

### 1: Common Objections to the Reformed Doctrine of Predestination - church

*In this week's article, I propose to list some objections to the Calvinist doctrines of predestination and election. It Changes The Ground of Our Salvation According to the Bible, man is saved through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.*

Subscribe to the CompellingTruth. What is the doctrine of predestination? And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. However, the key is understanding what the Bible says about predestination. According to Romans 8: Other scriptures that refer to believers in Christ being chosen include Matthew Using these scriptures, predestination is the biblical doctrine that God, in His sovereignty, chooses certain individuals to be saved. One of the most common objections to the doctrine of predestination is that it is unfair. Why would God choose certain individuals and not others? However, it is important to understand that no one deserves heaven. The Bible states that we have all sinned Romans 3: However, in His grace and divine mercy, God chose to save some of the people who deserved hell. God is not being unfair to those who are not chosen because they are receiving what they deserve. In other words, God choosing to be gracious to some does not make it unfair for others. No one deserves anything from God; therefore, no one can object if he does not receive anything from God. A practical example of this principle would be a man handing out money to five people in a crowd of twenty. Would the fifteen people who did not receive anything be upset? Do they have a right to be upset? No, they do not. Because the man did not owe anyone anything and only decided to be gracious to some. Another common objection to the doctrine of predestination is the role that our free will plays in all of this. The Bible tells us in John 3: The Bible never tells us of God rejecting anyone who believes in Him or turns away anyone that is seeking Him Deuteronomy 4: Somehow, in the mystery of God, predestination works hand-in-hand with a person being drawn by God John 6: God predestines who will be saved, and we must choose Christ in order to be saved. Both facts are equally true at the same time. How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

### 2: Answering Objections To Predestination Sermon by Keith Foskey, Romans - [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com)

*The objection so strenuously urged on some occasions by Arminians, to the effect that if the doctrine of Predestination is true the Gospel cannot be sincerely offered to the non-elect, should be sufficiently answered by the fact that it bears with equal force against the doctrine of God's Foreknowledge.*

That the world is governed by fixed and permanent laws is evident, even to the casual observer. But by whom those laws are established and how far they extend have been matters of controversy. In the Christian world, all admit that the will of God is the great source of law. In the arrangements of the vast systems of worlds, as well as in the formation of the earth with all its varied tribes, we recognize the hand of him who doeth "his will in the heavens above and in the earth beneath. Do all things thus come to pass? Are human actions the result of laws as fixed and unalterable as those which govern the movements of the planets? Is the destiny of every human being unchangeably determined before his birth without reference to foreseen conduct? Or has the mind a power of choice? Can it move freely within certain specified limits? And will the nature of its movements and choice influence its eternal happiness? These are questions which in some form have exercised the highest powers of the human intellect. The Atheistical school of philosophers, ancient as well as modern, taught the doctrine of necessity. With them, matter is eternal; and, no designing mind superintending its movements, there must be a necessity in nature. This has been differently expressed in different ages. Sometimes it appears as the atomic theory of Democritus and Leucippus and, again, as the Pantheism of Spinoza. But, whatever form it may assume, it teaches that all actions come to pass by necessity and denies the responsibility of all beings. It annihilates the freedom of the human will and degrades intelligence to mechanism. Another class of philosophers admits the existence of a Deity, but denies his special, superintending providence. Such imagine the great First Cause to be, according to the Hindu mythology, in a state of beatific repose; or to be employed in movements so transcendently important that the affairs of earth are neglected; or that he is himself subject to fate. The third great class is composed of such as not only admit the existence of God, but who worship him as the supreme Governor and as invested with all moral as well as natural perfections. They reject the doctrine of fate and all necessity, other than that which springs from the Divine decree. But they differ as to the extent of that decree. This difference has given rise to the formation of sects and parties in all ages and to controversies of the most exciting character. Milton in his *Paradise Lost* fancies the fallen angels engaged in discussions of this nature. They Reasoned high Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate; Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge, absolute, And found no end, in wandering mazes lost. Such, too, has been the character of many human controversies. The latter sentiment, so far as a heathen ignorant of gracious influences could perceive, is expressed by Plato when in his treatise against the Atheists he says that God "devises this in reference to the whole, namely, what kind of a situation everything which becomes of a certain quality must receive and inhabit; but the causes of becoming of such a quality, he hath left to our own wills. The Essenes taught predestination in its most severe form. The Sadducees held the freedom of the will in nearly the same manner as the Pelagians have since taught; while the Pharisees endeavored to combine the two systems. Prideaux says, "They ascribed to God and fate all that is done, and yet left to man the freedom of his will. But how they made these two apparent incompatibles consist together is nowhere sufficiently explained; perchance they meant no more than that every man freely chooseth what he is unalterably predestinated to. But if he be predestined to that choice, how freely soever he may seem to choose, certainly he hath no free will, because he is, according to this scheme, unalterably necessitated to all that he doth and cannot possibly, choose otherwise. With them, every event in nature was fixed by an absolute decree. The soldier could neither be killed nor wounded until his time had come. Hence, they acquired a recklessness of all physical danger, as well as of moral feeling. But, even with them, the mind rebelled against fatalism, and the sect of the Motazalites and portions of other sects held the freedom of the human will. In the early ages of Christianity, the doctrine of predestination, as extending to every act and fixing the destiny of every individual without reference to foreseen faith or works, was unknown. The early fathers teach no such creed. They occasionally use the terms foreordain, predestinate, elect, etc. Paul and not in the predestinarian,

or what has since been termed the Calvinistic, sense. This continued to be the case for the first four centuries of the Christian era; but at the commencement of the fifth century, the Pelagian controversy arose. As usual in controversies, each party ran into an extreme. But he erred in teaching the unconditional election to life of a part of the race and the damnation of the rest, including some infants. Augustine was sustained and his works remain to this day standards in the Catholic Church. It must, however, be remarked that Augustine is not at all times consistent in his statements. Hence, Calvin alleges that he had attributed to foreknowledge that which pertains only to decrees. His writings thus gave rise to discussions almost interminable. During the progress of the century in which he lived, a number who were termed Predestinarians advocated the doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation to the utter denial of free will. Again in the ninth century, Godeschalcus, a Saxon monk, having taught that God had predestinated some to eternal death, a violent controversy arose, heightened by what existed between him and Rabanus, who was his abbot. The doctrines of Godeschalcus were condemned by three councils, and he was cruelly cast into prison. But, afterward, his sentiments were approved by three councils, and at his death the controversy ceased. The Dominicans, who were for many centuries among the strongest pillars of the Catholic Church and to whom the machinery of the Inquisition was committed, were strict predestinarians. So, also, were the Augustinians and the Jansenists. On the other hand, the Jesuits, who became the most indefatigable enemies of the Reformation, while they professed to believe with Augustine, yet were the advocates of free will. With all its professed unity, the Roman Church has been as much divided upon these questions as the Protestant. At present the Jesuitic theology is prevalent. They deny that they are either Calvinistic or Arminian. But, while they profess to accord with St. Augustine, they have no doubt departed far from his views. At the time of the Reformation, the great reformers drew much from St. Luther was an Augustinian friar, and he found the great doctrine of justification by faith so well established by that father against all opposers, that he received for a time his views on predestination also. The Lutheran Church, receiving their impress from him, hold only a predestination based upon foreknowledge; in this, strictly agreeing with the Arminian view. Melancthon, in the commencement of his career, was a rigid Predestinarian. In , writing of the decrees, he says: To Cranmer he observed that there had been, among the reformers, "Stoical disputations respecting fate, offensive in their nature, and noxious in their tendency. So much importance did he attach to these peculiar views that he scrupled not to apply the most opprobrious epithets to those who refused to receive them. These ministers were scattered among the reformed churches over Europe, and soon began to exhibit their disposition. Liberty of opinion was tolerated for a time; but, early in the succeeding century, the famous Synod of Dort was assembled in which the opinions of the Remonstrants or Arminians were condemned as heresy. Pious and influential ministers were banished from the land, many were thrown into prison, while some of their patrons were put to death. Macaulay well characterizes the proceedings of this synod as manifesting "gross injustice, insolence, and cruelty. Arminianism and a modified Calvinism, known afterward as Baxterianism, gained ground upon the Continent and rapidly pervaded the Anglican Church. In the days of Wesley, a strong effort was made to suppress Arminian views. Calvinism being made a test of office in the college in which they were engaged, Mr. Benson was removed, and Mr. A distinguished clergyman, Mr. Shirley, issued a circular, requesting a meeting of ministers to go in a body to Mr. But, though the spirit of the Synod of Dort was aroused, the civil power to punish could not be employed. Fletcher, in his defense, issued those masterly Checks which displayed at once his superior genius and the strength of the cause which he had espoused. In America in early days, the religious sentiment was, generally, Calvinistic. Such churches were supported by law in the New England states until a late period. The colleges and seminaries were also principally under their control. Hence, the introduction of Methodism gave rise to numerous controversies. In the midst, however, of repeated conflicts, Arminianism has increased until now a majority of members in the Union belong to churches which reject the Calvinistic faith. Of the churches, too, which are called Calvinistic, at least one-half have embraced what is termed New School theology. Whatever may be the merits or demerits of that system, the Old School assert that it is a departure, not only to Arminianism, but to Pelagianism. For some years past there had been a growing union among Christians; controversies were less frequent, and the Presbyterian and Methodist churches were living in peace and harmony. Recently, however, repeated attacks of the most virulent character

have been made upon the doctrines and usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church. For a time this was patiently borne; but as forbearance only seemed to increase the frequency and severity of the attacks, a notice of the principles involved became necessary. The letters contained in the present volume were written by Rev. A number of them appeared in the columns of the Western Christian Advocate; and, at the earnest solicitations of many readers, he was induced to present them in a more permanent form. Their style is clear and forcible, and the process of argumentation strictly logical. As the reader will perceive, he has limited himself to two principal points: This work has been well executed by giving the standard authors in their own language and thus preventing any candid opponent from making the charge of misrepresentation. The book will thus be very valuable to such as have not access to extensive libraries, or who have not time to examine for themselves the various writers here quoted. The objections are distinctly and explicitly stated, and the intelligent reader will, we think, be fully convinced that they are well sustained. We commend the volume as one of great merit to such as are perplexed upon the subject of predestination. We doubt not that many, after perusing these pages, will fully acquiesce with Calvin, in terming, as he did, the decree of predestination a horrible decree.

### 3: Calvinism | Unconditional Election | John Calvin

*Answers to objections to the doctrine of Predestination. 1. THAT IT IS FATALISM. MUCH misunderstanding arises through confusing the Christian Doctrine of Predestination with the heathen doctrine of Fatalism.*

Its origin can be found in what is called the Eternal Covenant. Essentially, God works covenantally. A Covenant is a pact or agreement between two parties. It is a contract. Testament comes from the Latin testamentum, which means covenant. There are OT covenants that God made with individuals, i. The Eternal Covenant, then, is the covenant made between God the Father and the Son with regard to the elect. This covenant was made before the universe was created and it consisted of the Father promising to bring to the Son all whom the Father had given the Son. I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world" John 6: In the Eternal Covenant we see that God has given a certain number of people to the Son and that the Son came to redeem them, to "lose none of them" John 6: We can conclude from this that God had in mind a certain people whom would be His elect. Since God knows all things, He knows those whom He has chosen. Hence, they are predestined from the very beginning of time. He does not become a sinner by sinning. He sins because he is a sinner. He is depraved, which means that sin has corrupted all that he is: Man is so engulfed in sin, so thoroughly touched by it, that there is nothing in him that merits or enables salvation. He, therefore, is born into a state of condemnation: This is not to say that we are as evil as we can be, rather, that all of what we are is affected by sin. The heart is often referred to in scripture as the deepest part of man and the center of his spiritual nature Esther 7: From the heart man understands Prov. Also, it is out of the heart that we speak " All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man" Mark 7: The unregenerate person is a slave of sin: That means that doing good is not a concern or need of the unbeliever-and naturally so for a person with a sinful nature. The unregenerate is inherently against God: Enmity is hatred, bitterness, and malice toward an enemy. That was our relationship to God prior to salvation; there was enmity between us. So, the Bible reveals the true nature of man. It is evil Mark 7: It then follows that out of his utterly sinful condition, only sinful desires and effects will follow. The question must then be asked, "How can a sinful person ever desire God? Because of his sinfulness, he loves darkness rather than light; he loves evil rather than good: Because of his depravity, he is incapable of accepting the things of God or understanding them: The natural man is the unregenerate man. The natural man cannot understand the things of God. Salvation is one of those "things of God," and so is the understanding of being lost, of being a sinner, of needing repentance, etc. All of these are out of reach of the natural man. He cannot understand them. So, in light of these scriptures, how can an unbeliever come to an understanding that he needs salvation if the Bible teaches that he cannot understand his need 1 Cor. What effect, then, does this condition have upon his free will? But this belief is not supported in scripture. What then will a sinful free will choose? It will choose sin. His free will, then, would never allow Him to reach out to God. But we must ask, "What is free will? But someone is only as free as his nature is free. His will is limited to that which is within his nature. The unregenerate can only choose what his nature allows him to choose. Since he is full of sin, not goodness, his choices can only be sinful. In other words, a person can choose to do only that which his nature allows him to do. He cannot simply will to suddenly vanish into thin air or fly like Superman because he is incapable of such feats; his nature limits him. So too with the nature of fallen man. He is severely limited by what he can and cannot do. How is he able, in his sinful free will, to desire God when his inclinations are always to reject Him? How can he, with his blind and sinful will that is deadened, hardened, and enslaved by sin Rom. But some still maintain that God works on a person and slowly teaches and guides him or her into believing. They maintain that everyone is equally able to accept or reject. Why are there variations in choice? Are the variations a result of a tendency that God gave them? But God made them that way. Is it because of their environment? But God put them there. Is it because of some physical inclination? But God gave them their bodies. But God gave them their parents. The fact remains, man is not entirely free; he is sinfully free. The unsaved can act freely, but only within the limits of their sinful

nature which cannot understand spiritual things 1 Cor. These are not the statements one would hope to find if the sinner were so free to choose to accept or reject God. Man is completely a sinner who is incapable of understanding and coming to God and has a sinful free will capable only of rejecting God. Therefore, in order for salvation to occur, God must predestine. It can be no other way. If this is so, then there should be verses supporting it. The preceding scriptures clearly show that the Lord is very active in salvation. He did not simply provide the means of salvation, the cross, but He also ensured the application of the blood of Christ through predestination. Please consider that it is God who: It is man who: Left to man, salvation is impossible: That is why it must be God who opens the heart: This is what truly glorifies God, that in His infinite mercy He is gracious enough to save those who would always reject Him, always hate Him, and always malign Him. Praise Him and His love! Sovereignty means that God is supreme in power and authority, that He answers to no one, and that He may do as He pleases for whatever reason He chooses. Out of a people of utter sinfulness and inability, God has chosen, by His sovereign grace, to elect some into salvation and not others. Remember, there is nothing in man that merits any favor, blessing, or mercy whatsoever. For there is no favoritism with God Rom. Each and every person is entirely worthy of wrath and incapable of saving himself. That is why God has chosen a people to Himself out of the good pleasure of His heart. Because without His choosing, none would ever come to Him. Therefore, predestination is a loving doctrine: In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ Sovereignty is why God has mercy on whom He desires and hardens whom He desires: It is God who is in control. Some He has elected to salvation, others He has not: And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory" Rom. It seems quite clear that God prepares some for mercy and not others. It ensures the salvation of the ones He has called. It properly reveals the true nature of man to be utterly sinful, rebellious, and antagonistic to God.

### 4: "Objections to the Doctrine of Predestination Answered - #7" by Loraine Boettner

*The past 2 weeks at Revolution, I've preached on election and free will from Romans [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com) is an enormous topic that I feel like we've only scratched the surface on. In thinking about the topic, there are a lot of questions about predestination and objections to it.*

And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. However, predestination is a biblical doctrine. The key is understanding what predestination means, biblically. What did God determine ahead of time? According to Romans 8: Essentially, God predetermines that certain individuals will be saved. Numerous scriptures refer to believers in Christ being chosen Matthew Predestination is the biblical doctrine that God in His sovereignty chooses certain individuals to be saved. The most common objection to the doctrine of predestination is that it is unfair. Why would God choose certain individuals and not others? The important thing to remember is that no one deserves to be saved. We have all sinned Romans 3: As a result, God would be perfectly just in allowing all of us to spend eternity in hell. However, God chooses to save some of us. He is not being unfair to those who are not chosen, because they are receiving what they deserve. No one deserves anything from God; therefore, no one can object if he does not receive anything from God. An illustration would be a man randomly handing out money to five people in a crowd of twenty. Would the fifteen people who did not receive money be upset? Do they have a right to be upset? No, they do not. Because the man did not owe anyone money. He simply decided to be gracious to some. The Bible says that we have the choiceâ€”all who believe in Jesus Christ will be saved John 3: The Bible never describes God rejecting anyone who believes in Him or turning away anyone who is seeking Him Deuteronomy 4: Somehow, in the mystery of God, predestination works hand-in-hand with a person being drawn by God John 6: God predestines who will be saved, and we must choose Christ in order to be saved. Both facts are equally true. How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

### 5: Objections to CALVINISM as it is: INTRODUCTION

*Answering Objections To Predestination When discussing the biblical doctrine of predestination, there are many questions which arise. In this lesson, Pastor Foskey seeks to answer the most common among them.*

Determinism Determinism is the belief that all events, including human choices are determined or caused by another. Proponents of this view believe that human choices are the result of antecedent causes, which in turn were caused by prior causes. There are two basic kinds of determinism: Naturalistic determinists include behavioral psychologist B. F. Skinner who wrote that all human behavior is determined by genetic and behavioral factors. On this view, humans are like a brush in the hands of an artist, though in his view the "artist" is a mix of societal manipulation and chance. The human being is at the mercy of these forces, and is simply the instrument through which they are expressed. The theistic version of this view insists that God is the ultimate cause who determines all human actions. It is the view held by all strong Calvinists. All human behavior is either uncaused, self-caused, or caused by something else. However, human behavior cannot be uncaused, since nothing occurs without a cause. Further, human actions cannot be self-caused, for no act can cause itself. To do so, it would have to be prior to itself, which is impossible. The only remaining alternative is that all human behavior is caused by something external to it. The Argument from the Nature of Causality. Edwards argued from the nature of causality. He reasoned that since the principle of causality demands that all actions are caused, then it is irrational to claim that things arise without a cause. But for Edwards a self-caused action is impossible, since a cause is prior to an effect, and one cannot be prior to himself. Therefore, all actions are ultimately caused by a First Cause God. Hence, all human actions ultimately are determined by God. The Argument from sovereignty. For if God is in control of all, then He must ultimately be the cause of all. Otherwise, He would not be in complete control. The Argument from Omniscience. For if God knows everything, then everything He knows must occur according to His will. If it did not, then God would be wrong in what He knew. But an omniscient Mind cannot be wrong in what it knows. A Response to Theistic Determinism. Non-determinists, especially self-determinists see Free Will, reject the premises of determinist arguments. It is important to distinguish two forms of determinism, hard and soft. The determinism rejected here is hard determinism: Hard Determinism Act is caused by God. Acts is not caused by God. God is the only cause. God is the primary cause; humans are the secondary cause. Totally free human choice is eliminated. Human free choice is compatible with sovereignty. Soft determinism is sometimes called compatibilism, since it is "compatible" with free choice self-determinism. Only hard determinism is incompatible with free choice or secondary causality of a human free agent. Response to the Argument from Alternative Possibility. But human behavior can be self-caused, since there is nothing contradictory about a self-caused action as there is about a self-caused being. For an action does not have to be prior to itself to be caused by oneself. Only the self I must be prior to the action. A self-caused action is simply one caused by my self. And my self I is prior to my actions. Response to the Argument from the Nature of Causality. Jonathan Edwards rightly argued that all actions are caused, but it does not follow from this that God is the cause of all these actions. Therefore, all actions need not be attributed to the First Cause God. Some actions can be caused by human beings to whom God gave free moral agency. Free choice is not, as Edwards contends, doing what one desires with God giving the desires. Rather, it is doing what one decides. And one does not always do what He desires, as is the case when duty is placed above desire. Hence, it does not follow that all actions are determined by God. Response to the Argument from Sovereignty. For God can control by His omniscience, as well as by His causal power. As the next point reveals, God can control events by willing in accordance with His omniscient knowledge of what will occur by free choice. God need not make or cause the choice Himself. Simply knowing for sure that a person will freely do something is enough for God to control the world. Response to the Argument from Omniscience. It is true that everything God knows must occur according to His will. For an omniscient Mind cannot be wrong in what it knows. However, it does not follow from this that all events are determined i. God could simply determine that we be self-determining beings in a moral sense. The fact that He knows for certain what free creatures will do with their freedom is enough to make an event determined. But the fact that

God does not force them to choose, is enough to establish that human free acts are not determined caused by another but by oneself. God determined the fact of human freedom, but free creatures perform the acts of human freedom. Weaknesses of Determinism Determinism is self-defeating. A determinist insists that both determinists and non-determinists are determined to believe what they believe. However, determinists believe self-determinists are wrong and ought to change their view. But "ought to change" implies they are free to change, which is contrary to determinism. Lewis argued that naturalistic, complete determinism is irrational. For determinism to be true, there would have to be a rational basis for their thought. But if determinism is true, then there is no rational basis for thought, since all is determined by non-rational forces. So, if determinism claims to be true, then it must be false. Determinism destroys human responsibility. If God is the cause of all human actions, then human beings are not morally responsible. One is only responsible for a choice if there was free will to avoid making it. But if God caused the action, then we could not have avoided it. Hence, we are not responsible. Determinism renders praise and blame meaningless. Similarly, if God causes all human actions, then it makes no sense to praise human beings for doing good, nor to blame them for doing evil. For if the courageous really had no choice other than to show courage, why reward it? If the evil had no choice but to commit their crime, why punish them? Rewards and punishment for moral behavior makes sense only if the actions were not caused by another. Determinism leads to fatalism. If everything is determined beyond our control, then why do good and avoid evil? Indeed, if determinism is right, evil is unavoidable. Determinism destroys the very motive to do good and shun evil. Theistic opponents to determinism offer several objections from Scripture. Defining free choice as "doing what one desires" is contrary to experience. For people do not always do what they desire, nor do they always desire to do what they do Romans 7: If God must give the desire before one can perform an act, then God must have given Satan the desire to rebel against Him. But this is impossible, for in that case God would be giving a desire against God. God would be in effect against Himself, which is impossible. Theistic determinists like Edwards have a faulty, mechanistic view of human personhood. He likens human free choice to balancing scales in need of more pressure from the outside in order to tip the scales from dead center. But humans are not machines; they are persons made in the image of God Genesis 1: For God could have predetermined things in accordance with free-choice, rather than in contradiction to it. Even the Calvinistic Westminster Confession of Faith declares that "Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly, yet by the same providence He ordered them to fall out, according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently" 5.

### 6: John Calvin –“ Objections to Predestination & Election | The Old Guys

*Tim Keller answers three common objections to the biblical doctrine of election.*

We might ask, How can the offer of salvation be sincerely made to those who God foreknows will despise and reject it, especially when their guilt and condemnation will only be increased by their refusal? Arminians admit that God knows beforehand who will accept and who will reject the message; yet they know themselves to be under a divine command to preach to all men, and they do not feel that they act insincerely in doing so. The difficulty, however, in both cases is purely subjective, and is due to our limited knowledge and to our inability to comprehend the ways of God, which are past finding out. We do know that the Judge of all the earth will do right, and we trust Him even though our feeble reason cannot always follow His ways. We know definitely that abundant provision has been made for all who will come, and that every one who sincerely accepts will be saved. The father saw the returning prodigal when he was still a great way off, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the welcome given to this prodigal God is willing to give to any prodigal. A man may be altogether sincere in giving an invitation which he knows will be refused. A father who knows that his boys are going to do wrong feels constrained to tell them what is right. His warnings and pleadings are sincere; the trouble is in the boys. Will any one contend that God cannot sincerely offer salvation to a free moral agent unless in addition to the invitation He exerts a special influence which will induce the person to accept it? After a civil war in a country it often happens that the victorious general offers free pardon to all those in the opposing army, provided they will lay down their arms, go home, and live peaceable lives, although he knows that through pride or malice many will refuse. He makes the offer in good faith even though for wise reasons he determines not to constrain their assent, supposing him possessed of such power. We may imagine the case of a ship with many passengers on board sinking some distance out from shore. A man hires a boat from a nearby port and goes to rescue his family. Incidentally it happens that the boat which he takes is large enough to carry all the passengers, so he invites all those on the sinking vessel to come on board, although he knows that many of them, either through lack of appreciation of their danger, or because of personal spite toward him, or for other reasons, will not accept. Yet does that make his offer any the less sincere? Or, a man may make a feast for his own friends and the provisions be so abundant that he may throw open his doors to all who are willing to come. This is precisely what God, according to the Calvinistic doctrine, has actually done. Out of special love to His people, and with the design of securing their salvation He has sent His Son to do what justifies the offer of salvation to all who choose to accept it. No stumbling block is put in their way. All that the call contains is true; it is adapted to the conditions of all men and freely offered if they will repent and believe. No outside influence constrains them to reject it. The elect accept; the non-elect may accept if they will, and nothing but their own nature determines them to do otherwise. Hodge, the non-elect have all the advantages and opportunities of securing their salvation that, according to any other scheme, are granted to mankind indiscriminately. Calvinism teaches that a plan of salvation adapted to all men and adequate for the salvation of all, is freely offered to the acceptance of all, although in the secret purpose of God He intended that it should have precisely the effect which in experience it is found to have. He designed in its adoption to save His own people, but consistently offers its benefits to all who are willing to receive them. More than this no anti-Calvinist can demand. His commands to Pharaoh have already been referred to. Isaiah was commissioned to preach to the Jews, and in 1: Ezekiel was sent to speak to the house of Israel, but was told beforehand that they would not hear, Ezek. In these passages God declares that He does the very thing which Arminians say He must not do. Hence the objection now under consideration has arisen not because of any Calvinistic misstatement of the divine plan, but through erroneous assumptions made by Arminians themselves. The decree of election is a secret decree. And since no revelation has been given to the preacher as to which ones among his hearers are elect and which are non-elect, it is not possible for him to present the Gospel to the elect only. It is his duty to look with hope on all those to whom he is preaching, and to pray for them that they may each be among the elect. In order to offer the message to the elect, he must offer it to all; and the Scripture command is plain to the effect that it should be offered to all. Even the elect

must hear before they can believe and accept, Born. While the message is preached to all, it is God who chooses among the hearers those to whom He is speaking, and He makes this selection known to them through the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit. The elect thus receive the message as the promise of salvation, but to the non-elect it appears only as foolishness, or if their conscience is aroused, as a judgment to condemnation. As a rule, the non-elect are not concerned about salvation, do not envy the elect their hope of salvation, but rather laugh and scorn at them. And since the secret as to which ones in the audience belong to the elect is hidden from the preacher, usually he does not know who got the message to salvation and who got it to judgment. Among the elect themselves there are so many weaknesses, and on the other hand the evil one is so able to appear as an angel of light and to make such an outward show of good deeds and words, that the preacher usually cannot be sure of the outcome. Yet while it is certain that the non-elect will not turn to God, repent of their sins, and live good moral lives, it is, nevertheless, their duty to do so. Though members of a fallen race, they are still free moral agents, responsible for their character and conduct. God is, therefore, perfectly consistent in commanding them to repent. For Him not to do so would be for Him to give up the claims of His law. We commonly hear the idea expressed that man is under no obligation to do anything for which he has not full and perfect ability in himself. The reasoning, however, is fallacious; for man labors under a self-acquired inability. He was created upright and voluntarily sank himself into sin. He is, therefore, as responsible as is the person who in order to escape military service deliberately mutilates a hand or an eye. If inability canceled obligation, then Satan with his inherent depravity would be under no obligation to do right, and his fiendish enmity toward God and men would be no sin. Sinners in general would then be lifted above the moral law. In conclusion it may be further said that even in regard to the non-elect the preaching is not altogether vain; for they are thus made the objects of general restraining and directing influences which prevent them from sinning as much as they otherwise would. Systematic Theology, II, p. Boettner was born on a farm in northwest Missouri. He was a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary Th. Previously he had graduated from Tarkio College, Missouri, and had taken a short course in Agriculture at the University of Missouri. In he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity, and in the degree of Doctor of Literature. He taught Bible for eight years in Pikeville College, Kentucky. A resident of Washington, D. His home was in Rock Port, Missouri. His other books include:

### 7: Objections to CALVINISM as it is: CHAPTER Election and Reprobation

*Common Objection #1: "If you believe in predestination, you make God a tyrant and salvation arbitrary." I think this stems from an elevated view of human goodness and a lesser view of God's holiness and righteousness.*

Responses to Objections Against Predestination Predestination is undoubtedly one of the most difficult doctrines in the Bible. But predestination is nevertheless a clear, biblical concept. This is certainly not an exhaustive list of objections or responses, but I hope it will serve to address some of the main ones. What am I supposed to say to them? The notion of predestination is not immediately palatable to those who have close, unbelieving loved ones because it seems to imply that they might be out of luck. As such, we tend to believe that if we had the freedom to choose God, then we would have a better shot at salvation than if we were predestined, i. But the question is, is that a correct assumption? The Bible, unfortunately, has a much more skeptical viewpoint of human morality than we do. It says apart from Christ, we are dead in our sins Eph. And dead people simply cannot choose life. This idea is formally recognized as total depravity: But the Bible communicates that we are dead, not sickâ€”totally helpless to chooseâ€”and that God must make us alive by his grace Eph. Even if we could choose God, we would not choose Him 10 times out of 10. Predestination, therefore, becomes really good news. So, if your close family member or friend is not a Christian, praise God that their eternity is in His hands and not in theirs or yours. If their salvation was in their hands, you should utterly despair. If their salvation was in your hands, you should constantly fret. Truly, one reason why predestination seems unpalatable at first is because usually people wrongly assume a darker picture of God and a brighter picture of us. People assume that we want others to be saved more than God wants others to be saved; that we have a bigger evangelistic and compassionate heart for others than God does. We all affirm that truth in our mind; we just need to reaffirm that truth in our heart. Predestination does not seem fair because some are chosen and others are not. Some people get the chance to accept Christ, and others do not even get that chance. However, the notion of fairness runs much deeper than we think at first. Because of our sin, if God chose to save no one, He would be acting in complete fairness. The fact that we get anything but damnation is grace. Predestination is unfair not because it is partial, but because it is gracious. His sovereign will involves all the things that He decrees to take place. And his moral will involves all the things that He desires to take place. This is important distinctionâ€”just because God desires something does not mean He will decree it. There are many evidences of this throughout the Bible. One, for example, is when the Israelites wrestled with God about wanting a king 1 Sam. God desired that He be their king. But the Israelites were relentless in their request for a human king, so God decreed there to be a king, appointing Saul for the role. Another more important example is the cross of Christ. God never desires that people sin; however, He decreed the crucifixion, which involved the blaspheming, mocking, and murdering of the Son of God. When it comes to salvation, God may likewise desire that all be saved, but He may only decree that so many people be saved according to His sovereign plan. That sounds absurd, so what could I possibly mean? We used 1 Tim 2: No, of course not. The context is clear: Paul is referring to all types of people, here. And that fits the general salvific theme of the Bible, tooâ€”that God will save all types of people. He will save people from every nation, tribe, tongue, background, economic status, etc. In verses like these, we need to remember that God has two different wills just like we have two different wills. Just because we desire something to happen does not mean we will always accomplish it, even if we have the power to do so. And the same is true of God. A response to this objection, however, might be something you would only hear about in seminary. In other words, God actively saves some, and others are damned passively by virtue of their sin. According to this viewpoint, not only does God actively save some, but He also actively damns others. Nevertheless, if you struggle with the doctrine of predestination, just know that you are not alone. This topic, therefore, demands humility more than intellectual precision, and grace more than intellectual correctness.

### 8: Overcoming Objections for Hard Determinism (predestination).

*Predestination. In this series, Dr. R.C. Sproul discusses key Scriptural texts that deal with the doctrine of predestination and addresses common objections to it. Exploring what the word means and how it differs from foreknowledge, he applies vital truth about God's sovereignty, grace, justice, and mercy to help us grasp the sweetness of God's choice in election.*

In thinking about the topic, there are a lot of questions about predestination and objections to it. I came across this from John Stott that I thought was helpful: Nevertheless, he has thrown light on our problem in such a way as to contradict the chief objections which are raised and to show that the consequences of predestination are the opposite of what is popularly supposed. I give five examples. Click To Tweet 1. But on the contrary, predestination excludes boasting. Click To Tweet 2. Predestination is said to foster uncertainty, and to create in people a neurotic anxiety as to whether they are predestined and saved or not. But this is not so. If they are unbelievers, they are entirely unconcerned about their salvation, until and unless the Holy Spirit brings them under conviction of sin as a prelude to their conversion. If they are believers, however, even when passing through a period of doubt, they know that in the end their security lies only in the eternal, predestinating will of God. Nothing else can bring such assurance and comfort. Predestination is said to foster apathy. But again this is not so. Instead, the two lie side by side in an antinomy, which is an apparent contradiction between two truths. Nor is there any way to get rid of it, save by falsifying the very facts that led us to it. Why do people not come to Jesus? Is it that they cannot? Or is it that they will not? Predestination is said to foster complacency, and to breed antinomians. For, if God has predestined us to eternal salvation, why should we not live as we please, without moral restraint, and in defiance of divine law? Paul has already answered this objection in chapter 6. Those whom God has chosen and called he has united to Christ in his death and resurrection. Having died to sin, they now live a new life to God. Indeed, he has predestined us to be conformed to the likeness of his Son. Predestination is said to foster narrow-mindedness, as the elect people of God become absorbed only in themselves. The opposite is the case. The reason God called one man Abraham and his one family was not for their blessing only, but that through them all the families of the earth might be blessed. Similarly, the reason God chose his Servant, that shadowy figure in Isaiah whom we see partly fulfilled in Israel, but specially in Christ and his people, was not only to glorify Israel but to bring light and justice to the nations. Indeed these promises were a great spur to Paul as they should be to us when he courageously broadened his evangelistic vision to include the Gentiles. So the doctrine of divine predestination promotes humility, not arrogance; assurance, not apprehension; responsibility, not apathy; holiness, not complacency; and mission, not privilege. This is not to claim that there are no problems, but to indicate that they are more intellectual than pastoral.

### 9: What is the doctrine of predestination?

*The objections are distinctly and explicitly stated, and the intelligent reader will, we think, be fully convinced that they are well sustained. We commend the volume as one of great merit to such as are perplexed upon the subject of predestination.*

Having dealt with most of these questions from my own mind, I seek here to give both the most common questions and the best answers I can to them. If predestination is true, why do we evangelize? It simply stands to reason, for most, that if God has ordained the salvation of His elect people then our evangelism efforts are really in vain. But this is a legitimate answer. In fact, it is the right answer. God has ordained the end. Nothing happens apart from His sovereign decree. Even Satan could not touch Job apart from the sovereign decree of God. God has determined the end, and the end for the elect is eternal life. But God has also ordained the means to that end, which is evangelism. No one is born on accident. It is He who planned our birth day. In history there has been only one documented case of parthenogenesis virgin birth in human beings. Of course I refer to Jesus Christ. Without those means we would not be born. It most certainly was. Likewise without evangelism no one would ever be born again because that is the means God has ordained to bring about His end. No one has ever been saved apart from evangelism of some kind. It is God who gives us the ability to have faith and the preaching of the Word that gives us an object for that faith. Does predestination mean that I do not have a will? And we all have the ability to make choices. It is here that we have a problem. But ultimately we want to live more, so we give him our money. Thus the will is in action. It is like the illustration of a person skydiving. He has the capacity to motivate himself north, south, east and west. But ultimately he is always going down. This relates to predestination in this way. Man, by nature, does not choose God because he does not naturally desire to do so. In fact, he is at enmity with God and instead would rather worship an idol or himself than the true God. So, in response to the question: This will is in bondage to sin. All true believers should rejoice that God has set them free. Again, this is a common question. We must remember, as a disclaimer, that God is under no obligation to be fair by our standards in the first place.

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