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## **Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Predestination But Were Afraid to Ask**

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### **Double Predestination**

**If God predestines certain people for salvation, does He also predestine certain people to damnation? Why?**

- 1) Whenever Scripture speaks of predestination or election, it is always unto salvation or sanctification, never unto damnation. Predestination is based on God's love, God's favor. To speak of predestination to hell is like called a nice fragrance and odor!
- 2) God does not need to prevent people from believing since we are all inclined toward rejecting God anyway.

**PPT>>>ESV 1 Corinthians 2:14** ~ The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

- 3) However, there are some texts that could be taken to mean that God sends judgment on some people, hardening them in their sin:

**PPT>>>ESV Romans 9:22** **God** ~ . . . has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction . . .

**PPT>>>ESV Romans 11:7-10** ~ Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day." And David says, "Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them; let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs forever."

**PPT>>>ESV 1 Peter 2:8** ~ They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

### **Evangelism**

**How should a proper understanding of election and predestination affect your evangelism?** The doctrine of election is a big encouragement when witnessing. The results do not rest on our shoulders. In a sense we can't fail: the elect will respond.

**PPT>>>ESV 1 Corinthians 1:23-24** but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

**PPT>>>ESV 2 Timothy 2:10** . . . I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they . . . may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus . . .

**\*\*\*\*What motivated Paul in his missionary journeys?**

**Since God alone determines who will believe and who will not, why witness?**

a) Jesus commanded it.

ESV **Matthew 28:19** . . . make disciples of all nations . . .

ESV **Acts 1:8** . . . you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

b) Just as God predestines the end (salvation), He also predestines the means (which includes our evangelism). Witnessing is part of process whereby God brings the elect to salvation.

ESV **Romans 10:14-15** . . . how are they to call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

ESV **2 Timothy 2:24** . . . the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.

We are privileged to be part of a divine process whereby His elect are brought to salvation.

**Particular Redemption**

**PPTS>>>Now let's consider Particular Redemption, which some people call Limited Atonement**

**PPT>>>Why did Jesus die on the cross?** It was to pay for sins.

**How many of our sins did he die for?** He died for all of them.

**Whose sins did Jesus die for? All men or only the elect? If he died for all men, then why are not all men in heaven?**

**PPT>>>Fact:** Everyone except heretics limit the atonement in some way.

The Arminian says Jesus died for all men, but not all sins. They limit the sins that Jesus paid for. They say there is one sin Jesus did not die for: unbelief.

The Augustinian says that Jesus died for all sins but not all people. He died to pay for all the sins of all of His people, but not for all people.

**Arminian:** Jesus died for everybody in general, making them savable.

**Augustinian:** Jesus died for the elect, guaranteeing they would be saved.

**PPT>>>ESV Matthew 1:21** . . . you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

**PPT>>>ESV Matthew 26:28** . . . this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

**PPT>>>ESV John 10:15** . . . I lay down my life for the sheep.

**PPT>>>ESV Ephesians 5:25** . . . Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her . . .

In sum, it could be said Christ's atonement is sufficient for all, but efficient only for the elect.  
Some call this limited atonement but perhaps it is better to think of it as particular redemption.

### **"All"**

**PPT>>>ESV John 12:32** ~ When I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.

**In John 12:32, to whom does "all" (12:32) refer?** The context will help determine this (John 12:20-21).

**PPT>>>ESV John 12:20-21** Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

"All" refers to both Jew and Greek (Gentile), just as it does in Romans 3:9.

**PPT>>>ESV Romans 3:9** . . . have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin . . .

Jesus will draw "all" men without distinction ethnically, but not all men without exception (universalism).

### **"World"**

**PPT>>>ESV John 3:16** ~ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

**In what sense does love the "world" in John 3:16?** It is from *kosmos* (2889) which from context refers to "all mankind, but especially believers, as the objects of God's love" (BAG p 446). The Jews tended to think of salvation in nationalistic terms (excluding Gentiles). However, God had love for the whole world of mankind (not just the Jews); see **John 1:11-13, 29**. Thus, world refers to all mankind without distinction (Jew or Gentile), but not necessarily all mankind without exception (universalism).

**PPT>>>ESV Genesis 12:3** ~ . . . in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

**PPT>>>ESV Revelation 5:9** ~ . . . by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation

**PPT>>>ESV 1 John 2:2** ~ He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

That is, not just Israel! He died for the sins of elect Jews and also the elect throughout the entire world of mankind (Gentiles too)!

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### The Doctrines of Grace

There is a set of beliefs concerning predestination known as the “Doctrines of Grace.” These were formulated by the Reformed Churches of Europe in 1618 at the Synod of Dort, Holland. The Doctrines of Grace were drawn up in response to five other points of doctrine published by a group of believers who did not believe in God’s sovereignty in the salvation process. These original five points were promoted by the followers of a Dutch seminary professor named Jacob Arminius and have come to be known as Arminianism. Both sets of beliefs are much older than the 1600s. The Doctrines of Grace can be remembered by the word “TULIP” (which has nothing to do with the fact that they were drawn up in Holland!).

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**T—Total Depravity.** This would perhaps better be called **Radical Depravity**. The point is not that man is as bad as he possibly could be. Rather, man has been affected by sin in every part of his being: both mind and body. Our corruption by sin is so great that, left to ourselves, none of us would ever come to Christ for salvation.

**U—Unconditional Election.** This means that God’s election (choice) of certain people for salvation was not based on any foreseen merit in the person chosen. God’s gracious choice was despite our total depravity. God’s decision was not based on anything in us, but on God’s desire to show mercy.

**L—Limited Atonement.** This would probably best be renamed as **Particular Redemption**. Simply stated, it means that Christ died for the elect, that He laid down His life for the sheep (not the goats), that He paid for the sins of the church (not the world). Jesus’ death on the cross did not merely make it possible for people to be saved, it instead guaranteed that the elect would indeed be saved. His atonement was designed for His people. His death was certainly sufficient for all people, but was efficient only for the chosen.

**I—Irresistible Grace.** God grace unto eternal life is irresistible. Salvation is all of God and none of man. Even our faith is the work of a prior grace. God shoots his grace at His elect, and like a gunshot wound they receive it.

**P—Perseverance of the Saints.** This doctrine has been truncated to “once saved always saved.” Though it does indeed include eternal security, it also is intended to reflect the truth that those who are truly saved will persevere in the faith and in holiness until the end of their lives. Perhaps it would be better called the Perseverance of the Holy Spirit since it is God’s Spirit within us Who keeps us on track for the Lord.

### Miscellaneous

**Babies: What happens to babies who die in infancy or are aborted?** The Scriptures are essentially silent at this point. Hopefully all such babies are among the elect and will serve to help fulfill Ro 5, Re 5:9. Cp. 2Sa 12:13-23.

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**Losing Salvation: What bearing does the doctrine of predestination have on the possibility of losing one's salvation?**

ESV **John 6:39** And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.

ESV **John 10:27-29** My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

ESV **Romans 8:30** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

ESV **Romans 8:33** Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

ESV **Romans 8:38-39** For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ESV **Ephesians 1:13-14** . . . you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

**Note:** There are verses that could be taken to mean one could lose his salvation. Certainly it is possible for a person to claim faith in Jesus and for a time follow Christ, only later to fall away. Such people are like Judas: false believers. They did not lose their salvation; they never had it. As Adrian Rodgers said, "The faith that fizzles before the finish had a flaw from the first!"

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**Universalism: Since Ezekiel 18:32 is true, why doesn't God predestine all men to salvation?**

ESV **Ezekiel 18:32** . . . I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord GOD . . .

Nowhere in Scripture is it indicated what caused God to give certain men to Christ and not others. We do know that it was not an arbitrary decision, but was based on God's will, God's pleasure and God's purpose and that it was not based on man's will or man's effort. This is simply a mystery beyond our ability to understand; Romans 11:33-36.

ESV **Romans 9:19-21** You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?" But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me like this?" Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honored use and another for dishonorable use?

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**All Men Saved: From context, to whom does "all" (2:4) refer in 1Timothy 2:1-4? See Revelation 5:9.** God desires for all types of men to be saved, even some kings and some of those in authority (for whom we are to pray). Again, God loves all men without distinction (even kings), but not necessarily all men without exception.

**Everyone: In 2 Peter 3:8-9, to whom does “anyone” and “everyone” refer?** To “anyone” and “everyone” of “you” (3:9), and “you” refers to the recipients of Peter's letter. *See 1:1,10 and 1Pe 1:1-2.*

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**Application: How should we respond to the truth that God chose us, according to 2Th 2:13-15?**

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**Romans 5, Original Sin? Why witness? Why pray?**

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### **Conclusion**

**PPT>>>At the end of the section on predestination in Romans, Paul wrote:**

ESV **Romans 11:33-34** Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?"

### **Discussion Questions**

**If God predestines certain people for salvation, does He also predestine certain people to damnation? Why?**

**Since God alone determines who will believe and who will not, why witness?**

**How should a proper understanding of election and predestination affect your evangelism?**

**In what ways do all Christians limit the atonement?**

**What are the five points of Calvinism?**