

Lecture 18-Predestination (II)**Prayer**

Grant, Almighty God, that as Thou hast been pleased to adopt us once for all as Thy people to this end, that we might be engrafted as it were into the body of Thy Son and so be made conformable to our Head; O, grant, that through our whole life we may strive to seal in our hearts the faith of our election that we may be the more stimulated to render Thee true obedience, and that thy glory may also be made known through us. And those others also whom Thou hast chosen together with us, may we labor to bring with us that we may with one accord celebrate Thee as the author of our salvation and so ascribe to Thee the glory of Thy goodness and having cast away and renounced all confidence in our own virtue, we may be led to Christ as the only fountain of Thy election, in whom also is set before us the certainty of our salvation through Thy Gospel until we shall at length be gathered with him into that eternal glory which He has procured for us by His own blood. Amen.

Predestination (II)

I. History of the Doctrine

II. Location in Institutes

III. Function

IV. Description

A. Definitions (3, 21, 5-7): absolute, particular, double.

B. Cause and ground

1. Election

- a. Not good works*
- b. Not foreseen good works*
- c. God's good pleasure*

2. Reprobation

- a. Not sinful works*
- b. Not foreseen sinful works*
- c. God's good pleasure (ultimate cause)*
- d. Man's sin (proximate cause)*

C. Means

1. Election: "the call...justification" (3, 21, 7)

2. Reprobation: "shutting off of the reprobate from knowledge of his name or from the sanctification of his Spirit" (3, 21, 7)

D. Goal

1. Election

- a. Glory of God (ultimate goal)*
- b. Our sanctification (proximate goal)*

2. Reprobation: glory of God (justice)

V. Objections to Predestination

A. Makes God a tyrant - "O depth" (3, 23, 5)

B. Takes guilt and responsibility away from man - "Man falls according as God's providence ordains, but he falls by his own fault" (3, 23, 8)

C. Teaches that God shows partiality toward persons - "The fact that God therefore chooses one man but rejects another arises not out of regard to the man but solely from his mercy" (3, 23, 10)

D. Destroys all zeal for an upright life -- "Paul teaches that we have been chosen to this end: that we may lead a holy and blameless life" (3, 23, 12)

- E. Makes all admonitions meaningless -- "Let preaching then take its course that it may lead men to faith" (3, 23, 13)

VI. Uses

- A. Misuse: curiosity ("a labyrinth" - 3, 21, 1)
- B. Proper uses
 1. Exalts God and humbles man
 2. Encourages confidence
 - a. "Christ...is the mirror" (3, 24, 5)
 - b. "If Pighius asks how I know I am elect, I answer that Christ is more than a thousand testimonies to me" (*On the Eternal Predestination of God*, p. 130)
 3. Creates worship and reverence

VII. Critique (*Not part of lecture due to time restraints*)

- A. Calvin's use of logic (3, 23, 1)
- B. Calvin's use of Scripture
- C. Election and reprobation: equal ultimacy?

For Further Study

Calvin, John. *Concerning the Eternal Predestination of God*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.

Murray, John. *Calvin on Scripture and Divine Sovereignty*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960.

Klooster, Fred. *Calvin's Doctrine of Predestination*. Grand Rapids: Calvin Theological Seminary, 1961.