

Understanding Predestination from Understanding God

Everything must be understood from a correct, Biblical understanding and knowledge of God. Morality, salvation, spirituality, science, mathematics and the Bible, must all be understood from a sound, Biblical understanding of God. Many people know God from their own inclination of what God ought to be like from their viewpoint. But in truth we are confined to the Word of God in truly knowing God. We know that He exists from nature. But, knowing Him we are limited to His own revealing of Himself in His Word—living Word: Jesus Christ and written Word: the Holy Bible.

To correctly understand Predestination we must know God. We must know His Love. Why? Because according to Ephesians 1:4-5, His love motivated Him to predestinate. Divine Love, which we have noted.

Ephesians 1:4 ...That you will be holy and blameless before Him, referring to God the Father. This means “in the presence of” and it refers to after the rapture.

Ephesians 1:4 ... In love

Ephesians 1:5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

Understanding Predestination from Understanding God Ephesians 1:5

In love

As we move into a discussion on predestination, remember this, if nothing else: predestination and love go together! This will take care of the covenanters.

The word for love is *agape* and it refers to Divine Love. Remember, there are three categories of love. There is Divine Love which, of course, comes from the members of the Godhead. Then there is human love which comes from humans and depends on the integrity of each individual. Then there is Spiritual Love which comes from the Holy Spirit, only through a born again believer who is walking by faith in the Holy Spirit. “The fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace....”

The next phrase is the *aorist participle* **having predestinated**. In the Greek, this is a compound verb with the prefix *pro* – before, plus the verb *to determine*, “To determine or decree beforehand.” This word has caused a great deal of confusion and been the cause of a lot of false teaching.

To prevent error in our understanding of the Biblical word *having predestinated* we are going to look at three other vital doctrines that directly impact how we understand predestination. They are the doctrines of Divine Love, Divine Sovereignty and the doctrine of Divine Decrees. To be certain, we will not exhaust, in any measure, the study of these three doctrines but note them as to their importance in understanding predestination.

1. We must start with Divine Love. Why? Because it is His love that motivated Him to predestination.

Understanding Predestination from Understanding God
Ephesians 1:5

2. Start right off with the point. To those who believe that unbelievers are predestined by God to believe in Jesus, they are loved by God. That is fine for them. But what about those who are not predestined to believe in Jesus, what happens to the love of God for them? So it is vital that we grasp the Love of God.
3. The Love of God does not violate the perfect Righteousness of God. In other words, God does not set His Righteousness aside to satisfy some desire from His love.
4. The Love of God does not violate the Fairness of God. He is not partial to some with the rejection of others without the satisfaction of His Righteousness.
5. Can we define Divine Love? The simple answer is no. The Bible defines faith in Hebrews 11:1, but the Bible does not define Love. Divine Love defies defining. To define love would be like trying to define God. The definition limits God. And so, with a definition of Love. To define love is to confine love. But what the Bible does do is to define love by describing love. It is much like gravity. We define gravity by describing gravity: *the force that attracts a body toward the center of the earth*. And so it is with defining Divine Love. It is a spiritual force that attracts created beings toward God Himself.
6. Not only does the Bible declare that God is love (1 John 4:8 and 16) but it also declares that God is Spirit (John 4:24). Therefore, His love is a Spiritual force that attracts man and angels to Him. But Scripture also declares that God is light. Therefore, His love is a

Understanding Predestination from Understanding God
Ephesians 1:5

light that allows those who see His love to see who and what God is and therefore attracted to Him out of the darkness of our existence.

7. Understanding Divine Love as a spiritual force that attracts us to God is seen in

Jeremiah 31:3 I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with or by lovingkindness.

But what about those who refuse to believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior? Question: how many people are there in this world who refuse and reject the love of someone else. Like those children who reject the love of their mother and father? Or those who reject the true love of another and marry the wrong person? But those who will see the light are drawn to the light of God's love.

8. In truly grasping the Love of God, one must also grasp all the attributes of God. In other words, God is Good, therefore His love is a manifestation of His Goodness. God is Omnipresent, therefore His love is everywhere present, etc. So, if you truly desire to grasp the love of God, you must spend time in His Word on all His attributes. A study of 1 Corinthians 13 which describes love, will give you some understanding of the Love of God. His love is Longsuffering, His love is Kind, His love is not Jealous nor boastful, His love does not consider when wronged, etc. These are 16 descriptions of love. His love is Kind, not you. When the Holy Spirit pours His love in you, you are not these 16 impacts, they describe the Love of God.

Understanding Predestination from Understanding God
Ephesians 1:5

9. And most dramatic for us is that His love is manifested toward those least deserving of it.

John 3:16 For in this manner, loved, The God, the world, that The Son, the only begotten, He gave that – in order that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

From this we learn one of the most important lessons about love. Being benefited by love is the issue for mankind. For all eternity, those who will be in the Lake of Fire are loved by God, but they refused to be benefited by His love. When you say, *I love someone*, what do you mean? Are they benefited by your love? And if so, how are they benefited by your love? When God declares that He loves the world—all unbelievers—this does not mean that He just arbitrarily saves everyone. It means that His love motivates Him to find a way to express that love, and complete the desire of His love, which is to spend all eternity with them. God expressed His love and His desire by offering His own Son up on the cross to be their Savior. But, to be benefited by His love, each individual must make a faith decision to believe in Jesus as his personal Savior.

10. Now in our study of predestination, Ephesians 1:4-5 declares that **in love He predestined us**. We must correctly understand what predestination is to grasp the demonstration of His love toward us.

But before we can understand predestination, we must grasp the Sovereignty of God.

Understanding Predestination from Understanding God
Ephesians 1:5

We must also correctly understand His Sovereignty. Why? Because it is His ultimate authority that establishes predestination, that no one can stop or counter. So let's take a brief look at the Sovereignty of God Almighty.

The Sovereignty of God Almighty

1. Sovereignty of God identifies God as supreme ruler. He is not ruled by anyone or anything. He has supreme authority, over this and any other universe that may exist beyond our knowledge. He is supreme ruler over the 100 billion galaxies in the universe. This means there is no authority anywhere that rules over the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of the Bible. There is nothing beyond the Sovereignty of God: life, death, good and evil, blessings and sufferings and all relationships are within His absolute authority. Therefore, people, when God declares that you have life eternal, no one can change your eternal life. Your eternal security is in the Sovereignty of God.
2. Scripture references to the Sovereignty of God.

Psalm 33:8 Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

Psalm 33:9 For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Understanding Predestination from Understanding God
Ephesians 1:5

Psalm 33:10 The Lord nullifies the counsel of the nations; He frustrates the plans of the peoples.

Psalm 33:11 The counsel of the Lord stands forever,

Divine Decrees:

Psalm 33:11 The plans of His heart from generation to generation.

Psalm 50:1 The Mighty One, God, the LORD, has spoken, And summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

Psa. 66:7 He rules (has dominion over) by His might (this is what makes Him Sovereign) forever; (Sovereignty plus eternity) His eyes keep watch on the nations; Let not the rebellious exalt themselves.

Psalm 93:1 The Lord reigns, (Because He is Sovereign He rules, which emphasizes the fact that He regulates, He is in charge; He reigns—to exercise Sovereign power) He is clothed with majesty;

The Lord has clothed and girded Himself with

Understanding Predestination from Understanding God
Ephesians 1:5

strength; (Omnipotence) Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved. (There is no power or authority over Him.)

Psalm 93:2 Your throne is established from of old;

You are from everlasting. (Eternality of God)

Isaiah 40:12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand,

Because of the Sovereignty of God, we need not worry about the weather or climate—they are in His Sovereign control.

Isaiah 40:12 And marked off the heavens by the span, And calculated the dust of the earth by the measure, And weighed the mountains in a balance And the hills in a pair of scales?

Isaiah 40:13 Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, (No one) Or as His counselor has informed Him? (No one)

Isaiah 40:14 With whom did He consult and *who* gave Him understanding? (No one, He is Omniscient) And *who* taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge (No one, He is perfect Righteous) And informed Him of the

Understanding Predestination from Understanding God
Ephesians 1:5

way of understanding? (No one. The point here is that the great Lucifer, Satan has to be taught, but not God).

Isaiah 40:15 Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, And are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales; Behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust.

Isaiah 40:16 Even Lebanon is not enough to burn, Nor its beasts enough for a burnt offering.

Isaiah 40:17 All the nations are as nothing before Him, They are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless.

Isaiah 40:18 To whom then will you liken God? (No one. Idolatry tries.) Or what likeness will you compare with Him?

People, I pray that as we go through these readings on the Sovereignty of our God, that it gives you peace and assurance.

Isaiah 46:9 “Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; *I am God, and there is no one like Me,*

Understanding Predestination from Understanding God
Ephesians 1:5

Isaiah 46:10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, (Divine Decrees) And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’;

Isaiah 46:11 Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned *it*, *surely* I will do it.

He is Sovereign and there is no power, no authority, no one who can stop the fulfillment of the Decrees of God, as in Predestination.

Some people have to learn about the Sovereignty of God the hard way as Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel 4:31 While the word was in the king’s mouth, a voice came from heaven, *saying*, ‘King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you,

Daniel 4:32 and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place *will be* with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the

Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.'

Daniel 4:33 Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*.

Daniel 4:34 "But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever;

**For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
And His kingdom *endures* from generation to generation.**

People, you do not want to have to have God come down and take you through tribulations just so you will learn that God is Sovereign. You can learn it, by faith, in the study of His Word, and enjoy the blessings of just knowing that our God is Sovereign in your daily life.