

# LESSON 3

## Chapter 3. "Of God's Decree"

### I. Paragraph 1: God's Decree

- A. God has decreed all events from eternity, but is neither the author nor accomplice in sin.
- B. God has established our "freedom" by controlling all events.
- C. God's decree is perfectly wise and unchangeable.

### II. Paragraph 2: God's Foreknowledge

- A. God's foreknowledge is based on His decree.
- B. His foreknowledge is not prescience (i.e., looking into the future to see what happens).
  - 1. Process Theology
  - 2. Openness of God

### III. Paragraphs 3, 4 & 5: Predestination

- A. Election is a gracious, positive action to save some people and angels.
  - 1. Elect angels were preserved from falling and have no need of salvation.
  - 2. Fallen angels are not redeemed.
- B. Reprobation is God allowing the non-elect to receive their just punishment.
- C. God's choosing of the elect was made in eternity past before creation and is unchangeable.
- D. The choosing was made by God, in His sovereign wisdom and grace, not randomly.
- E. The choosing was made independently from any foreseen goodness or faith.

### IV. Paragraph 6: Means of Redemption

- A. Christ, the redeemer, pays the penalty to satisfy God's justice.
- B. The Holy Spirit works effectually in the redeemed to give them faith in Christ.
- C. Only the elect persons (not angels) are redeemed.

### V. Paragraph 7: Praise and Humility

- A. Predestination is a deep mystery and should be discussed with caution and care.
- B. Election by grace is undeserved and should produce profound humility and obedience.
- C. God could have passed you by, but for reasons only know to him he did not.

## GOD'S SOVEREIGN WILL

### Will of Purpose (Secret Will, Hidden Will, Decretive Will)

God has not revealed everything in His mind to us. Obviously, we couldn't comprehend it. However, we do know that His plan must be perfect and infallible because He cannot err. Everything comes to pass because God has either caused it or permitted it. Remember: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:23 God planned for Christ to be crucified and used human wickedness to accomplish it. There are many other examples of human evil being worked by God for His good purposes.

### Will of Command (Revealed Will): creation, providence and the Holy Scriptures

## REPROBATION

The doctrine of reprobation (sometimes called double predestination) is often misunderstood to teach that God shoves people into Hell against their will or that He would refuse a person who sincerely wants to be saved. Anyone who comes to Christ, God will in no wise cast out. Also, God takes no pleasure in punishing the guilty. "For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God, wherfor turn yourselves, and live ye." Ezk 18:32

Reprobation is a necessary consequence of election. It is impossible to choose some without leaving the rest. The reprobate are those who were not chosen. They received the just wage for sin. Reprobates will either never believe or will turn away from the "faith" because they never were true believers (apostates). "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in they name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And I will profess unto them, **I never knew you**: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matt 7:21-23 Jesus says "I am the good shepherd, **I know** my sheep. John 10:14

## LOGICAL ORDER IN GOD'S DECREE

Supralapsarian View: Election occurred prior to decreeing the fall (lapse)

Infralapsarian (Sublapsarian) View: Election occurred after decreeing the fall.

Book Suggestions:

Lorraine Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*

Gordon Clark, *Predestination*

A. W. Pink, *The Sovereignty of God*

P. H. Mell, *A Southern Baptist Looks At Predestination*