

Three Important Doctrines Related to Grace

November 16, 2008

Election (Predestination)

- III.1. **God from all eternity, did**, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely, and **unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass** (Eph. 1:11; Rom. 9:15-18; 11:33; Heb. 6:17;); yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin (Jam. 1:13, 17; 1 Jn. 1:5), nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established (Acts 2:23; 4:27-28; Mt. 17:12; John 19:11; Pr. 16:33)
- III.2. Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions (Acts 15:18; 1 Sam. 23:11-12; Mt. 11:21-23); **yet has He not decreed anything because He foresaw it as future**, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions (Rom. 9:11-18)
- III.3. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, **some men and angels** (1 Tim. 5:21; Mt. 25:41) **are predestinated unto everlasting life; and others foreordained to everlasting death** (Rom. 9:22-23; Eph. 1:5; Pr. 16:4)
- III.4. These angels and men, thus predestinated, and foreordained, are **particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite**, that it cannot be either increased or diminished (2 Tim. 2:19; John 13:18)
- III.5. **Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life**, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, has chosen, in Christ, unto everlasting glory (Eph. 1:4, 9-11; Rom. 8:30; 2 Tim. 1:9; 1 Th. 5:9), **out of His mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature**, as conditions, or causes moving Him thereunto (Rom. 9:11-16; Eph. 1:4); and all to the praise of His glorious grace (Eph. 1:6, 12)
- III.6. As God has appointed the elect unto glory, so has He, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto (1 Pe. 1:2; Eph. 1:4-5; 2:10; 2 Th. 2:13); wherefore, **they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ** (1 Th. 5:9; Titus 2:14), are **effectually called unto faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified** (Rom. 8:30; Eph. 1:5; 2 Th. 2:13), **and kept by His power, through faith, unto salvation** (1 Pe. 1:5); neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only (John 17:9; 6:64-65; 10:26; 8:47; Rom. 8:28; 1 Jn. 2:19)
- III.7. **The rest of mankind God was pleased**, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extends or withholds mercy, as He pleases, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, **to pass by; and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin**, to the praise of His glorious justice (Mt. 11:25-26; Rom. 9:17-22; 2 Tim. 2:19-20; Jude 4; 1 Pe. 2:8)
- III.8. **The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care** (Rom. 9:20; 11:33; Dt. 29:29), that men, attending the will of God revealed in His Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election (2 Pe. 1:10); so shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God (Eph. 1:6; Rom. 11:33); and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the Gospel (Rom. 8:33; 11:5-6, 20; 2 Pe. 1:10; Luke 10:20)

Original Sin

- VI. 1. Our first parents, being seduced by the subtilty and temptations of Satan, sinned, in eating the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:13; 2 Cor. 11:3); this their sin, God was pleased, according to His wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to His own glory (Rom. 11:32)
- VI. 2. **By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion, with God** (Gen. 3:6-8; Eccl. 7:29; Rom. 3:23), and so became dead in sin (Gen. 2:17; Eph. 2:1), and wholly defiled in all the parts and faculties of soul and body (Titus 1:15; Gen. 6:5; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:10-17)
- VI. 3. **They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed** (Gen. 1:27-28; 2:10-17; Acts 17:26; Rom. 5:12-19; 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 45-49); and the same death in sin, and corrupted nature, conveyed **to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation** (Ps. 51:5; Gen. 5:3; Job 14:14; 15:14)
- VI. 4. **From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good** (Rom. 5:6; 8:7; 7:18; Col. 1:21), and wholly inclined to all evil (Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Rom. 3:10-12), do proceed all actual transgressions (Jam. 1:14-15; Eph. 2:2-3; Mt. 15:19)
- VI. 5. This corruption of nature, during this life, does remain in those that are regenerated (1 Jn. 1:8, 10; Rom. 7:14-23; Jam. 3:2; Eccl. 7:20); and although it be, through Christ, pardoned, and mortified; yet both itself, and all the motions thereof, are truly and properly sin (Rom. 7:5-8, 25; Gal. 5:17)
- VI. 6. **Every sin, both original and actual**, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto (1 Jn. 3:4), **does in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner** (Rom. 2:15; 3:9, 19), whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God (Eph. 2:3), and curse of the law (Gal. 3:10), and so made subject to death (Rom. 6:23), with all miseries spiritual (Eph. 4:18), temporal (Rom. 8:20; Lam. 3:39), and eternal (Mt. 25:41; 2 Th. 1:9)

Free Will

- IX.1 God has endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that is neither forced, nor, by any absolute necessity of nature, determined good, or evil (Mt. 17:12; James 1:14; Dt. 30:19)
- **Able to Sin:** IX.2. **Man, in his state of innocency**, had freedom, and power to will and to do that which was good and well pleasing to God (Eccl. 7:29; Gen. 1:26); but yet, mutably, so that he might fall from it (Gen. 2:16; 3:6)
- **Not Able to Not Sin:** IX.3. **Man, by his fall into a state of sin**, has wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation (Rom. 5:6; 8:7; John 15:5): so as, a natural man, being altogether averse from that good (Rom. 3:10-12), and dead in sin (Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13), is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto (John 6:44, 65; Eph. 2:2-4; 1 Cor. 2:14; Titus 3:3-5)
- **Able to Not Sin:** IX.4. **When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace**, He frees him from his natural bondage under sin (Col. 1:13; John 8:34); and, by His grace alone, enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good (Phil. 2:13; Rom. 6:18, 22); yet so, as that by reason of his remaining corruption, he does not perfectly, or only, will that which is good, but does also will that which is evil (Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:15-23)
- **Not Able to Sin:** IX.5. The will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to do good alone **in the state of glory only** (Eph. 4:13; Heb. 12:23; 1 Jn. 3:2; Jude 24)