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## THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

Consideration of the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God is sometimes avoided by Baptists because it is a feature of the dark, philosophical circles of Calvinistic discussion. However, this is no reason for us to bypass such a blessing — or shirk our responsibility to determine what the Bible teaches.

Any discussion of God’s sovereignty encompasses the following:

- The foreknowledge of God
- The counsel of God
- The will of God
- The providence of God

These are some of the more difficult areas of theology — largely because we who are *finite* are attempting to comprehend the *Infinite* One. Nevertheless, as always, we must be guided by the Word of God.

### I. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

The word “sovereign” means “supreme” — to be ‘above all others’, and to be ‘independent of all others’.

It is without dispute that our God is absolutely sovereign. This is affirmed by both logic and Scripture:

#### A. God’s Sovereignty Is Logical.

“To declare God sovereign is to declare Him God”.<sup>1</sup> If God were not sovereign, He would be finite — someone else would be master.

#### B. God’s Sovereignty is Scriptural.

The Bible declares God to be supreme (*I Chronicles 29:12; Psalm 47:2*) and therefore sovereign (*Psalm 115:3; Isaiah 14:24*).

#### C. God’s Sovereignty Is Harmonious.

The Sovereignty of God does not transcend or overrule His attributes — it is in consonance with them. This fact is extremely important to keep in mind in order to avoid ‘Calvinistic-confusion’ in matters such as predestination and free will.

The king-pin of the Calvinist philosophy is the Sovereignty of God — the problem

<sup>1</sup>Pink A. W. *The Sovereignty Of God*: Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1930: pg.19

being that *their* concept of sovereignty leans towards capriciousness.

However, God ***never*** ignores His attributes just because He is sovereign and can do anything He wants to. The fact is He is *always* holy, He is *always* loving, He is *always* gracious and merciful, He is *always* longsuffering, He is *always* just, He is *always* immutable, He is *always* Truth — and, He is *always* Sovereign!

God exercises His absolute sovereignty in ways consistent with all His attributes. He is never arbitrary in what He does or decrees.

## II. **THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD**

One of the most vexing questions mooted in theological circles deals with the reconciling of God's foreknowledge and His sovereignty.

### A. **God's Foreknowledge Is Logical.**

If God did not know about some thing before it happened, He would not be God. The fact is, nothing ever occurs to God — nothing surprises Him!

### B. **God's Foreknowledge Is Scriptural.**

God is omniscient — therefore He knows "*the end from the beginning*". (*Isaiah 46:10*).

See also: *Isaiah 42:9*

This simply means that every event in time, every thought, word, and deed of man, every sparrow that falls, every soul that is *saved* — *everything* — *is* known to God, and was known to God in eternity past.

The Bible gives several specific examples of God's foreknowledge:

1. He Foreknew The Need To Send His Son To The Cross.  
*Acts 2:23*
2. He Foreknew All Who Would Receive His Son As Saviour.  
*Romans 8:29; I Peter 1:2*
3. He Foreknew The History Of His Chosen People, Israel.  
*Romans 11:2*

### C. **God's Foreknowledge Is Harmonious.**

The fact that God has known everything that has, is, and will take place in time from eternity past does not condition His sovereignty.

Calvinist philosophy, which argues that since God knew a certain event would take place in time He must of necessity have ordained it to be — or else He could not be sovereign, is erroneous. This rationale, applied to the area of salvation states that

since God knew back in eternity past who would be saved, it had to be because He ordained who would be saved. While this logic may make sense to some, the ramifications in the area of sin are startling! i.e. Since God knew back in eternity past that sin would enter into the world, it had to be because He sovereignly ordained it to be so. (God is the Author of sin!)

This matter will be further considered at a later point in this lecture.

**D. God's Foreknowledge And His Eternal Purpose.**

The Bible speaks of God's 'eternal purpose'. A study of the relevant Scriptures shows this relates to God's plan of redemption through His Son. By His foreknowledge God knew in eternity past what man would do with his free will, and so determined the great Plan of Salvation. His eternal purpose is centered in His Son — *Ephesians 3:11*— and involves the following:

1. The Provision Of Redemption By Christ.  
*I Peter 1 :18-20; Revelation 13:8*
2. The Promise Of Eternal Life Through Christ.  
*Titus 1:2*
3. The Predestination Of Those In Christ.  
*Ephesians 1:4,5; Romans 8:29; II Thessalonians 2:13,14.*

**Note:** The subject of election and foreordination will be dealt with more fully under the Doctrine of Salvation.

4. The Purchase Of The Church Of Christ.  
*Ephesians 3:3-11*
5. The Prospect Of The Consummation By Christ.  
*Isaiah 14:24-27.*

Like the sovereignty of God, His foreknowledge is always consistent with His other attributes — including His counsel.

**III. THE COUNSEL OF GOD**

The Counsel of God is an aspect of His attribute of wisdom — we may define it as the *expression* of His infinite wisdom. The Counsel of God figures into the discussion on the sovereignty of God because in Calvinist thinking it is synonymous with His sovereign decree.

**A. The Counsel Of God — Viewed Philosophically.**

Based upon Scripture references such as *Acts 2:23* and *Acts 4:28*. Calvinists see the

Counsel of God as a foreordaining decree, predetermined in eternity past by a sovereign God.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism states: *“The decrees of God are His eternal purpose, according to the counsel of His will, whereby, for His own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.*

Bancroft says: *“The counsel of God is that eternal scheme of all things adopted by the Divine mind which embraces all His original designs, including everything in the creative and redemptive program of God and involving or embracing the free actions of men.”*<sup>2</sup>

Thiessen states: *“The decrees of God are His eternal purpose or purposes, based on His most wise and holy counsel, whereby He freely and unchangeably, for His own glory, ordained either efficaciously or permissively, all that comes to pass.”*<sup>3</sup>

**B. The Counsel Of God — Viewed Scripturally.**

As always, we must let Scripture define and interpret Scripture. On this subject, the Word of God reveals some interesting facts (not speculations!):

1. The Counsel Of God **Is** The Word Of God.

The following Scriptures show that we have the counsel of God in our hands: *Psalms 33:11; 73:24; 107:11; Jeremiah 23:18; Micah 4:12; Acts 20:27.*

Note the following:

a. We Have The “Mind Of Christ” — *I Corinthians 2:16*

b. We Have ALL Of God’s Counsel — *Acts 20:27*

c. We May Not Understand It Fully — *Romans 11:33,34*  
Truly, God’s wisdom is infinite.

See also: *Isaiah 55:8,9.*

d. We Can Reject It — *Luke 7:30; Proverbs 1:24,25,30*

2. The Decrees Of God Are Stated In The Word Of God.

These are:

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<sup>2</sup>Bancroft, E. H. **Elemental Theology**: Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan 1977: pg 106.

<sup>3</sup>Theissen, H. C. **Lectures In Systematic Theology Grand Rapids**, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1974: pg 147.

- a. God's Decree To Provide Rain — *Job 28:26*
- b. God's Decree Concerning The Lord Jesus Christ — *Psalms 2:7*  
The decree to send His Son into the world to die for the sins of mankind is the only stated **predetermined** act of God. See: *Acts 2:23; 4:28; 1 Peter 1:20; Luke 22:22a*.
- c. God's Decree To Establish The Heavens — *Psalms 148:6*
- d. God's Decree To Contain The Sea — *Proverbs 8:29; Jeremiah 5:22*
- e. God's Decree To Deliver Israel — *Isaiah 10:22*
- f. God's Decree Concerning King Nebuchadnezzar — *Daniel 4:24*

There *are* **no** other decrees of God.

- 3. Other Things Are Determined By God.  
The Bible does speak of the Lord determining certain events. For example:

- a. God Has Determined Certain Prophetic Events.  
*Daniel 9:24,26,27; 11:36.*
- b. God Has Determined The Days Of A Man.  
*Job 14:5.*

Some interpret this to mean that God has decreed the length of each man's life. Obviously, God knows how long each man will live. However, since it is possible for a man to "*die before his time*" (*Ecclesiastes 7:17*), it appears this reference relates more to the "bounds" (boundary) set by God in *Psalms 90:10*.

- c. God Has Determined The Boundaries Of The Nations.  
*Acts 17:26; Deuteronomy 32:8.*

Obviously, this determination by a sovereign God is not irresistibly enforced. Man has violated these boundaries — albeit to his own sorrow!

#### IV. THE WILL OF GOD

The expressed Will of God is the same thing as the Counsel of God. God has sovereignly determined to reveal Himself to man and His will is fully expressed through His Word — *Deuteronomy 29:29*.

- A. The Will Of God Is Revealed To Man.  
How do we know this?

1. Because It Can Be Known.  
*Ephesians 5:17; Colossians 1:9; 4:12.*
2. Because It Can Be Done.  
God would not expect us to actually do His will without telling us what it is.  
The following Scriptures establish that God's will can be done:  
  
*Psalms 40:8; 143:10; Matthew 6:10; 7:21; 12:50; Mark 3:35; John 7:17; Hebrews 10:36; 1 Peter 4:2; 1 John 2:17.*
3. Because It Can Be Proved.  
*Romans 12:2.* How is the mind renewed? How is the will of God proven?  
Through the knowledge of the Scriptures!
4. Because It Is Explicitly Stated.  
See: *1 Thessalonians 4:3; 5:18; 1 Peter 2:15.*

The Word of God reveals numerous details about the will of God — both to the lost, and to the child of God.

**B. Is There A “Secret” Will Of God?**

If there is, then no man can be expected to do it.

However there is no secret will of God whereby He sovereignly determines who will be saved and who will not be saved. This would be impossible because His *revealed* will clearly is:

1. That All Should Be Saved.  
*1 Peter 3:9; Matthew 18:14; 1 Timothy 2:4.*
2. That All Who Believe On Christ WILL Be Saved.  
*John 3:18.* Compare this with *Isaiah 45:19.*

God ***never*** wills sin. See: *Jeremiah 19:5.*

**C. Is There A “Permissive” Will Of God?**

Though this term is not found in Scripture, the concept of a permissive will (at least from a human perspective) is. This term is applied to situations where the express will of God (the ‘perfect’ will of God — *Romans 12:2*) is not followed, and yet where the Lord apparently permits certain things to proceed anyway.

For example:

1. Abraham Was Permitted To Go Down To Egypt.  
See: *Genesis 12:10* etc.

God's perfect will was for Abram to remain in the Land he was specifically

called to. Nevertheless, God allowed him to step out of that will and go to Egypt (a picture of the world — *Isaiah 31:1*). In Egypt, Abram compounded his folly by having his wife lie.

2. Israel Was Permitted To Have A King.

See: *I Samuel 8:4-22*.

Clearly, God's perfect will for His chosen people was a Theocracy, (*Judges 2:16*). However, God permitted them to have a king—something they later regretted (see: *verses 11-18; I Samuel 14:52; I Kings 12:1,4,11*).

3. John Mark Was Permitted To Return Home.

See: *Acts 13:5,13*.

God's perfect will was for the Gospel to be preached to "every creature". John Mark accompanied Saul and Barnabas on a church-planting venture into Asia-minor. For some reason (homesickness, fear, etc.) he quit the team and went home. Evidently the apostle Paul believed he had stepped out of God's will and had weakened the effectiveness of their mission. The issue later became a divisive matter of contention between he and Barnabas — *Acts 15:36-40*.

This so-called permissive will of God really falls into the category of the Providence of God, because God invariably uses it to accomplish His perfect will anyway.

- \* We note that God used the adverse situation in Egypt to bring Abram back into the center of His perfect will (*Genesis 12:20; 13:1,3*).
- \* We understand through the prophetic Word that God will use the throne of David to re-establish Israel under a true Theocracy (*Isaiah 9:6,7; 43:15; Jeremiah 23:5,6*).
- \* God used the circumstances surrounding John Mark's departure to increase the spread of the Gospel. The sharp contention between Paul and Barnabas (an incident itself normally outside of God's perfect will — *Proverbs 13:10; 18:18,19*) resulted in *two* evangelistic teams instead of one taking the Gospel to the lost. As for John Mark, the Lord evidently used this personal failure in his life to produce a trustworthy servant — the writer of the Gospel of Mark and a profitable ally of Paul (*II Timothy 4:11*).

No one should use the permissive will of God as an excuse for disobedience to the revealed will of God. No matter how acceptable the permissive will of God may be, it will never be as acceptable to God as His perfect will.

From man's perspective, see: *Psalms 106:15*

From God's perspective, see: *Numbers 14:18*

**D. Is There A Purpose To God's Will?**

Some believe God's ultimate aim is the happiness or the holiness of man. Others think it is the establishment of His rule over all creation. While these aims may be encompassed in what God does, the single purpose of His will is His glory. Everything God does is designed ultimately to His glory — *I Chronicles 16:24,28,29; Psalm 115:1; Ephesians 1:6,12,14c; Philippians 2:11; I Timothy 1:17; I Peter 4:11; Jude 25*. See also: *Acts 12:23; Romans 1:21; 3:23*.

1. Creation Glorifies God.  
*Psalm 19:1*
2. Israel Glorifies God.  
*Isaiah 48:11; 49:3; 60:21*
3. Salvation Glorifies God.  
*Romans 9:23; Ephesians 1 :6,12,14c*
4. Believers Glorify God.  
*I Corinthians 6:20; 10:31; Romans 15:6*
  - a. By their works — *Matthew 5:16*
  - b. By their fruit — *John 15:8*
  - c. By their words — *Psalm 50:23; II Corinthians 4:15*
  - d. By their sufferings — *II Thessalonians 1:10,12; I Peter 4:14,16*
  - e. By their death — *John 21:19*
5. Churches Glorify God.  
*Ephesians 3:21*
6. The Millennium Will Glorify God.  
*Psalm 86:9*
7. Heaven Glorifies God.
  - a. Its occupants — *Revelation 4:9,11; 5:12,13*
  - b. Its city — *Revelation 21:11*  
*etc.*



## VII. THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

### A. The Providence Of God Defined.

“Providence” comes from the Greek root, “*pronoia*” which means “to provide.” It is the provision and care God exerts to accomplish His divine purpose. It is God’s bidding, control, direction, overruling, and permission in the affairs of His creation.

### B. The Basis Of God’s Providence.

The providence of God extends from, and is in consonance with, the attributes of God.

1. He Is Wise.  
Therefore we may expect God to act rationally.
2. He Is Good.  
Therefore He will have the interests of His creatures at heart.
3. He Is Omnipotent.  
Therefore we can be confident He has the ability to accomplish His purposes.

### C. The Scriptural Proof Of God’s Providence.

That God’s sovereignty extends over all His creation is made abundantly clear in the Bible. For example:

1. Providence In The Physical Realm.  
*Psalm 103:19; 147:16-18; 1 Samuel 7:10; Job 9:5-7; 37:10; 38:12-35; Acts 14:17.*
2. Providence In The Animal Kingdom.  
*Job 12:10; Psalm 104:21,28,29; 147:9; Matthew 6:26; 10:29.*
3. Providence In The Affairs Of The Nations.  
*Job 12:23; Psalm 22:28; 66:7; 75:6,7; Proverbs 21:1; Isaiah 10:5-7; Daniel 4:25b; Acts 17:26; Romans 13:1.*
4. Providence In The Preservation Of His Word.  
*Psalm 12:6,7; Matthew 24:35; etc.*

[See: Unit 1, Lecture 8]

5. Providence Over All Individuals.
  - a. In Birth And Life:  
*1 Samuel 16:1; Esther 4:14; Psalm 139:16; Isaiah 45:5; Jeremiah 1:5; Galatians 1:15,16.*

- b. In The Course Of Man's Life:  
*Matthew 10:30; Luke 1:52; Proverbs 16:1,33; I Samuel 2:6-8; Exodus 12:36.*
- c. In Needs:  
*Psalm 4:8; 5:12; 63:8; 121:3; Romans 8:28; Philippians 4:19; Isaiah 64:4.*
- d. In Eternal Destiny:  
*Psalm 73:24; 37:23,24; 11:6.*

6. Providence Over The Actions Of Men.

- a. In General:  
*Exodus 12:36; I Samuel 24:18; Exodus 7:27; Proverbs 19:21; 21:1; Jeremiah 10:23; Philippians 2:13.*
- b. Sometimes, God Permits Sin:  
*II Samuel 16:10; 24:1; II Thessalonians 2:11,12; II Chronicles 32:31; Psalm 81:12,13; Hosea 4:17; Acts 14:16; Romans 1:24,26,28.*

**Note:** This is only after opportunities for righteousness have been rejected.

- c. Sometimes, God Prevents Sin:  
*Genesis 20:6; Psalm 19:13; Hosea 2:6.*
- d. Always, God Limits Sin:  
*Job 1:12; Psalm 124:2,3; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Revelation 20:2,3.*

**D. The Purpose Of The Providence Of God.**

According to *Romans 8:28*, all things work together for GOOD. See also: *Psalm 84:11*.

Even with the unsaved, God's providence is for good. See *Acts 14:17*. Providential goodness to the lost has for its end their salvation. See: *Romans 2:4*.

The ultimate end of Providence is the glory of God. *Isaiah 48:11*.

**E. Theories Opposed By The Providence Of God.**

- 1. Naturalism.  
This view states that everything is governed by the laws of nature, and that man's happiness depends on his cooperating with these laws.
- 2. Fatalism.

This view states that everything is determined by fate. Fatalists may call fate “God,” (as does Islam), but such a “god” is arbitrary, non-moral, and impersonal.

3. Pantheism.

This view makes man part of “god,” thus making God sinful, weak, and of corrupt morality.

**F. Difficulties Associated With The Providence Of God.**

1. Does Providence Deny Human Freedom?

The providential workings of God do not limit God. Sometimes He allows man to do as he pleases; other times He restrains, or prevents man from doing what he desires; always God over-rules in ways to accomplish His glory.

While we will never properly comprehend the ways of God, we know from Scripture that according to His foreknowledge, God achieves His sovereign purpose by whatever of the above methods He chooses.

2. Does Providence Mean I Don't Have To Pray?

To say this would deny the many Scriptural exhortations to pray. Evidently, there are some things God does only in answer to prayer.

Again, we may not be able to fully understand the ways of God (that's because He is God!) - but we must be guided by Scripture.

For example, it would be foolish to pray for the sun to rise (God's providence takes care of that!), but we would certainly need to pray for the sun not to set. (*Joshua 10:12-14.*)

A father will provide many good things for his child, whether the child asks for them or not — but he loves to be asked, and may not give some things until such time as he is asked.

**VI. THE CALVINIST QUAGMIRE**

Calvinist philosophy impales itself on the horns of a dilemma when it elevates the Sovereignty of God above His other attributes.

The Calvinist logic goes something like this:

God is Sovereign

God is Omniscient

God knows everything from the beginning

Therefore God must have *decreed* everything from the beginning

Therefore God foreordains  
every  
thought, word, and deed  
of  
every man  
(Proverbs 16:1,9,33; 19:21; 20:24; 21:1; 29:26)

**A. The Calvinist Concept Of “Decrees”.**

Calvinist ‘logic’ refers to the decrees of God (or THE Decree, of which all decrees are but a part), teaching that God has decreed all things.

A. J. Gordon said, *“A universe without decrees would be as irrational and appalling as would be an express train driving on in the darkness without headlight or engineer, and with no certainty that the next moment it might not plunge into the abyss.”*

*“God foreknows all events as certainly future because he has decreed them and thus made them certainly future.”<sup>4</sup>*

*“The decrees of God are His eternal purpose or purposes, based on His most wise and holy counsel, whereby He freely and unchangeably, for His own glory, ordained either efficaciously or permissively, all that comes to pass.”<sup>5</sup>*

Calvinists usually speak of the decrees of God in the following way:

1. God’s Decrees Are Eternal.  
They were not formulated in time, as human history progressed, but were made in eternity.
2. God’s Decrees Are Unalterable.  
They are sovereign.
3. God’s Decrees Are Wise And Holy.  
This is because God is Wise and Holy. Because God is omniscient (all-knowing), He knows what is best. Because God is Holy, He cannot decree anything that is wrong.

<sup>4</sup>Hodge, A. A. **Outlines Of Theology.** Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1879(1972 ed.): pg 202

<sup>5</sup>Theissen, H. C. **Lectures In Systematic Theology.** Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, pg 197

4. God's Decrees Are Free.

The decrees of God did not originate out of necessity. God may have chosen to confine His activity with Himself in the Godhead. He was not influenced or bound — what God purposed, He purposed voluntarily according to His attributes.

5. God's Decrees May Be Efficacious Or Permissive.

An efficacious decree is one God determines to bring about. A permissive decree is one God determines to permit.

As noted above, the Bible lists the actual decrees of God. They are not as the Calvinist asserts.

**B. Calvinist Logic Leads To Error.**

If God decreed all things, as Calvinists assert, then He must have decreed sin! This matter has been a source of contention among Calvinists, who divide into three 'camps' over the issue of the fall (*lapis*) of man. These opinions are:

1. Supralapsarianism.

This view holds that God decreed the fall of man. The supralapsarian order in the decree is:

- a. God decreed the salvation of some and the damnation of others for the end of His own glory.
- b. God decreed, as a means to that end, to create those already elected or reprobated.
- c. God decreed the fall of man.
- d. God decreed the atonement for the elect.
- e. God decreed salvation for the elect.

This viewpoint makes God the Author of sin, and teaches that He created certain men so that He could damn them; consequently it is held by the minority of Calvinists. It is often referred to as *hyper*-Calvinism, no doubt to make mainstream Calvinism appear moderate. Nevertheless, it illustrates where philosophy and man's logic will take you.

2. Infralapsarianism.

The prefix *infra* means below. The order in the decree in this system is:

- a. God decreed to create man.
- b. God decreed the fall of man.

- c. God decreed election (salvation) and reprobation (damnation).
- d. God decreed the atonement for the elect.
- e. God decreed salvation for the elect.

This viewpoint is held by the majority of Calvinists. While it does not have God creating men in order to damn them, like all theories within the Augustinian-Calvinist theology, it teaches that some are predestined to salvation and others to damnation.

3. Sublapsarianism.

This view, otherwise known as “Four-point Calvinism”, has the decree in the following order:

- a. God decreed to create.
- b. God decreed the fall.
- c. God decreed the atonement for all men.
- d. God decreed election (salvation) and reprobation (damnation).
- e. God decreed salvation for the elect.

In this scheme, reprobation is usually divided into two acts — first, Preterition (where God sovereignly *passes by* [i.e. did not choose] the non-elect); second, Condemnation (where God later judicially punishes those He passed over for their sin).

**C. The Scriptural Teaching.**

The decrees of God actually stated in Scripture have already been listed. The Bible does not mention anything of an eternal decree which foreordains every thought word, and deed of every man in time.

More on this subject will be covered under the doctrines of Man, Sin, and Salvation. However, a few important Biblical truths are stated below.

1. God NEVER Decrees Wickedness.

See: *Isaiah 10:1; Job 34:10; 36:23; Psalm 5:4.*

The Bible does teach that God allows evil to happen (e.g. *II Samuel 17:14; Nehemiah 13:18; Isaiah 45:7; Lamentations 3:38; Ezekiel 14:22; Daniel 9:14; Amos 3:6; etc.*), but this kind of evil is judgment which is dispensed because of man’s sin — *Jeremiah 19:3-5.*

If God decreed sin, He would deny Himself, *II Timothy 2:13b.* God is not the

Author of sin — *James 1:13,14* — for that would be inconsistent with His divine, holy nature.

2. God Permitted Man To Be Tested.

God permitted (not decreed) this, knowing before-time that man would fail and that sin would enter the universe.

It was necessary for man to be tested in his innocent (neither sinful or holy) state because the relationship God desired with him was to be free.

3. God Over-rules Sin For Good.

This fact must go hand in hand with the above, otherwise the entrance of sin into the world would have bested God. While God sometimes permits sin, He also can control its manifestation.

The following examples show this to be so: *Genesis 50:20; Psalm 33:10,11; 76:10; Daniel 3:19-30*; etc.

4. God Determined To Provide For Man's Salvation.

*Acts 2:23; 4:27,28; 1 Peter 1:20.*

As noted above, the atoning death of Jesus Christ was the only stated predetermined act of God.

5. God Chose (Elected) To Save All Who Trust Christ As Saviour.

a. God Seeks To Save All Men.

God took the initiative in our salvation. See: *Genesis 3:8,9; Isaiah 59:15,16; John 15:16; Romans 2:4; Titus 2:11.*

b. God Knows All Who Will Be Saved.

This is called “divine foreknowledge,” and is predicated in the omniscience of God.

c. God Elected To Save All Who Will Trust Christ.

Election is based on the foreknowledge of God. *Romans 8:29; 1 Peter 1:1,2.* By election, we mean that sovereign act of God in grace, whereby from eternity past He chose in Christ all whom He foreknew would accept His Son.

d. God Predestines All Who Trust Christ To Salvation And Its Benefits.

*John 1:12; 6:37; Ephesians 1:5; Romans 8:29.*

6. God Declares He Will Punish All Who Reject Christ.

*Psalm 9:17; Isaiah 3:11; Revelation 20:11-15*; etc.

Men will be cast into the Lake of Fire, not because of a sovereign eternal

decree predestinating them to such, but because they have wilfully rejected their only hope of salvation in Jesus Christ. In this sense, all sinners are (by virtue of their sin) predestined to Hell — until they receive Christ, whereupon they are then predestined to Heaven!

**D. Conclusion.**

Calvinists and Bible-believers have one thing in common — none of them can fully comprehend the ways of an Infinite God. None can explain why God is as He is, does as He does, or permits as He permits.

The *difference* between the two groups is that Calvinists resort to philosophical speculations for an explanation (*Colossians 2:8*), whereas Bible-believers stand on what God has revealed in His Word.



## STUDY QUESTIONS UNIT 2, LECTURE 6

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

*Each question worth 4.1 points*

The Doctrinal Statement given by Bancroft on page 111 is Calvinistic heresy. The offending words are, "certain individuals". A more correct statement would read: ("The Scriptures teach that God has from eternity purposed to save all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ..." The student is warned to be extremely careful of this doctrine of men.

1. What is the implication of God not being sovereign?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What Is the important thing to remember about the Sovereignty of God and His other attributes?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What is meant by the "foreknowledge" of God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What is the 'focus' of the eternal purpose of God?

5. How do Calvinists view the Counsel of God?
6. What is the Counsel of God?
7. Is there any decree recorded in Scripture which states that God foreordained certain men to salvation?
8. Where do we find the will of God revealed?
9. What is the will of God concerning the salvation of men?
10. What is meant by the 'permissive will' of God?
11. Give a Biblical example of God's permissive will.

12. What is God's supreme purpose and aim?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
13. List 3 ways in which Christians can glorify God.
  - A.
  
  
  
  - B.
  
  
  
  - C.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
14. What is meant by the Providence of God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
15. Give an example where God providentially permitted sin.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
16. Give an example where God providentially prevented sin.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
17. Cite a Scripture reference which teaches the Providence of God working in the life of a believer.

18. Cite a Scripture reference which teaches the Providence of God working in the preservation of the Scriptures.
19. Why must we pray if God providentially works all things for good toward us?
20. Outline the basic logic of Calvinism.
21. What is the basic difference between supralapsarianism and infralapsarianism?
22. What is the basic feature of sublapsarianism?
23. Who did God elect to save?

24. What is the "in a nutshell" difference between Calvinists and Bible-believers?