

THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE

LESSON 7 GOD'S ELECTION

- Predestination
The term “providence” is usually used to speak of God’s ordering of the world and guiding history according to His will, while “predestination” is usually used to speak of God’s ordering human destiny according to His will. Many would include under predestination both God’s decision to save some (election) and His decision to pass over others (reprobation).

- Election
Election is an act of God before the foundation of the world whereby He chooses some people for salvation. Election can sometimes concern groups of people (e.g. Israel) and sometimes concern individuals. Election in the Bible sometimes refers to God’s choice of a person’s service and sometimes of God’s choice of a person’s salvation.

- Reprobation
Reprobation is a decision of God before the foundation of the world to pass over some persons, not intervening to save them, but allowing them to receive the just punishment for their sins. Reprobation deals with all the un-elect and seeks to explain why they are not saved. While Arminians affirm election, only Calvinists affirm reprobation. We will discuss reprobation in a future lesson after studying election.

- Sometimes election is national
 - Genesis 12:1-3
 - Deuteronomy 7:6-8
 - Deuteronomy 10:14-15
 - Psalm 33:12
 - Psalm 106:5
 - Jeremiah 31:35-37
 - Amos 3:1-2
 - Romans 11:28

- Sometimes election is unto service

- Numbers 16:5-7
- Psalm 105:26
- 1 Samuel 2:28
- 1 Samuel 10:24
- 1 Samuel 16:7-12
- 1 Chronicles 28:4-6
- Jeremiah 1:4-5, 10
- Haggai 2:23
- Mark 3:13-19

- Including angels
 - Mark 8:38
 - 1 Timothy 5:21

- Including the messiah
 - Isaiah 42:1
 - Luke 9:35
 - Luke 23:35

- Sometimes election is unto salvation

- Psalm 65:4
- Matthew 13:11-15
- Matthew 22:14
- Matthew 24:22, 24, 31
- Luke 18:7
- John 10:29
- John 15:16
- John 17:2, 6, 9
- Acts 13:48
- Romans 8:28-30, 33

- Romans 11:7-8
- Romans 16:13
- Ephesians 1:3-14
- Colossians 3:12
- 1 Thessalonians 1:4
- 1 Thessalonians 5:9
- Titus 1:1
- 1 Peter 1:1
- 1 Peter 2:8-9
- 1 Peter 5:13
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14
- Revelation 17:14

Arminian Understanding of Election

Article 1 from the Five Articles of Remonstrance

That God, by an eternal and unchangeable purpose in Jesus Christ his Son, before the foundation of the world, hath determined, out of the fallen, sinful race of men, to save in Christ, for Christ's sake, and through Christ, those who, through the grace of the Holy Ghost, shall believe on this his son Jesus, and shall persevere in this faith and obedience of faith, through this grace, even to the end; and, on the other hand, to leave the incorrigible and unbelieving in sin and under wrath, and to condemn them as alienate from Christ, according to the word of the Gospel in John 3:36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," and according to other passages of Scripture also. ¹

Calvinist Understanding of Election

Westminster Confession of Faith- Chapter 3 "Of God's Eternal Decree"

I. God from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.

¹ <http://www.theopedia.com/five-articles-of-remonstrance>

II. Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions; yet has He not decreed anything because He foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions.

III. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life; and others foreordained to everlasting death.

IV. These angels and men, thus predestinated, and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

V. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, has chosen, in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving Him thereunto; and all to the praise of His glorious grace.

VI. As God has appointed the elect unto glory, so has He, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power, through faith, unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.

VII. The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extends or withholds mercy, as He pleases, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by; and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice.

VIII. The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men, attending the will of God revealed in His Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God; and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the Gospel.²

² http://www.reformed.org/documents/wcf_with_proofs/