

Predestination and Foreknowledge:- Different But Equal

Written by K B Napier

Thursday, 05 February 2015 14:35

Arminians deny that their beliefs reject God's sovereignty, by saying they have a choice in their own salvation; they believe in an illusory (and sinful) 'free will'. Another way they do this is in their attempt to get rid of the idea of God's sovereignty by saying that predestination is merely a second step taken by the Father, Who has Foreknowledge; one step is necessary before the other can be taken.

Jesus – or 'Methods' and tactics?

The idea is simple – God knows in advance who will refuse to be saved, and so He predestines them to hell. But, He does NOT predestine them to hell deliberately or before He knows they will refuse the 'offer' of salvation. (This is why Arminian teaching and preaching keeps repeating its message in many different ways, because they think that a sinner will finally come to his senses and 'accept' salvation if the message is bright and breezy enough. It is how I used to preach! But, it contradicts Jesus' command to shake the dust from our feet if the message is only resisted ONCE). To me, all this is messy and contradictory, with a definite dash of ridiculous meaning-swaps!

What Arminians are suggesting (very strongly) is that God plays a little game with Himself, a game that is both fruitless and silly. They are saying that Almighty God, Who is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent, has to wait until a person rejects Him before He can decide the person's future state. This is so absurd, even if it is supposedly conducted in less than a split-second. To God, everything is NOW, because He is in eternity. He does not fool about, pretending He does not know a man's 'decision' to be saved, while, all along, He already knows everything before it happens!

And exactly WHEN does the man make that decision? In His lifetime. Yet, God, Who knows all, knows in advance that the man will reject the Gospel call. Thus, God knows in eternity and does not need to know man's answer - He knows it already! Now, the point about this, is that eternity has no beginning and no end. Everything is known to God about incidents in Time. The absurdity I refer to is to say that God 'waits' in eternity for a man's decision, even though He already knows what that decision will be. But, God plays a game and waits until the man decides before electing him to Heaven or hell! Eh? Can you not see how absurd that is? It is far from feasible, and it is too odd to bother with. In divine reality, both predestination AND foreknowledge exist together – one does not 'drive' the other.

God does not wait until the man makes his decision. He already knows in advance about it. Nor does God make His condemnation absolute because of the man's decision. It refutes what God

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Himself says in His own word, and makes doctrine meaningless. All to give man 'free will' and a choice in his own salvation.

Predestination and Foreknowledge

The word 'predestination' does not appear in scripture, but its meaning and several cohorts do (such as 'predestinate') does. Hence we come to Romans 8:29, 30.

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

In verse 28, we are told that good comes to those who love God, because they are "called according to his purpose". This means that we are saved because He says so: it was His will to save us. As God's will is eternal it is also fixed and final. Everything about God is absolute. There is no variation in His will. Therefore, if Arminians insert foreknowledge as the reason why God chooses men to salvation, they are introducing variation in His will – which is impossible, a variation rooted not in God but in man's choices. They are also playing 'silly-fools' with logic and declared scriptures, and rendering words meaningless.

Verse 30 tells us that God predestinated those *He* chose to be predestinated. The whole 'process' listed here is subsequent to God's election, not to man's choice.

The verb, 'foreknowledge', *proginōskō*, means to have knowledge beforehand. And for those who do not realise it, the word also means to predestinate. It simple means that God knew before men were born, who should be saved... because He

predestines

them, and NOT because of a silly twist in logic. If I say "I will buy a grey suit", then it means I already know in advance of buying a suit, and what the colour will be. I have elected to have grey. Both words (predestinate and foreknowledge) describe the same thing, though each word is different.

Meaning Not Found in Scripture

What I am saying is that Arminians bring in another 'layer' of meaning that is not found in scripture, inserting it like a secret weapon to destroy the reality of election... that it is of God, not man.

To predestinate, *proorizō*, though part of foreknowledge, is a separate word, meaning to predetermine, to decide in eternity, to foreordain. The person to be saved is both known beforehand to God and chosen by Him at the same time. So, talk of foreknowledge preceding predestination, is meaningless and puerile; it would be a pointless exercise. Vine's Expository Dictionary reminds us that the verb for predestinate differs from that of foreknowledge. If you like, God knows in advance who will be saved; He has foreknowledge. Those who are the subjects of His decisions will be predestinated.

Thus *action* (predestination) is ascribed to God's decision to save, and, at the same time, God knows (foreknowledge) who will be saved. Obviously! The two go together and are inseparable. They are not separate entities.

Called Personally, So No Choice

Those who are predestinated are 'called', *kaleō*, with a loud voice. This is a call to a specific person, who is named and called by name, which, Vine says, suggests either vocation or destination. The root, *keleuō*, makes it clear – to command. The elected person is called out from others by name, by a direct command of God to be saved. It is a salvation that is already in Heaven and eternity, to be brought to being in the person's life at a specified time and day. If, then, it is a command, it does not accommodate the one elected choosing to be saved. The person may only agree to the command and obey it. (Besides, no person has 'free will'. See relevant articles).

Only those elected in eternity will ever be saved. They have been chosen by God before they were born and are thereby justified (rendered righteous before God) and glorified – praised and made glorious. All of this is by, in, and through, Jesus Christ. None of this can apply to the unbeliever, the one who remains unsaved, and they have no possible choice in the matter.

Eternal Choice Equals Fixed

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God chose who would be saved in eternity, and whatever is chosen in eternity is fixed, not open to negotiation or choice. This is holy logic. And, it is what scripture tells us. As the second root (*doke*

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) tells us, it pleased God to choose us. Thus, we are elected on the basis not of foreknowledge, but because God wished to do it. His decision to save us is found in both predestination AND foreknowledge. One does not, and cannot, precede the other, because both co-exist in eternity.

This idea of God saving us because He simply wished to is also found in Ephesians 1:5.

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,”

We see that He chose us because He was pleased to do so. As everything in eternity is absolute, fixed, and ‘now’, we know that predestination, foreknowledge, and His pleasure, are all committed at the same ‘time’ (though time is not part of eternity!).

This same purpose of God is repeated in verse 11, which reinforces the idea that God chose the elect as a product of His will, and all are eternal. In Isaiah, we find the same conceptual truth, *bachiyr* – chosen, elect. (In the root, *bachar* – to be selected).

Preference of Men Not Same as God’s Choice!

Arminians dislike these facts intensely. They want men to have a say in their own salvation, and so they lean on the Romish (and pagan) idea of having ‘free will’. (See articles on this fallacy). But, their refusal to accept eternal election does not alter its validity or existence! They are choosing what God has not!

In the New Testament, the elect are *ekklektos* – picked out (from others), chosen by God to have salvation. Again, logic tells us that if we are picked out, then others are NOT picked out. Here comes another thing hated by Arminians – that though they might waiver on being chosen to salvation, they refuse to accept that the same applies to those who go to hell... that is, they are chosen to go there. If God is absolute, which He is, then I see no problem with this. He is the Creator, and He made some to destruction and some for glory (The Potter).

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The root, *eklegomai*, underlines the fact that God chooses out of many. It also means God has separated a few to receive His favours (starting with salvation). Not to accept this fact is not to accept what words mean! Arminians may not like the idea of God choosing the many to destruction, but there can be no other meaning to the term. They try to avoid the tough reality by saying that God only sends people to hell because they refuse His 'offer' of the Gospel. This is not found in scripture. They are sent to hell because God made them for destruction, just as He created Pharaoh at the time of the Exodus, to be damned.

The 'problem' does not arise until Arminians show a preference for their own theory. Whenever men reject what God's word really says, they bring in 'problems'. But, they are only 'problems' because they do not arise from what God says. To be offended by God's word is very telling, because it is indicative of rebellion against Him.

Many Called, Few Chosen

Many are called but very few are chosen (Matthew 20:16 and 22:14). That is, many hear the Gospel, but because they are not elect in eternity, they are unable to respond to salvation. They are not 'chosen' – the same word as 'elect', who are the "chosen of God" (Luke 23:35). As Jesus told His disciples, THEY did not choose HIM; rather, HE chose THEM. (John 15:16).

Paul uses a different word for this choice in Acts 22:14, *procheirizō*, but the essential meaning is the same: chosen for one's (God's) use and for salvation. Ephesians 1:4,

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:"

Note that there is *no mention* that the act of choosing us is predicated on foreknowledge. This is because it is part of the same concept. They are both coincidental, not separate. To be frank it amazes me that anyone should think otherwise, when scripture is obvious.

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