

A.W. Pink: The Attributes of God.
Chapter 4: The Foreknowledge of God
Woodland Park Study Group (8/30/13)

Read WCF III: "...some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life; and others foreordained to everlasting death."

What does the WCF tell us that foreknowledge is *not*?

What does Pink explain regarding certain uses of the verb "to know" in the OT?

What does Pink explain regarding the usage of *foreknowledge* in the NT?
(Used in reference not to *events*, but to what?)

How is the *knowledge* of God (Chapter 3) different from the *foreknowledge* of God?

How does the *foreknowledge* of God relate to the *decrees* of God (Chapter 2)?

What is the relationship between *foreknowledge* and *election*?

If we try to put *foreknowledge* before *election*, what then is the ground of election?

What is the relationship between *foreknowledge* and *predestination*?

ETCF (Sproul): "The non-Reformed view...is that God...chooses for eternal life those whom He knows will choose Him.... The Reformed view differs in that it sees the ultimate decision for salvation resting with God and not with us."

How does the command to obey the gospel—and man's decision to freely do so—fit in with the doctrine of *election*?

ETCF (Sproul): "The elect do choose Christ, but only because they were first chosen by God.... Unregenerate people have no *desire* to choose Christ."

With the foregoing in mind, what can we say about salvation?

What are some practical implications of God's foreknowledge—

- In regard to unbelieving friends and family?
- In regard to our security?
- In regard to worship?

Preparation for Prayer:

- Reread WCF III:8
- Prayer Requests

Westminster Confession of Faith
Chapter III
Of God's Eternal Decree

I. God from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.

II. Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions; *yet has He not decreed anything because He foresaw it as future*, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions.

III. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, *some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life; and others foreordained to everlasting death.*

IV. 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.*

V. 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, 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; and all to the praise of His glorious grace.

VI. 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. Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power, through faith, unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.

VII. 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 praised of His glorious justice.

VIII. The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, 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. *So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God; and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the Gospel.*