

PREDESTINATION

INTRO: If someone were to ask us, "Do you believe in predestination?" most of us might be inclined to answer, "No." That is not the right answer. The correct answer is, "We believe what the Bible teaches about predestination." But what does the Bible teach?

READ ROMANS 8:28-30.

I. WE MUST DISTINGUISH BETWEEN WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ON THIS SUBJECT & WHAT HAS BEEN COMMONLY TAUGHT BY THOSE WHO HAVE COME UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF 16th CENTURY REFORMER, JOHN CALVIN.

- A. Definition: To mark out beforehand.
- B. The word is used twice in Rom 8:28-30 & 4 more times in the N.T.

Herod & Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles & the people of Israel were gathered together to do whatever Your hand & Your purpose determined before to be done. (Acts 4:27-28).

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory. (1 Cor 2:7).

READ EPHESIANS 1:5, 11

- C. Our subject is difficult, but would be less so if too many folks hadn't tried to explain it in such a way as to leave out the principle of human free will. Volumes upon volumes have been written from a Calvinistic viewpoint.
- D. Many religious groups have been strongly influenced by the teachings of Calvin: Presbyterian, Baptist, Reformed
- E. Our most commonly used translations have been at least slightly influenced by scholars who held Calvinistic

views. KJV, Acts 2:47; ASV, NASB, Rev 13:8; NIV, almost too many to mention.

- F. Common expressions: "What will be will be." "It was just his time to die." But see Jonah (40 days), Hezekiah.
- G. We begin, primarily, to part company with Calvinists on the subject of God's sovereignty & the manifestation of His sovereign grace. Titus 2:11-12.

NOTE; SHOW FIRST CHART

1. Calvinists say that there are a fixed number of individuals predestined to heaven & that number "cannot be increased or diminished." (Westminster Confession of Faith). The Bible teaches that all can potentially be saved,
Rev 22:1

2. Calvinism says God predestined certain individuals to be saved. All others will be lost in hell for all eternity simply because God didn't save them. He didn't want to. The Bible teaches the predestination of a class or body of individuals, those who are in Christ, Eph 1:4.

3. Calvinism teaches that God's grace is irresistible. If you happen to be one of the elect you couldn't keep from being saved if you wanted to. The Bible teaches that God's grace can be resisted.

You stiffnecked & uncircumcised in heart & ears! You always resist the H.S.; as your father did, so do you. (Acts 7:51).

4. According to Calvinism, salvation is unconditional for the elect & impossible for the non-elect. The Bible says folks must meet certain conditions to be saved. Acts 16:30-31; 2:36-38; 22:16.

5. According to the Calvinistic view, man is passive in

his salvation. The Bible teaches that man must be active in order to be saved.

...We implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. (2 Cor 5:20).

6. According to Calvinistic theory, once a person has been saved & come into a covenant relationship with God, that individual cannot fall from grace. The Bible teaches that a saved person can fall away. Jesus said some do, LK 8:13. Paul said some had, Gal 5:4. The H.S. said some will, 1 Tim 4:1. Paul said the 2nd coming will not happen till there has been an apostasy, 1 Thes 2:2-3. In O.T. times, 23,000 fell in one day, 1 Cor 10:9.

7. Calvinism teaches the security of the individual. A saved person cannot do anything to endanger his salvation. The Bible teaches the security of the body. The number of those who make up the body may fluctuate from time to time. Some who are not in the body at this moment may in the next few minutes be baptized into the body of Christ, 1 Cor 12:13. Some who are in the body now will be plucked out when Christ returns, MT 13:41.

READ EPHESIANS 5:23, 25-27.

II. THE BIBLE INDICATES THAT THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST WILL BE THE ONES WHO ARE PREDESTINED AS SONS OF GOD. READ EPHESIANS 1:3-12

USE SECOND CHART

A. We frequently appeal to folks to choose to serve God. This is Scriptural & important, Josh 24:15.

B. But in Eph 1, Paul puts the emphasis on God's choice! It's not such a great thing if I choose to serve God. In the light of heaven & hell, I'd be a fool not to. The great

thing is that God has chosen those who are in Christ to be His own people, destined for heaven--& He has given me the opportunity to come into Christ. The great choice was God's.

III. ACTUALLY, GOD HAS CHOSEN CHRIST. WHEN WE COME INTO CHRIST WE PARTAKE OF HIS CHOSENNESS.

- A. To get into Christ: Gal 3:26-27; Mark 16:16
- B. Then we must abide in Christ. READ JOHN 15:3-8
And now little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence & not be ashamed before Him at His coming. (1 JN 2:28).

Exton, PA, June 15, 1986
Lancaster Co., PA, August 17, 1986
Liberty Hill, TX, October 12, 1986 (adult class)
Coventry Hills, Pottstown, PA, November 16, 1986
Washington, NJ, April 26, 1987
Jonestown, TX, September 15, 1987 (meeting)
Shiloh, Mexia, TX, January 30, 1994
Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, February 6, 2000
Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, February 9, 2003