

## Predestination vs Free Will

- Predestination - God chose those who would go to heaven and those who go to hell before hand - man has no choice
- Free will - man chooses and it has nothing to do with God's calling
- Subtopics
  - Lack of salvation is based on the rejection of Christ's saving power
    - Age of accountability
  - Books being opened and man being judged by the books
  
- Anytime you handle a difficult passage or concept in the Bible there are a couple of things to keep in mind
  - There is always a balance that needs to be sought
  - We need to keep in mind the whole counsel of God's Word
  - One passage of Scripture will not contradict another
  - If both sides of a position are stated clearly in Scripture (God's choosing, man's free will to respond) then both must be held to even if we don't understand it
    - Someone once said there are two things for sure. There is a God. I am not Him. To think we can know and understand all of who He is, or what He has done, of why He does it is absurd. Our finite minds can't understand His infinite wisdom
    - When we can't understand - that is where our faith needs to be exercised. If God says that it is so, then it is, it doesn't matter if we do or don't understand, His Word still stands.
  - When things seem to contradict or we have difficulty with interpretation, there are four things that usually cause us the trouble
    - 1) we have taken the verse out of its context
    - 2) we don't understand a word and its usage so we need to find its meaning in the original language
    - 3) if it is a verb (an action) we don't understand the tense, voice, or mood that it is in
    - 4) we are neglecting the whole counsel of God's word - where else that exact same word used, rule of first usage, how the author uses that word, what principles have been taught throughout the entirety of Scripture because we can't neglect those
- Predestinate - only mentioned 6 times in the Bible
  - Romans 8:29-30
  - Acts 4:28
  - I Corinthians 2:7
  - Ephesians 1:5, 11
- Strong's number in 4309 - proorizo
  - To determine or decree beforehand
  - From the Complete Word Study New Testament
    - A word that has caused great division in the church as if it attributed to God absolute and capricious determination of who would be saved and

who would not. A careful examination of each instance of its occurrence is important.

- 1) I Corinthians 2:7 it has a thing as its object; namely, the wisdom of God
  - 2) In Acts 4:28, the verb is followed by the infinitive *genesthai* (1096), to be done. Here reference is made to the actions of Herod and Pontius Pilate in regard to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ as doing only what God knew and permitted them to do. This concerns Jesus Christ and His position in history in that it was not of man but of God.
  - 3) In Romans 8:29 it is used with a personal object, the relative pronoun *hous* (3739), whom, in the plural this personal pronoun applies also to the previous verb *proegno* (4267), foreknew. The translation is, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate." The purpose of this foreordination is expressed in the phrase, "to be conformed to the image of his Son."
  - 4) In Ephesians 1:5 the purpose of the foreordination is the adoption, which means the placing of those who were born of God, into their proper position (*huiiothesia* (5206) which is from *huios* (5207), son, and the verb *tithemi* (5087), to place.
    - This is not condemnatory but rather beneficial for the believer.
  - 5) In Ephesians 1:11, it is used again and the purpose of it is explained in verse 12 by the infinitive, "that we should be to the praise of his glory," that is, "For the purpose of being . . ." This purpose is benevolent
  - 6) The occurrence in Romans 8:30 is to be explained by verse 29, in which it is clearly stated that this foreordination was neither capricious nor an independent concept that was complete in itself. It was joined with the verb foreknew. The important thing for us to consider when the word is used is not who are the objects of this predestination, but what they are predestined to. They are always predestined to salvation, to adoption, or to glory.
- To limit in advance
  - To choose
  - Always in the aorist indicative active
    - Action that is not continuous
    - Usually in the past but not determined as to the time of the event
  - A look at each use (in chronological usage - to keep in mind the rule of first usage)
    - I Corinthians 2:7 (context I Cor 2:6-13)
      - There is a wisdom (mystery) which before history began, God decreed that it would bring us glory
        - Eph 3:1-12 - the mystery that God brought to light - Christ would bring our salvation both Jew and Gentile
        - Ro 16:25 - mystery - obedience through faith
        - Eph 6:19 - mystery is the Gospel

- Col 1:25-29 - mystery - Christ in you the hope of glory
- Romans 8:28-30
  - 28 - we have been called (invited) to accomplish God's purpose
  - 29 - God knew those who would be His and predestined (predetermined plan for their life) them to be conformed to the image of His Son
  - 30 - those predestined, He called, He justified, He glorified
    - They were determined beforehand (the knowledge of their choice foreknown(29), He sent out the invitation called them, when they responded to Him He justified them (salvation), in the future they will be glorified
    - Who were called (invited)?
      - John 3:16-17
      - Whosoever will respond
        - Matt 7:24
        - Matt 10:32-33
        - Mark 8:34-35
        - Luke 6:47
        - Rev 22:17
    - The wedding feast parable (Matt 22:2-14; Luke 14:16-24)
      - Invitation went out the feast is ready - the first invited (Jews) wouldn't come
      - The first invited were not worthy - then the invitation went to the highways invited all (Gentiles) both "good" people and the "bad" people
      - They had to come to the feast dressed properly - if not cast out into the darkness (Rom 13:14; Col 3:12; Rev 19:8; I Peter 5:5; Matt 3:8)
      - **Many (all) are called, but few are chosen**

### **MANY ARE INVITED (CALLED, DRAWN) BUT FEW RESPOND (CHOSEN)**

- Ephesians 1:5, 11 (context Eph 1:3-14)
  - God chose us in Jesus before the foundation of the world that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predetermined that we would be adopted (placed in our proper positions) as sons through Christ Jesus (4, 5)
  - We have redemption through His blood (7)
  - He made known the mystery (the Gospel, Christ in us, Jew and Gentile in one body through faith) (9)
  - Through Christ we obtained an inheritance (because we are sons) having been predetermined according to His purpose to bring Him glory (11-12)
  - In Christ - after listening to the message of truth - believed (had faith) and then were sealed by the Holy Spirit (13)
  - Eph 2:8-10

- It is by God's grace (His predetermined plan), through faith (our free choice to choose to accept or reject that gift) we are saved
- We are all His workmanship (He is the Creator of all men), but as a believer we were created as a new man in Christ
- God knowing the decision that we would make, created us with the strengths, weaknesses, and abilities so when we receive Him and through Him the Holy Spirit, He empowers us with gifts (that He determined before hand as well as how He wanted those gifts used) that we can now walk in the way that He has for us
- John McArthur's study notes - every elect sinner comes to God by trusting in Christ Jesus - They have chosen to respond to God's invitation (gift)
- Acts 4:28
  - God determined from the foundation of the earth that the response to man's sin was that Jesus Christ would die
  - God wrote all of history according to His eternal (preordained) plan
  - What happened to Jesus was not in the power of any man, but God Himself
- Next question then is who are the elect (chosen) and how are they described. Does this fit into the topic of predestination?
  - Groups of people/entities that are described as the elect
    - OT - Israel was God's elect
    - NT - believers (the saved) are God's elect
    - Those who receive Christ during the tribulation are called the elect
      - Rev
      - Matt 24:22
    - Holy, unfallen angels are called the elect (I Tim 5:21)
  - 1588 is the Strong's number
    - Eklektos - elected or chosen
    - Comes from the word 1586 - eklegomai
      - To speak intelligently. To choose, select, choose for oneself, not necessarily implying the rejection of what is not chosen but giving favor to the chosen subject, keeping in view a relation to be established between him and the object. It involves preference and choice from among many
  - Some of the places this word is used in Scripture
    - Matt 20:16 - the first will be last and the last first
    - Matt 22:14 - many are invited but few respond (are chosen) - those who respond are the chosen (elect)
      - John McArthur commentary - the call is a general call (invitation) - a summons to repentance and faith that is inherent in the gospel message - this call extends to all who hear the gospel - many hear it, few will respond - those who respond are the "chosen", the elect. Here then is the proper balance between human responsibility and divine sovereignty: the "called who reject the invitation do so willingly, therefore their exclusion from the

- kingdom is perfectly just. The "chosen" enter the kingdom only because of the grace of God in choosing and drawing them.
- Luke 18:7 - God will bring justice to His chosen (elect) - those who responded are crying out to Him day and night
  - Luke 23:35 - Christ is the chosen one of God
  - Romans 8:33 (context 31-39)
    - Who can accuse someone whom God declared righteous (His elect)?
    - This takes us back to verse 29
    - McArthur's commentary - foreknowing is not just God's omniscience - that in eternity past He knew who would come to Christ. Rather, it speaks of a predetermined choice to set His love on us and established an intimate relationship - or His election (English Grammar rule called Granville Sharp rule - equates (pre) determination and foreknowledge - Those God chooses, He destines for His chosen end - that is, likeness to His Son - conformed to the image of His Son. The goal of God's predestined purpose for His own is that they would be made like Jesus Christ. This is the prize of the upward call
  - Colossians 3:12-17
    - As the elect of God, we are to put on . . .
    - McArthur's commentary - Paul described the behavior and attitude that God expects in response. The elect of God - designates true Christians as those who have been chosen by God. No one is converted solely by his own choice, but only in response to God's effectual, free, uninfluenced, and sovereign grace
  - Romans 1:18-23
    - God made Himself known to all men
    - Man has the choice to acknowledge God, or reject Him as Creator therefore Owner of man - who has the right to lay down laws that we are to follow
  - II Peter 3:9 - God desires that not any should perish
    - Therefore He sent His Son to die for all mankind (John 3:16)
    - All men have the opportunity to come (the invitations were sent out for the wedding) - the question is whether they choose to accept the invitation
  - I Timothy 5:21 - chosen angels
    - Angels were made with a will and had the ability to choose
    - Lucifer chose to set himself against God
    - There were angels (1/3) who chose to follow him
  - Titus 1:1 - faith of those chosen - we see the justification (salvation), sanctification (daily setting apart), glorification (future) - must exercise personal faith - need to respond to God's invitation - do you want to come? - the choice is yours

- McArthur's commentary - those who have been graciously chosen for salvation "before the foundation of the world" (Eph 1:4) but who must exercise personal faith prompted and empowered by the Holy Spirit. God's choice of believers always precedes and enables their choice of Him (Jn 15:16; Acts 13:46-48; Ro 9:15-21; 2 Thes 2:13; 2 Tim 1:8,9; 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1, 2)
- 1 Peter 2:4-9
  - Jesus was the chosen living stone - chosen to proclaim the excellencies of God who called you out of the darkness and into His light
  - Jesus is the cornerstone to those who believe, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to those who have chosen to reject God and be disobedience to the word
- Man's Responsibility - the necessity for him to respond to God's call
  - Romans 1:18-32
    - Unbelief and its consequences
    - God has made Himself evident to all men through that which He created (18-20)
    - Man is without excuse (20)
      - They knew God and did not honor Him (21)
      - Exchanged the glory of God for an image (23)
      - Worship the creature rather than the Creator (24)
    - This was their choice
    - They chose not to acknowledge God (28)
  - Romans 10
    - Not knowing about God's righteousness they sought to establish their own (3)
    - They did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God (3)
    - Righteousness is based on faith (6)
    - Confess with you mouth Jesus as Lord, believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead - then you will be saved (9)
    - With the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness and with the mouth he confesses resulting in salvation (10)
    - Whosoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved (13)
    - Faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ (17)
  - Romans 11
    - Israel as a nation rejected God (15)
    - They were broken off for their unbelief (20)
    - There was a partial hardening of Israel so the Gentiles can come into the kingdom (25)
      - God did not make them hard for no reason, because you have the promise in Deuteronomy that if they sought Him they would find Him
        - Deuteronomy 4:29
        - You will seek the Lord and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and soul

- Israel chose to abandon God and chase after the gods of the lands
- Because of that God allowed them to have their own way and they were hardened
- Book of Judges - they could not drive them out because they would not drive them out (Judges 2:1-3)
- Joshua 24:15
  - Choose this day whom you will serve
- Judgment by the books
  - Revelation 20:11-15
    - Books were opened (plural - at least 2)
    - Another book - the book of life (12)
    - Dead were judged by the things that were written in the books according to their deeds (12)
    - Anyone's name not found in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire
  - Old Testament talks about names of those who are evil being blotted out of the book
    - Exodus 32:32-33 (rule of first usage)
      - Moses pleads with God to forgive the people and if not then asks that He blot Moses out of His book which He has written
      - God says whoever sinned against Him He will blot him out of His book
    - Deuteronomy 29:19-20
      - God will blot our his name from under heaven
    - Psalm 9:5
      - God has destroyed the wicked and blotted out their names forever
    - Psalm 69:28
      - May their (evil) names be blotted out of the book of life
  - Then there passages that talk about the righteous staying in the book
    - Daniel 12:1
      - Everyone written in the book will be rescued
    - Philippians 4:3
      - Paul's fellow workers' names are written in the book of life
    - Revelation 3:5
      - The overcomers (the believers) will be clothed in white garments and will not be erased from the book of life, and will be confessed before My Father
  - New Testament passages that deal with those who will not be in the book of life
    - Revelation 13:8
      - All who dwell on the earth (evil) will worship the antichrist - all whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb before the foundation of the world
    - Revelation 17:8

- All those who wonder at the beast, who dwell on the earth whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world
- Revelation 21:27
  - Nothing unclean will be in heaven but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life
- There seems to be a book that was written from the foundation of the earth with those who will enter heaven and another book of names that people's names can be blotted out of.
- Malachi 3:16-17 - talks about a book of remembrance
  - Book of remembrance was written for those who fear the Lord and esteem His name