

“The Doctrines of Grace: Foreknowledge”

Foreknowledge, Predestination, and Election: What Do These Words Mean and Where are They Found in the Bible?

Unconditional Election – Is God’s predetermined action, whereby even before creation, He elected certain individuals who would believe and be saved. God’s election is unconditional, in that it is not based upon that individual’s future faith or faithfulness, but upon God’s gracious will.

Review:

“Total Inability” – Is fallen man’s inability to repent and come to a saving knowledge of Christ on his own because of sin’s _____ of him. (Rom. 3:10-18; Eph. 2:1-3)

People are born into God’s family by _____ Will! (cf. John 1:13)

I. What Do These Words Mean?

Romans 8:29-30 records the past, present, and future aspects of _____.

Why is it important that all the verbs (dealing with salvation) in Romans 8:29-30 are active verbs? (i.e. Who is performing all the action?)

A) Foreknowledge

A WRONG and INCORRECT Definition of “Foreknowledge” – God looked down the corridor of time and saw who would choose Him, and that being the case, He chose them, thus making them His elect.

Reason #1: The Word Foreknowledge Cannot Hold Such a Definition

Does the word “know”, as it’s used in Scripture, ever imply something *other than* simply “having knowledge of”? If so, where and how is it used?

Explain the connection between God’s omniscience (all knowing) and His omnipotence (all powerful):

God does not merely know what is going to happen. He knows what is going to happen – which means at the same time – He controls what is going to happen!

A Correct Definition of “Foreknowledge” – Is God’s knowledge the future because of His relationship to what is going to happen - because He Ordained it to happen.

State the proof of this truth by giving examples from the references provided:

- 1) Genesis 18:17-18 - _____
- 2) Deut. 7:6-8 - _____
- 3) Isaiah 46:8-11 - _____
- 4) Jeremiah 1:5 - _____
- 5) Amos 3:2 - _____
- 6) Acts 2:22-23 - _____

2 Things We Need to Understand about God: (cf. Romans 9:9-23)

- 1) He controls all and chooses according to His good pleasure
- 2) The goal of God is not to make everyone happy

Reason #2: If You Define Foreknowledge Simply as “God Looking into the Future” – Then that Definition Contradicts Other Truths about God’s Salvation Revealed in Scripture

If God simply looked into the future to see who would choose Him, then God did NOT predestine anyone . . . which the Bible clearly says He did! (Rom. 8:29-30; Rom. 9:11)

➤ Explain:

If you define “foreknowledge” as God looking into the future, saw who would believe, then elected them; then in truth - man elected himself! (NOTE: That’s not correct)

Reason #3: If You Define Foreknowledge Simply as “God Looking into the Future” – You Promote a Type of Works-Based-Gospel

Did God choose Abraham (Abram) because of his future faithfulness? _____

- How about Israel (the nation)? _____ (Deut. 7:7ff)
- How about Jacob over Esau? _____ (Rom. 9:11-13)
- Did God choose His elect based upon a future good work that they would do? _____

If one defines foreknowledge as God looking into the future to see who would choose Him, and then in response God choose that person. Isn't God choosing man because of His future faithfulness? And if so, isn't that a form of works salvation?!?!

Reason #4: Foreknowledge is Not Mentioned in Other Passages where Predestination, Election, and God's Choice are Discussed

Point Being: Some want to interpret predestination, election, and choice through the lens of their narrow definition of foreknowledge. The problem is that the writers of Scripture sometimes discuss predestination, election, and choice without including the term foreknowledge.

- Example: Eph. 1:3-14

Foreknowledge Truths:

- 1) God Chose to establish a loving relationship with the elect before the world was created and before the persons elected had done anything good or bad and without regard to their future merits, deeds, or faith.**
- 2) Foreknowledge is God's knowledge of what will happen because of His control over it.**
- 3) Foreknowledge is God's knowledge the future because of His relationship to what is going to happen - because He Ordained it to happen.**
- 4) Foreknowledge = Foreordination**
- 5) Foreknowledge = Fore-Relationship**

II. Where Are They Found in the Bible?

III. What Do They Say about Salvation?