

## The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination - Lesson #4

### I. God has a plan

*It is unthinkable that a God of infinite wisdom and power would create a world without a definite plan for that world. And because God is thus infinite His plan must extend to every detail of the world's existence. If we could see the world in all its relations, past, present, and future, we would see that it is following a predetermined course with exact precision.*

*Before the architect begins his edifice, he makes his drawings and forms his plans, even to the minutest details of construction. In the architect's brain the building stands complete in all its parts before a stone is laid. So with the merchant, the lawyer, the farmer, and all rational and intelligent men. Their activity is along the line of previously formed purposes, the fulfillment, so far as their finite capacities will allow, of preconceived plans. - E.W. Smith*

*We cannot conceive of God bringing into existence a universe without a plan which would extend to all that would be done in that universe. As the Scriptures teach that God's providential control extends to all events, even the most minute, they thereby teach that His plan is equally comprehensive. It is one of His perfections that He has the best possible plan, and that He conducts the course of history to its appointed end. And to admit that He has a plan which He carries out is to admit Predestination.*

*In recognizing that the eternal God has an eternal plan in which is predetermined every event that comes to pass, the Calvinist simply recognizes that God is God, and frees Him from all human limitations. The Scriptures represent God as a person, like other persons in that His acts are purposeful, but unlike other persons in that He is all-wise in His planning and all-powerful in His performing. They see the universe as the product of His creative power, and as the theater in which are displayed His glorious perfections, and which must in all its form and all its history, down to the least detail, correspond with His purpose in making it.*

*...since [God] knew perfectly every event of every kind which would be involved in this particular world-order, He very obviously predetermined every event which would happen when He chose this plan. His choice of the plan, or His making certain that the creation should be on this order, we call His foreordination or His predestination.*

### II. Even the sinful acts of man are included in God's plan

*Even the sinful acts of men are included in this plan. They are foreseen, permitted, and have their exact place. They are controlled and overruled for the divine glory.*

Example: The crucifixion of Christ

- A. The worst crime/injustice in human history
- B. Had it's exact and necessary place in God's sovereign plan  
*Acts 2:23* Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death...  
*Acts 4:27-28* For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.
- C. The crucifixion was not "Plan B"  
*This particular manner of redemption is not an expedient to which God was driven after being defeated and disappointed by the fall of man.*

- D. Christ's sacrifice for sin was foreknown before the foundation of the world and believers were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

**1 Peter 1:20** He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you

**Eph 1:4** ...just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world...

**2 Tim 1:8-9** ...share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,

*And if the crucifixion of Christ, or His offering up Himself as a sacrifice for sin, was in the eternal plan, then plainly the fall of Adam and all other sins which made that sacrifice necessary were in the plan, no matter how undesirable a part of that plan they may have been.*

*History in all its details, even the most minute, is but the unfolding of the eternal purposes of God. His decrees are not successively formed as the emergency arises, but are all parts of one all-comprehending plan, and we should never think of Him suddenly evolving a plan or doing something which He had not thought of before.*

### III. Objections to God's decrees being eternal - Is God immutable?

- A. Are these "problem" verses?

**Gen 6:6** And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

**Jonah 3:10** Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

B. No, they are not! Rather they use anthropomorphic language to convey meaning  
*...when the Scriptures speak of God repenting, for instance, no one with proper ideas of God understands it to mean that He sees He has pursued a wrong course and changes His mind. It simply means that His action as seen from the human view-point appears to be like that of a man who repents.*

**WSC 4. Q.** What is God? **A.** God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

**Psalms 33:11** The counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations.

**Mal 3:6** For I *am* the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.

**Heb 1:12** Like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.

**James 1:17** Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

*...what can give the Christian more satisfaction and joy than to know that the whole course of the world is ordered with reference to the establishment of the Kingdom of heaven and the manifestation of the Divine glory; and that he is one of the objects upon which infinite love and mercy is to be lavished?*