan is UNCONDITIONAL. meaning he consulted no one. He did as He wanted. He planned EVERYTHING, AND he knew the outcome, because He predestined all events that come to pass.

Now here is where people miss it. This eternal, before the earth was formed, sovereign plan INCLUDED MAN'S FREE WILL CHOICES AND ACTIONS! Example: Joseph's brothers made a free will choice to sell him into slavery, but:

Genesis 50:20

20 But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

Another example: Isaiah 10:5-12

5 Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger
And the staff in whose hand is My indignation.

6 I will send him against an ungodly nation,
And against the people of My wrath
I will give him charge,
To seize the spoil, to take the prey,
And to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

7 Yet he does not mean so,
Nor does his heart think so;
But it is in his heart to destroy,
And cut off not a few nations.

8 For he says,

“Are not my princes altogether kings?

9 Is not Calno like Carchemish?

Is not Hamath like Arpad?

Is not Samaria like Damascus?

10 As my hand has found the kingdoms of the idols,
Whose carved images excelled those of Jerusalem and Samaria,

11 As I have done to Samaria and her idols,
Shall I not do also to Jerusalem and her idols?”

12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Lord has performed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, that He will say, “I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his haughty looks.”

Assyria did what was in their heart by a free will choice. However they were fulfilling God's eternal plan. Predestination.

ANOTHER

Acts 2:22-23

22 “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know” 23 Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken[a] by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; This was predestined but clearly a free will choice. From man's side he makes a free will choice because the free will choices have been predestined.

Acts 4:27-28

27 “For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28 to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.

The free will choice is also true in the matter of redemption. God predestined and elected those who would believe as part of the eternal plan before the world began as we have seen already. Here is the scripture:

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14

13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord,

because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, 14 to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You see here the eternal predestined plan and the free will response of His elect chosen before the foundation of the earth. They were elect but must respond to the gospel by their free will.

It is VERY important that one sees that God's eternal plan had to be unconditional. If any part of the plan was conditioned on what man might or might not do the whole plan would be conditional and uncertain. God is sovereign and not dependent on what man or the devil might do. Jesus was predetermined to be betrayed by Judas. Judas was held accountable because he made the free will choice to do it.

God has foreknowledge or perfect knowledge and certainty of all events. Acts 15:18

18 "Known to God from eternity are all His works.[a]

NOTHING takes God by surprise!

Election is the sovereign choice of His people before the foundation of the world. He says they will be effectually called, justified, and glorified because it was predestined. See Romans 8:29-30.

Election is NOT God foreseeing who would believe by looking down history and saving those who believe. This would be works and not grace.

2 Timothy 1:9

9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,

Does this all mean that it is fatalism which is what Hyper-Calvinism believes?

NO! We are to pray, evangelize, teach, preach because this is what God has predestined us to do. We do not know who is or is not elect or how prayers will effect events in advance. The elect have to hear the gospel and respond which they will do by a preordained free will choice. The lost hear the general call and reject it by their own free will. Here it is in Jesus' words: John 6:64-65

64 But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. 65 And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." THESE WERE HIS DISCIPLES! HE HAD TAUGHT THEM JUST LIKE THE REST OF HIS DISCIPLES. John 5:39-40

39 You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. 40 But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

Why does God give a general call by the preaching of the gospel or by Romans 1:18-22 and their conscience? So they will be responsible for their free will choice.

What about 'fairness in all of this? Here is what the Bible says:

Romans 9:12-26

12 it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger." [a] 13 As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated." [b]

14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! 15 For He says to

Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion." [c] 16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. 17 For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth." [d] 18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

19 You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" 20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?" 21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

25 As He says also in Hosea:

"I will call them My people, who were not My people,
And her beloved, who was not beloved." [e]

26 "And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them,

"You are not My people,"

There they shall be called sons of the living God."

If God is not sovereign He is not God. He is perfectly fair and just in ALL that He does, which includes predestination and election

Here is what John Calvin taught in a brief summary and is essentially in line with scripture. 1. Man is totally lost in sin and cannot choose salvation apart from grace. 2. Unconditional election: God chooses who He will. 3. Limited atonement: Christ died savingly for the elect. 4. Irresistible (effective) grace: God's grace produces the effect for which it was intended. 5. Perseverance of the saints. All those God calls and saves will endure to the end. (This is not once saved always saved because salvation is a walk (enduring) not just receiving Jesus, getting baptized, and joining a 'church'.)

Hyper-Calvinism has perverted this into fatalism which results in no evangelism, little prayer or intercession, and carelessness of living for Jesus. This may be the origin of the name it and claim it, blab it and grab it, cheap grace ministries