

Soteriology 101

Week 2 – Election and Reprobation



Soteriology: Describes why we need saving, what we are saved from, Who saves us, how we are saved, and the purpose we've been saved for.

Salvation is purposed by the Father, accomplished by the Son, and applied by the Holy Spirit.

Westminster Shorter Catechism, question 7: What are the decrees of God?

Answer: The decrees of God are, His eternal purpose, according to the counsel of His will, whereby, for His own glory, He hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass.

Terms to describe God's general decree:

1. Eternal **purpose** (Ephesians 3:10-11)
2. Definite **plan** (Acts 2:23)
3. **Counsel** (Isaiah 46:10)
4. Counsel of His **will** (Ephesians 1:11)
5. **Purpose** of His will (Ephesians 1:5)
6. Good **pleasure** (Philippians 2:13)
7. His **will** (Romans 9:19)

Characteristics of God's decree:

1. **Eternal** (Psalm 139:16, 1 Corinthians 2:7)
2. **Unconditional** (Daniel 4:35)
3. **Efficacious** (Psalm 33:11, Isaiah 14:27)
4. **Exhaustive** (Romans 8:28, Ephesians 1:11, Proverbs 16:33, Romans 11:36)

"If we have one maverick molecule running loose out there, we have no assurance whatsoever that this single molecule may not be the grain of sand in the machinery of God's eternal plan. It may be the thing that runs amuck and makes it impossible, ultimately, for Christ to return to this planet. It may be the thing that destroys any hope for the consummation of the kingdom of God, leaving all those promises of God unfulfilled. There are no maverick molecules in a universe where God is sovereign." – R.C. Sproul



Predestination: God's decision to:

- elect some to **salvation** (election)
- **pass over** others and punish them for their sins (reprobation)



Election: Before the foundation of the world, God sovereignly **chose** certain individuals for salvation, not based on their **merits**, but according to His **grace** and divine **will**. (Ephesians 1:4-5)

"The decree of election is the free and sovereign choice of God, made in eternity past, to set His love on certain individuals, and, on the basis of nothing in themselves but solely because of the good pleasure of His will, to choose them to be saved from sin and damnation and to inherit the blessings of eternal life through the mediatorial work of Christ." – MacArthur and Mayhue

Types of election:

- God chooses some people to certain **offices** or **tasks**. (**vocational** election)
- God chooses certain **nations** or **groups**. (**corporate** election)
- God chooses certain people for eternal **salvation**. (**individual** election)

Characteristics of God's election:

1. **Eternal** (2 Timothy 1:9, Ephesians 1:4)
2. **Unconditional** (Galatians 2:16)

"God chooses us, not because He foresees that we would choose Him, or that we would believe, but for the very opposite reason. He chooses us just because He foresees that we would neither choose Him nor believe of ourselves at all. Election proceeds not upon foreseen faith in us, but upon foreseen unbelief." – Horatius Bonar

3. **Efficacious** (John 16:8, Titus 3:5-6)

"[The] Holy Spirit is the bond by which Christ effectually unites us to himself." – John Calvin

"God does not form His decree because He knows the future; rather, He knows the future because He has decreed the future." – MacArthur and Mayhue

4. **Exhaustive** (Romans 8:29)



Reprobation: Before the foundation of the world, God sovereignly **chose** not to elect certain individuals for salvation, **justly** leaving them in their fallen state and subject to the **consequences** of their sin, eternal **punishment** in hell. (Matthew 7:13-14, 25:46, 22:14; Romans 9:22-23, 20; 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12)

"In the case of the elect, He actively intervenes – setting His love on them, determining to appoint Christ as their Savior and to send the Spirit to sovereignly quicken them from spiritual death unto new life in Christ. In the case of the nonelect, however, He does not intervene but simply passes them by, choosing to leave them in their state of sinfulness and then to punish them for their sin. While He is the efficient cause of the blessedness of the elect, He is not the efficient cause of the wretchedness of the nonelect... The elect receive mercy, for they are not punished as their sins deserve, but the nonelect receive justice, for they are rightly condemned as their sins deserve. On neither ground can God be charged with unrighteousness, because all are guilty and because He is not obligated to show grace to any." – MacArthur and Mayhue

"In the presentation of Scripture the cause of election lies in God, and the cause of reprobation lies in the sinner. Another important difference is that the ground of election is God's grace, whereas the ground of reprobation is God's justice."

– Wayne Grudem



Take Aways

1. Build your understanding of God's salvation from His **word**.
2. Take comfort knowing God's decree is **set** and He doesn't **change**.
3. We don't know who is **elect** and who is not, so the gospel is to be proclaimed to **all**.
4. If you're in Christ, **thank Him** for His mercy and grace.

"If you ask me why I came to faith and why I'm in the kingdom and my friends aren't, I can only say to you, 'I don't know.' But this much I do know—it's not something I did to deserve it. It's not some condition that I met in my flesh. The only answer I can give is the grace of God.

You ask me, 'Why does He give that grace to me and not to somebody else?' If I begin to give an answer that suggests it was something good in me that He perceived, I would no longer be talking about grace. I would be talking about some good thing I did that was the basis for God to elect me. But I don't have anything like that to offer.

If the Bible teaches anything over and over and over again, it is that salvation is of the Lord." – R.C. Sproul