

To Glorify and Enjoy God

LESSON 8: GLORIFYING AND ENJOYING THE GOD WHO IS SOVEREIGN (PART 2)

Intro:

BIG IDEA: Our Triune God is in control over _____ too!

Sovereign Over Salvation

WLC 13: What has God especially decreed concerning angels and men?

A. God, by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace, to be manifested in due time, has elected some angels to glory; and in Christ has chosen some men to eternal life, and the means thereof: and also, according to his sovereign power, and the unsearchable counsel of his own will (whereby he extends or withholds favor as he pleases), has passed by and foreordained the rest to dishonor and wrath, to be for their sin inflicted, to the praise of the glory of his justice.

3. 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.

- The goal of the _____ in question is the manifestation of his _____.
- These decrees pertain to the eternal _____ of men and angels.
- _____ to eternal life, _____ to everlasting death.
- Some views of have election & reprobation as _____: equal _____.
- This means they are equally _____ and _____ by God's action.
- The different terms indicate that they are _____: positive-negative.

4. 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.

- These people and angels are _____ ordained to their destiny.
- Those predestined to eternal life will be _____.

5. 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, hath 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.

- First, this decree, like all others, was before the _____ of the world.
- The reason for their election is in the secret _____ & good _____ of God.

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- Election is “in Christ”: chosen to be in Christ, _____ to Him, to experience salvation.

“We jump to the conclusion that God is arbitrary as soon as we say there is no reason in us why he should select us. ... The reason is in God’s counsel, his purpose, that the purposes of election may stand in the honoring of his Son.” **R.C. Sproul**⁵⁴

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ... **Ephesians 1**

- We see many of the above elements here: “*blessed us in Christ*”, “*chose us in him*”
- Christ is _____ to our election to salvation. There is no salvation apart from Christ.
- It is not simply _____, but “*every spiritual blessing*” is found in Christ.
- We were chosen to be “holy and blameless before him.” Designed for our _____.
- Another aspect of this salvation is “*adoption as sons through Jesus Christ.*”

... according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, ...¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ... **Ephesians 1**

- God is revealing the “*riches of his grace*” in the doctrine of _____.
- Grace is _____ on us, not foolishly, but “*in all wisdom and insight.*”
- “*plan for the fullness of time*”: eternal plan _____ in time.
- Another aspect of this we obtain an _____ as sons adopted in Christ.
- Larger backdrop of “*him who works all things according to the counsel of his will*”.
- Predestination is a _____ of God’s eternal decree.

6. 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.

- As God’s eternal decrees establish _____ causes, election includes the means.

⁵⁴ Sproul, Vol. 1, pp. 97.

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- Election occurs within the background of our _____ in Adam.
- The first _____ is the redemption of Christ followed by _____ calling.
- We are not _____ saved, but actually fallen & guilty in Adam before conversion.
- The Spirit works to _____ salvation to all those the Father chose in Christ.

“The invitations of the gospel are not addressed to men as *elect*, but as sinners ready to perish.”
Robert Shaw⁵⁵

Reformed View: Election => Union w/Christ + Regeneration + Faith + Justification + Adoption + Sanctification + Glorification

Arminian View: Faith => Election + union + Regeneration + Justification + Adoption + Sanctification + Glorification

“He chooses them to faith and repentance, and not because of their faith and repentance.” **A.A. Hodge**⁵⁶

“The Confession affirms, first, positively, that Christ was eternally appointed to make atonement as a means of executing the purpose to save the elect; ...” **A.A. Hodge**⁵⁷

7. 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.

- We struggle with election’s counterpart. “*Pleased*” does not mean God was _____.
- It refers to God making a _____ in keeping with His _____.
- Regarding the rest of humanity, God _____ mercy or _____ over them.
- God is not actively _____ for their destruction or _____ them from believing.
- God _____ them in their corruption & sin so they remain under His righteous _____.
- This is for “*the praise of his glorious justice.*” This manifests _____ for all to see.

“In the case of the elect, God intervenes positively, bringing them to faith, drawing them to Christ, and preserving them by his salvific operation in our hearts. But in the case of the reprobate, God does not create fresh evil in their hearts or work unbelief in their souls. He simply passes them over. God does not interfere with the reprobate to make them more wicked, but simply withholds his saving grace from them.” **R.C. Sproul**⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Shaw, pp. 59.

⁵⁶ Hodge, pp. 70.

⁵⁷ Hodge, pp. 73.

⁵⁸ Sproul, Vol. 1, pp. 104.

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Paul addresses a number of normal objections to predestination in Romans 9.
If not all Israel is saved, has the word of God failed?

- Paul distinguished between natural/national Israel and the true or _____ Israel.
- Abraham's seed was thru _____ the child of promise, not Ishmael a child of the _____.
- Why? "*In order that God's purpose of election might continue, not by works but because of him who calls.*"
- God _____ Jacob, whom he _____.

Is there injustice on God's part? (vs. 14)

- Refers back to Exodus: "*I will have mercy on whom I have mercy ..*"
- It all depends on _____, not on human will or _____.
- God has mercy and _____ as He wills.

¹⁵For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." ¹⁶So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. ¹⁷For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." ¹⁸So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills. **Romans 9**

Why does He still find fault? For who can resist His will? (vs. 19)

- Some think this removes _____ from people. Paul disagreed.
- He brings us back to the prophets; the _____ speaking back to the _____.
- He can display both His _____ and His _____ according to His will.

8. 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.

- It is meant to _____ those who believe in the _____ of salvation.
- It should also _____ "humility, diligence and abundant consolation" if we believe.
- Wrongly understood some people _____ of ever being saved.
- Wrongly understood some are _____ up in _____.

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“That those things which the Lord hath laid up in secret, we may not search; those things which he hath brought openly abroad, we may not neglect; lest either on the one part we be condemned of vail curiosity, or on the other part, of unthankfulness.” **John Calvin**⁵⁹

How does the eternal decree pertaining to salvation help you to glorify and enjoy God?

⁵⁹ Quoted in Shaw, pp. 59.