

Predestination & the Sovereignty of God (Continued)

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

To understand Predestination, you must know and understand the Essence of God.

Let us review the first 10 points on the sovereignty of God from last week:

1. The Sovereignty of God identifies God as supreme ruler.
2. There are Scripture references to the Sovereignty of God.
3. Stephen Charnock well points out in his book on ‘The Essence and Attributes of God, on page 658 that: “As man is too shallow a creature to comprehend the excellency of God, so he is too dull and scanty a creature to offer up a true praise to God, both in regard of the excellency of His nature, and the multitude and greatness of His benefits.”
4. What is the difference between the Sovereignty of God and the Omnipotence of God? It is the difference between power and authority.
5. Sovereignty is inseparable from the being of God. If He is God, He is Sovereign and Omnipotent.

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6. His Sovereignty is clearly seen in that the objective and fulfillment of all His creation is for His Glory.
7. His Sovereignty is seen in that He is in control of all dispensations.
8. He is Sovereign in that He answers to no one.
9. The extent of His Sovereignty. He is sovereign over all that He has created. He is Sovereign over angels, under His title 'Lord of hosts.'
10. Being Sovereign means that it is God who makes laws.
11. This is a fact of Sovereignty that many ignore. The fact that His Sovereignty makes laws. He also has the Sovereign authority to Discipline or even Punish those who violate His laws. This is the joining of His Sovereignty with His Righteousness and Justice (Holiness).

Psalm 97:1 The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice; Let the many islands be glad. (People on all the continents)

Psalm 97:2 Clouds and thick darkness surround Him; Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.

Psalm 9:16 The LORD has made Himself known; He has executed judgment. In the work of his own hands the wicked is snared.

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Psalm 58:11 And men will say, (Jew and Gentile, believers and unbelievers) “Surely there is a reward for the righteous; Surely there is a God who judges on earth!”

We learn these two truths about God from the beginning. We learn that He is Sovereign and the law giver and has the authority and ability to execute judgments. First, His Sovereignty in the giving of Law—“*thou shall not eat*” and the execution of His judgments. “dying—spiritual death, you shall die—physical death. And they did!!

The wrath of God is real. It comes from His Holiness plus His Sovereignty. So many today deny the wrath of God, clinging to His love which to them is an ‘*unconditional*’ ‘*indiscriminate*’ love. This erroneous perception of Divine Love is from an erroneous understanding of Divine Love and Divine Righteousness. Please know and remember that in time and for all eternity, God is Holy and He will execute His wrath, even on those He loves. Being a benefactor of His love is conditional. He discriminates on those to whom are benefited by His love: only those who respond by faith to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Mark 1:1.

Whenever an unbeliever hears the true gospel (saved by faith alone in Christ alone) he should also understand that God has the Sovereign Authority and power to save those who believe and to condemn to eternal damnation those who refuse to believe. Whenever one rejects the gospel, they are in effect rejecting the

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Sovereign rule of God and His ability to execute His judgments, not to mention they are rejecting His Love.

12. And here is something we should always remember in regard to wars and politics and the design of others to do us harm. By His Sovereignty, God can and often does block the schemes of man.

**Psalm 2:1 Why are the nations in an uproar
And the peoples devising a vain thing?**

**Psalm 2:2 The kings of the earth take their
stand And the rulers take counsel together
Against the LORD and against His Anointed,
(Jesus the Christ) saying,**

**Psalm 2:3 “Let us tear their fetters apart And
cast away their cords from us!”** (What is
happening in America today has been going on all
through history: man rebelling against God.)

**Psalm 2:4 He who sits in the heavens laughs,
God is amused at the arrogance and
foolishness of man The Lord scoffs at them.
(Had they paid heed to the Word of God, they
would have learned this from the first book given
to us.)**

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Job 5:12 “He frustrates the plotting of the shrewd, So that their hands cannot attain success.

Job 5:13 “He captures the wise by their own shrewdness, And the advice of the cunning is quickly thwarted.

Job 5:14 “By day they meet with darkness, And grope at noon as in the night.

13. Historically, from Adam and Eve, man has contempt for the Sovereignty of God.

Leviticus 26:43 For the land will be abandoned by them, and will make up for its sabbaths while it is made desolate without them. They, meanwhile, will be making amends for their iniquity, because they rejected My ordinances and their soul abhorred My statutes.

Proverbs 1:21 At the head of the noisy *streets* she (wisdom from above) cries out; At the entrance of the gates in the city she utters her sayings:

Proverbs 1:22 “How long, O naive ones, will you love being simple-minded? And scoffers

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delight themselves in scoffing And fools hate knowledge?

Proverbs 1:23 “Turn to my reproof, Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you.

Here is where the Sovereignty of God and the freewill of man meet. Will you choose in accordance to His wisdom or reject His wisdom and try to find recovery in the wisdom of man? Every sin is rejection of Divine Sovereignty.

14. The sovereignty of God and the free will of man co-exist by the Sovereignty of God. His sovereignty is not in any way threatened by giving to this low creature of mankind, freewill. This is where the Calvinists miss the point on the Sovereignty of God. They think His Sovereignty is so small that it would be in jeopardy if He gave man freewill. But the truth of the matter is that by giving man free will, God glorifies His own Sovereignty. He will cause His plan to be fulfilled regardless of the decisions that members of the human race make. This is true Sovereignty.
15. Summary and conclusion on the Sovereignty of God. The Greatest action of the Sovereignty of God is the condemnation of mankind and the Redemption of mankind. Condemnation must precede Salvation. Adam and Eve were condemned before they were saved. So many passages teach this wonder of the Sovereignty of God but we shall look at

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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

Here we see the Sovereignty of God demonstrated by His Love, His perfect Righteousness, and His Grace for all who will simply believe.

We are well on our way of Biblically, truthfully, understanding Predestination, here in Ephesians 1:5. We have noted the Love of God, how God loves His Son, Jesus the Christ. Then we just noted the Divine Sovereignty of God, how He decreed the free will of man without jeopardizing His Sovereignty.

Divine Essence

We are on our way to Biblically understanding the doctrine of Predestination. We have looked at Divine Love, and Divine Sovereignty. It would do well to grasp the concept of Divine Essence, since Predestination comes from His being.

1. Essence is defined as the basic constituent of a thing, the intrinsic value of something. Essence is that of a being which underlies all outward manifestations, or outward declarations and is both permanent and unchangeable; it is the existence or actual being.
2. In our study of the essence of God, essence refers to the qualities or attributes of God, those which have always existed.

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3. The essence of God is that which remains stable and unchanged. Therefore, without essence a thing would not be what it actually is. Without God having essence, God would not be God.
4. For the record: The qualities and perfection or the essence of God belong to three persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.
5. Very important: The believer is totally dependent upon divine revelation in the canon of Scripture to correctly understand exactly who God is and what God is like, the nature and attributes of God.
6. Every doctrine from the Word of God must be understood in terms of the Complete Essence of God. What this means is that the Gospel must line up with the essence of God and not contradict the essence of God. For example, to claim that everyone will be saved and everyone will spend eternity with God is to contradict His essence of perfect Righteousness. It would be blasphemous because God cannot lie, and God has declared that those who refuse to believe in Jesus Christ will spend eternity separated from God and reside in the eternal Lake of Fire.

And the same holds true for understanding 'Predestination.' It must be from the perfect Essence of God. And, that God would create a being to spend eternity in Lake of Fire is a contradiction to His Love and His Fairness. And to counter with the declaration that He is God and as God He can do whatever He wants to do. The actions of God must always come from and be by His complete Essence. In other words, God cannot lie, God cannot sin. There are a multitude of

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things God cannot do because of His Holiness and His Love and His Fairness. Therefore, it is so important to accurately know each of the components of the essence of God and to understand that all that He says and does must come from His perfect essence. For example, there are those who claim that it is wrong for God to allow thousands of babies to die throughout the world, starve to death or be sacrificed. Please remember that God is eternity---and to Him the life of a created being is like a sigh even if it is 100 or more years. Therefore, for a baby to die and immediately have eternal life with God is far beyond even being gracious. So, as we study Predestination, we must understand it from God's viewpoint, not man's.

We are dependent upon the Word of God. This is one of the primary reasons why we must devote ourselves to the study of the Word of God, every part of it in the original manuscripts, daily. It is so important who you listen to in the teaching of the Word of God, and how consistent you are in listening and learning and believing and living the Word of God.

7. There is no subject more important to which you can address yourself to than the correct knowing of the person and character and essence of God. He has made Himself known to us. It is up to us to take advantage of His Word to learn about Him. This is why Paul said in Colossians 1:10 **...increasing or growing in the knowledge of God...that** is in the *epignosis* or true knowledge of God. The only place we can find this *epignosis* of God is in His Word. Or as Peter says in 2 Peter 1:2 **Grace and peace be multiplied to you in**

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the knowledge (*epignosis*) of God and of Jesus our Lord; Do you see it? Do you want to increase in the grace and peace from God? Well, here is how: *multiply your knowledge of God and or Jesus our Lord.* And how do you increase or multiply knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ? Not by praying, not by singing, not by witnessing but by the study of His Holy Word. It takes time to know someone. One reason so few people, truly, really know their spouse is because they are too busy to spend quality time with them. I would not want a marriage where I did not want to spend as much time as possible with them. Not out doing a lot of things, even doing things for them, but with them! And so it is with knowing God, many are so busy out working for Him, doing for Him, they do not even really know Him, therefore their doctrine is often in error. Their judgment of people is in error. They see someone out doing a lot of nice things for God and they are so sure that that person is in spiritual union with God. Wrong! You have to spend time in His Word to know Him accurately, truthfully, Biblically (*epignosis*). It takes time to get to know someone! And if you are not willing to spend the time, you will not ever really know them. This is knowledge that requires personal involvement with His Word.

8. All other categories of theology, all other doctrines – all are related to who and what God is. So many Christians are so sloppy about what they believe, they do not even consider what they believe as an extension of their knowledge of God.
9. Therefore, by definition, the essence of God is the study of all that He is, all His attributes not separately but all working together to

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produce what you see and learn. Predestination must come from the totality of God. Not just His love but His Holiness, His Fairness, His Omniscience, His Sovereignty and all else that God is.

10. God has revealed Himself to us through His Word. Yet at no point in life does a serious student of the Word sense his or her limitations more than when trying to grasp the working of the total being of God. This is no more true than trying to grasp an accurate understanding of Predestination or the origin of the world itself. This is why there are so many different kinds of evolution. There is *theistic evolution, atheistic evolution, idealism evolution, deistic evolution and on and on*. All of these by those who ‘study’ the Bible.

11. God has always existed. And God has created all beings—angelic and human in such a way that He can reveal Himself to them where they can understand Him. For example, God is invisible, God is Spirit. Therefore, neither angels nor man can see God. But God created us with the mental ability to see and understand. Therefore, the need of the second member of the Godhead, Jesus the Christ, the son of God in human form (John chapter 1). God gave to mankind the ability to think, and to think logically in order that He might reveal Himself in a logical manner, that makes sense to mankind. So, when we come to doctrines like the Gospel and Predestination, we must approach them from an understanding of God. One reason there are so many erroneous gospels, gospels of work of the flesh, is a failure on the part of those who propose such a gospel to consider all that God is and the inabilities of mankind.

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12. Now as Sovereign God, He has a plan and purpose for every member of the Godhead. This plan is in three stages.

First: God's plan for you begins the moment you believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior. God desires for all to be saved. But He does not program that everyone will believe. He gives to man free will. He does not impute 'irresistible grace' into anyone. What kind of grace would that be if you were so imputed? That is not the love that God is looking for, a love that He puts inside of people, even against their will. His sovereignty has determined that He will give free will and faith to His creatures. A free will that can decide to believe in His Son or not. A free will that can decide to love Him or not. If you make the decision to love God, you will make the decision to trust in His Spirit, whom He has given to you. And then His Spirit will 'pour' into you Spiritual love which is the only love that God responds to. People, please know and understand God. He does not create a being whom He so designs to love Him then finds glorification in that Love. That is not the love that God is looking for. What person wants another to love them because they have some 'love potion' that will make that person love them? This is the 'glory' of love: that another person chooses to love you! As we grow we sometimes are hurt because someone we desire to love us, does not love us. This hurts our tender souls. But when you find that person, whom you love and they love you—that is fulfillment.

So, God's plan for you begins the moment you believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior. He does some 34 things for every believer.

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And one of those is 'Predestination.' Predestination starts the moment you believe in Jesus Christ, not before.

Second: Then, God has a perfect plan for every believer. God is perfect. Therefore, His plan is perfect. But God recognizes everyone's free will. You have the freedom to choose not to be in the Plan of God. Not walk in the power and leading of His Spirit and make your own decisions.

Third: God has a plan for the eternal existence of every believer beginning with physical death. Physical death is not a bad occurrence for the believer in Jesus Christ. Once we die, physically we are face to face with Jesus Christ, waiting for the Rapture or Resurrection, then extending into the eternal state where there are no more tears, no more sorrow.

People, Know His essence. God is perfect. His plan is perfect. You will find peace in knowing God.