Subject: Predestination, Election, And The Sovereignty Of God
Posted by lesjude on Tue, 01 Nov 2011 21:27:00 GMT
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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 â€œ 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,

â€˜ 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?â€™â€•

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, â€œI will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his haughty looks.â€•
Assyria did what was in their heart by a free will choice. However they were fullfilling God's eternal plan. Predestination.
ANOTHER
Acts 2:22-23
22 â€œMen 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 knowâ€” 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 mans side he makes a free will choice because the free will choices have been predestined.
Acts 4:27-28
27 â€œFor 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 â€œKnown 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.â€• For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. 65 And He said, â€œTherefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.â€• 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, â€œThe older shall serve the younger.â€•[a] 13 As it is written, â€œJacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.â€•[b]
14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! 15 For He says to

Moses, â€œI will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.â€•[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, â€œFor 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.â€•[d] 18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.
19 You will say to me then, â€œWhy does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?â€• 20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, â€œWhy have you made me like this?â€• 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:

â€œ I will call them My people, who were not My people,
And her beloved, who was not beloved.â€•[e]
26 â€œ And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them,

â€˜ You are not My people,â€™
There they shall be called sons of the living God.â€•[

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

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Subject: Re: Predestination, Election, And The Sovereignty Of God
Posted by james on Thu, 06 Mar 2014 17:56:19 GMT
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I came across this rebuttal to the objection to the doctrine of election as being unjust or unfair to

those who are not included.

"Election deals, not simply with creatures, but with sinful, guilty, and condemned creatures. That any should be saved is a matter of pure grace, and those who are nor included in this purpose of salvation suffer only the due reward of their deeds. There is, therefore, no injustice in God's election.

God can say to all men, saved or unsaved, "Friend, I do thee no wrong...Is it not lawful for Me to do what I will with Mine own?"(Matt.20:13,15) The question is not whether a father will treat his children alike, but whether a sovereign must treat condemned rebels alike. It is not true that, because a governor pardons one convict from the penitentiary, he must, therefore, pardon all. When he pardons one, no injury is done to those who are left. But in God's government, there is still less reason for objection, for God offers pardon to all. Nothing prevents men from being pardoned except their unwillingness to accept His pardon. Election is simply God's determination to make certain persons willing to accept it."

Subject: Re: Predestination, Election, And The Sovereignty Of God
Posted by Mark L on Tue, 18 Apr 2017 21:23:06 GMT
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Predestination has always bothered me. Not the fact of it so much but Gods righteousness in doing it. Maybe a better way to put it is to say I have never been able to put it together in a way that satisfies me.

The Armenians believe God looked down through history and foreordained the ones who will believe. In spite of their protests though that still leaves humanity doing something to obtain salvation.

The Calvinistic view is set out in the post above. The objection by the Armenians to the Calvinistic view that it makes God the author of sin has I think some validity. At least the way its taught by the Calvinists. From the reading I've done their end point is that questions like that have to be left in the deeper counsels of God.

My own view more of less stated by the OP is that God foreordained our free choices. By ordering all the events issues and details around a decision so that only one choice is possible but that choice is made out of the persons own heart.

Can you imagine the kind of intelligence that can do that in advance through all of our human history. Not only ours but all of eternity with all the myriad personalities and realms there. I think that God is so big that he can't do anything but foreordain.

The biblical view as expressed by JI Packer (Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God) is that there are two streams of truth set
forth in the bible. One is that God from eternity foreordains and predestines everything. The other is that man is responsible. Like 2 railroad tracks side by side going off into the distance.
Never joining together just going off side by side.

Pauls answer to those who question Gods right to foreordain is . . . O man, who are you to reply against God? Rom. 9/19

Predestination has always bothered me for this reason. Because I can't find a way to adequately account for Gods righteousness. Not his holiness but his doing "right" And obviously that is an intrinsic part of his being. Intrinsic in that he can't do or be anything but "right"

I think part of the issue for me personally is that I like all my ducks set up neatly in a row. The bible of course doesn't do that. It just sets forth the facts and expects you to believe it.

Subject: Re: Predestination, Election, And The Sovereignty Of God
Posted by william on Wed, 19 Apr 2017 04:13:55 GMT
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I think you are right; we all want to be able to wrap our minds around predestination and election but it isn't as simple as the Arminians and Calvinists want us to believe!

Recently, (actually three or four years ago! Boy, does time fly!) I was reading Reformed Dogmatics by Herman Bavinck the abridged one-volume edition. I can't say exactly where I was in the book or even the statement but whatever it was it got me on the subject of predestination and election. So I begin to read some of the different stuff (tons of it available on the Internet) and ran across a third view called "Molinism".

For me, it provided a different perspective that helped with the whole
trying-to-wrap-my-mind-around-everything need that we humans tend to have. I'm not going to say that I've now experienced mind-wrap-nirvana mind you, but some of the ideas that were presented definitely warranted some attention.

By the way, I don't think that any of the material that I read constituted anything heretical, it was just an attempt at providing a viewpoint that embraced the seemingly contradictory elements of Free-will vs God's sovereignty doctrines.

I know I can't do justice to the whole doctrine of Molinism and perhaps even in this one example someone might find that I've butchered the doctrine miserably (or even completely misunderstood

it!) but at least in my mind the following example helped me with one aspect of the whole argument. (My problem is that I don't have anyone to critique anything I say which puts me into the enviable position of being right all of the time!<grin>) Of course I'm opening myself up by actually conversing with anyone reading here so be gentle if you must point out logical fallacies in my, until now, perfectly 'right' viewpoint!<grin>

Okay, Infinite God in eternity lays out His plan (must talk in human terms here because I don't understand how infinity and eternity actually work).

He has an infinite number of possible worlds (actually potential worlds) all of which from start to finish have an almost infinite number of possible outcomes. In one world I might misspel mispell which would have its own set of implications which in turn would further cause the world to develop differently with each reaction (think of all the spelling nazis out there!) having its own set of possibilities and so on and so forth. Get my drift?

To simplify (with the above in mind) He has an infinite number of bookshelves lined with an infinite number of DVDs (possible worlds) each containing an infinite number of character plots each of which should really be a separate DVD based upon an infinite number of choices that could possibly be made at each moment of the DVD. Got it? Sure you do... at least in this particular DVD at this particular moment!! He's got a pretty grand collection of DVDs.

He goes over (again speaking in terms that we can understand) and selects DVD number____ (insert your own infinite number here but we're going to call it Volume 1 Creation- episode 1 Adam in Paradise).

Any one of the DVDs selected would have been alright because each of them when they were conceptualized by God (again anthropomorphic language) had actors that were completely free to do whatever they wanted (free-will) and each of their choices would have its own volume in the series... remember there's an infinite number of them!

God, being sovereign, got to make the choice He wanted (predestination, election or we could say selection). This satisfies the predestination part that we have revealed to us in the Bible.

The infinite number of possible selections satisfies the free will part of the Bible because each participant did basically what they wanted to do without being forced, which is the essence of free-will.

He sticks His choice into the DVD player and here we are! Known/Chosen before the foundation of the world yet freely choosing how this DVD turns out!

Okay, that's what I took from Molinism.

Blessings,
William

Subject: Re: Predestination, Election, And The Sovereignty Of God
Posted by Mark L on Wed, 26 Apr 2017 21:16:48 GMT
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That Molinism is interesting. The way you explained it was fairly accurate. I looked at it on wikipedia. Not sure what I think. The way its explained on wiki is fairly complicated. Going to have to give it some more thought

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Molinism

Subject: Re: Predestination, Election, And The Sovereignty Of God
Posted by william on Thu, 27 Apr 2017 03:38:50 GMT
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Well, keep in mind that while it is sometimes referred to as a "doctrine" I don't really see it as such. It's more like someone's explanation of something that we don't, or can't, fully grasp.

Like God who is "one God" and yet manifested as "triune" being explained by using analogies. (Think, the Sun has 1) physical characteristics 2) light, and 3) heat and yet there is only "one" sun, or "like" one egg that has three parts).

All of the analogies break down at some point because God isn't really comparable to any of those things but since we don't really have any words or concepts to sufficiently describe Him we resort to things that we do know. Fully understanding that all attempts ultimately fail us because we, as finite creatures, cannot comprehend infinite!

Jesus is the God-Man, fully God yet fully man! All we can do is say what He has revealed through His Word even though we find it tough to wrap our minds around it.

He has revealed that He has predestinated everything and elected us for eternal life before the world was yet each of us must freely choose Him!

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Rom 11:33

Blessings,
William

Subject: Re: Predestination, Election, And The Sovereignty Of God
Posted by Gary on Sun, 12 Jan 2020 15:16:33 GMT
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This is a real good post here. I have been thinking a lot about God is in control of everything. In Proverbs 16:9 A man's heart plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps.

I checked the date when this post was first posted and it showed 2011, I assume all these dates are accurate, just wanted to know when someone started the post. Then I noticed the first time someone replied was three years later. The post after that was three years later with a total of three replies. Now here I was with a reply three years later in 2020. Interesting, since the topic is dealing with the Lords Sovereignty.

Mark wrote: Can you imagine the kind of intelligence that can do that in advance through all of our human history. Not only ours but all of eternity with all the myriad personalities and realms there. I think that God is so big that he can't do anything but foreordain.

I agree, God is beyond our comprehension as created beings. When I've tried to think back at times of God in Eternity my mind draws a blank, its almost impossible to imagine a God who always was, Looking forward to the future I come to the same wall. If I think of eternity in years, a million, billion, trillion, gazillion, years from now, I still see eternity making this "time factor", as mere seconds.

God who knows millions of human beings and knows the amount of hairs on their heads, knows all their thoughts, everything about them, nothing is hidden, it makes me wonder if the Lord is even beyond what we call intelligence.

I watched the video clip of Betty Maltz's glimpse in eternity, having read the book years ago. She said the Lord God was on His throne, and pure energy was going out from Him sustaining everything everywhere including our world and universe.

In Proverbs 3:7-8 it says; Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.

In other words I know I can't get my mind in this, so I see where God's Word is His revelation so we can clearly rest in it. I love this subject because it again confirms, How Great is our God, He chose us before the foundation of the world, He gives all of us His Mercy and Grace. If the Lord had not opened our eyes we would of been lost for all Eternity without Him.

The world uses the term "catch 22", maybe everybody here has experienced these moments in time. I think that's God's sovereignty in motion. Maybe those DVD's William mentioned are being changed out. Who knows maybe someone will reply to this in three years. :roll:

In Him,
Gary

Subject: Re: Predestination, Election, And The Sovereignty Of God
Posted by william on Sat, 13 Jun 2020 07:35:27 GMT
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Okay, on the subject of Molinism, William Lane Craig (posted 2 days ago) just gave a very interesting talk on the subject.

It's the best job of explaining Molinism that I've heard.

If you get an hour or so of free time I think that you'll come away with a much better understanding than my DVD explanation (above) could ever provide.

I know this is an old thread but the subject is timeless (pun intended!).

Blessings,
William

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWly0PlaTMI

Subject: Re: Predestination, Election, And The Sovereignty Of God
Posted by Mark L on Sat, 13 Jun 2020 13:08:54 GMT
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That looks very interesting. I'm going to get to it sometime today. Thanks for posting it.