

Inquirer's Class Week 5 - Providence and Predestination

I. Providence

A. Providence Defined - what our terms mean

1. "God's sovereign control and direction of events in the world" ~ James Anderson
2. "God's works of providence are, his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures, and all their actions." ~ WSC Q & A 11

B. Providence Demonstrated - what the Bible says

1. General Statements - Job 42:2; Psalm 139:16; Proverbs 16:4; 19:21; Isaiah 46:8-11; Ephesians 1:11
2. Forces of Nature - Psalm 147:15-18; Jonah 1:4; Mark 4:37-41
3. "Random" Events - Proverbs 16:33; Acts 1:23-26
4. Nations and Rulers - Job 12:23; Proverbs 21:1
5. Physical Suffering - Luke 4:40; Exodus 4:11; 2 Kings 15:5
6. Human Thoughts - Mark 13:11; John 14:26; 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12
7. Human Decisions - Proverbs 16:9; Ezra 1:1
8. Good Human Actions - 1 Corinthians 15:10; Philippians 2:13
9. Evil Human Actions - Genesis 45:7-8, 50:20; Exodus 4:21; Deuteronomy 2:30; Joshua 11:19-20; Acts 2:23; 4:27-28

C. Providence Defended - potential objections

1. This undermines human freedom and responsibility and makes us robots
 - a) Incompatibilism - freedom and responsibility are incompatible with God's providence
 - b) Compatibilism - freedom and responsibility are compatible with God's providence
2. This doctrine means God's will for us is to break his law and sin (Deuteronomy 29:29)
 - a) God's revealed or prescriptive will - Ezekiel 33:11; Matthew 7:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 1 John 2:17
 - b) God's secret or decretive will - 1 Samuel 2:25; Job 42:2; James 4:15

II. Predestination / Unconditional Election

A. Predestination / Unconditional Election Defined - what our terms mean

1. "God's decision to save someone does not ultimately depend on anything in that person." ~ James Anderson
2. From all eternity God decided to save some members of the human race and to let the rest of the human race perish." ~ R. C. Sproul
3. "That eternal act of God whereby He, in His sovereign good pleasure, and on account of no foreseen merit in them, chooses a certain number of men to be the recipients of special grace and of eternal salvation." ~ Louis Berkhof

B. Predestination / Unconditional Election Demonstrated - what the Bible says

1. Deuteronomy 7:7-8
2. John 6:37, 44, 64-65
3. John 10:24-26
4. John 15:16
5. Acts 13:48
6. Romans 8:29-30
7. Romans 9:10-16
8. Ephesians 1:3-6
9. 2 Thessalonians 2:13
10. Revelation 13:8, 17:8

C. Predestination / Unconditional Election Defended - potential objections

1. God respects our free will
2. If God chooses whom He will save, there is no need for evangelism
3. It is unfair and unjust for God to condemn people to hell before they are born
4. John 3:16 teaches that salvation is for anyone
5. Unconditional election undermines assurance of salvation - am I really saved?

D. Predestination's / Unconditional Election's Implications

1. God is the one who gets the glory for our salvation
2. Because He chooses us, we can have total assurance of salvation
3. Predestination and unconditional election remind us of the need for humility and fight against pride
4. Predestination and unconditional election give us confidence in our evangelism