

Predestination & Free Will (three part study)

(appropriate for High-Schoolers and older)

Michael R. Daily July 2018

Other youth bible studies by Michael Daily available at: <http://gciweb.org/2011/04/youth-bible-study-materials-michael-r-daily/>

Reference: J. Dwight Pentecost, Things Which Become Sound Doctrine, Zondervan, 1970.

(Portions taken from Rev. John S. Mahon, Grace Community International, Houston, TX, <http://www.gciweb.org>)

Tonight we start our study on the doctrine of Predestination or Election. This is a challenging topic for us because we are finite beings trying to understand the workings of God, an infinite being.

(Psalm 147:5)

Great is our Lord and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite.

Infinite: *inconceivably great or extensive; subject to no limitation; extending beyond or being greater than any preassigned finite value no matter how large*

As we work through this study it is important to remember that everything that God does is good and right, because He defines what is good and right and what is not.

Psalm 118:1

Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting.

(Mark 10:18)

And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.

Its also important that we remember that words have specific meanings. Our job is to understand what the meanings of the words God uses are and not try to redefine the meanings of the words to better suit what we would prefer the words to mean.

"That is what Reason can neither grasp nor endure, and what has offended all these men of outstanding talent who have been so received for so many centuries. Here they demand that God should act according to human justice, and do what seems right to them or else cease to be God." — **Martin Luther**

With those ground rules in place let's get started!

Predestination is the biblical doctrine that God in His sovereignty chose specific individuals to be given the gift of eternal life before He even created them, and that these decisions were predetermined & foreordained. The word translated "predestined" in the bible is from the Greek word *proorizo*.

Proorizo: *determine beforehand, ordain, decide upon ahead of time.*

Sovereign: *one who exercises supreme authority*

Predetermine: *to fix conclusively or authoritatively beforehand*

Foreordain: *to appoint in advance, to fix beforehand by the exercise of authority.*

Ordain: *to order by decree*

Decree: *an order having the force of law*

All of these words are very strong words indicating that a supreme authority is issuing a formal declaration that has the force of law, to ensure that future events are to be made to occur exactly as He wants them to occur.

"I believe that nothing happens apart from divine determination and decree. We shall never be able to escape from the doctrine of divine predestination - the doctrine that God has foreordained certain people unto eternal life." - **Charles Spurgeon**

God did this as part of His sovereign plan designed to achieve His sovereign purpose.

Isaiah 46:10

Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';

He chose those things that would be needed to accomplish His plan, including individual human beings.

The human beings He chose to receive salvation are referred to in the Bible as "the elect" - which is why the doctrine of predestination is also known as the doctrine of election.

Elect: *carefully selected, chosen for salvation through divine mercy, called out.*

God selected those individuals, by name, for salvation, without reference to anything these people would or would not do in the future. Then, He called them to become the elect.

Call: *to announce authoritatively; to command, summon, or cause to come and be present*

God determined His purpose, plan, and program for all of human history before it was put into operation.

By His supreme authority He issued an order having the force of law, that the plan would be executed to the specific course of action that He had selected.

Ephesians 1:3-11

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight ⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him ¹¹ also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will

God has predestined believers to a future where they will be blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, become holy and blameless, adopted as sons into God's family, forgiven of their sins, have His grace lavished on them, and be given an eternal inheritance.

Romans 8:28-33

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. 31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? 33 Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies;

God has also predestined believers to have all things work together for their good, become conformed to the image of His Son, be justified, be glorified, be freely given all things, and be protected from satanic accusation.

Predestination & Foreknowledge Are Not The Same Thing

A common error in the church today is to confuse predestination and foreknowledge.

Foreknowledge: *To know beforehand*

Error: God with His foreknowledge, knows those who will, during their lifetimes, choose of their own free will to place their faith in Christ for their salvation. On the basis of this foreknowledge, God elects these individuals before the foundation of the world. But this is not what the words of scripture mean.

Key Point: *Foreknowledge is not about what God knew men would do, but about what God had decided He would do with men ahead of time.*

If predestination was just God knowing ahead of time what men would do, then God did not foreordain nor decree anything. Instead, God has limited Himself by the will of man.

God is not really choosing, He is only confirming. Man is the ultimate decision maker.

But this is not what the words used in the bible mean. No, election is not based on what people will or won't do. People do not elect God, then God elects them.

Acts 2:22-23

Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know —²³ this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.

Jesus was crucified, not because God knew that men would crucify Him, but because God had decided ahead of time how He would use sinful men to crucify Jesus as part of His plan of salvation.

The reason people believe is that they belong to God.

John 10:26

But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep.

Believers were chosen for salvation, not because they would one day believe, but because God chose them and adopted them as His children (i.e. His sheep) before they were ever born in order to guarantee that they would follow Him.

"Even if it were granted that 'foreknew' means the foresight of faith, the biblical doctrine of sovereign election is not thereby eliminated or disproven. For it is certainly true that God foresees faith; He foresees all that comes to pass. The question would then simply be: whence proceeds this faith, which God foresees? And the only biblical answer is that the faith which God foresees is the faith He himself creates." – John Murray

God not only elects those who will have faith in Christ, He also is the one who supernaturally generates in them the faith to believe in Christ. God elects people for salvation and, in the course of their lives on the Earth, these people are the ones who will come to faith in Christ because God has elected them!

Key Point: *Rather than simply making salvation possible, God chooses those whom He will save, and then He saves them.*

This puts God in the correct position as the sovereign authority.

Man's Free Will

The Bible also teaches that man must make an intentional decision and take action to be saved.

Romans 10:9-13

that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 13 for "**Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.**"

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Each person has to decide to believe in Christ and receive Him as Savior and Lord.

John 6:35 & 40

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.

40 For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

So, God makes it clear that it is up to each person to make their decision to either come to Christ or live life without Him and that God will hold each person accountable for their decision at the Judgment.

Hebrews 9:27

And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment

Luke 22:21-22

But behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table. ²² For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!"

If man was not responsible for his decisions, then God could not hold him accountable at the Judgment. The Bible teaches that predestination and man's free will are both true and active at the same time.

Do we completely understand this? No. But we can get into trouble when we insist on understanding things that are beyond human comprehension. When we do that, we will end up getting it wrong or understanding it incompletely.

Instead we need to see what the full mind of God is on the issue by studying all parts of the Bible and, for things beyond human comprehension, we need to be content to accept what God has said as true, even if we can't fully understand it.

Romans 11:33-34

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! 34 For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor?

"I'm a John 3:16 Christian, I believe God so loved the world, I do believe that, and I believe that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish. But I also believe, you know, predestination from the foundation of the Earth. So to me, I'm able to hold tensions in my mind rather than having to explain them I believe them both."

– Pastor Rick Warren

END OF PART 1

BEGINNING OF PART 2

Depravity Distorts Man's Free Will

Although man has free will, his choices are severely limited by his sinful nature.

Ephesians 2:1-10

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ² in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. ³ Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and **were by nature children of wrath,** even as the rest. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, **made us alive together with Christ** (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; ⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

All men are spiritually dead and unable to respond to God. Dead men cannot choose to make themselves come alive. The raising of Lazarus from the dead is a good illustration of the problem.

John 11:43-44

When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." ⁴⁴ The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

What part did Lazarus play in this event? His job was to lay there and be dead – that was his natural state. He was not able to "come forth" until after Christ used His supernatural powers to give Lazarus life. Once brought to life, Lazarus was commanded to leave the tomb, so he did.

In a similar fashion, men, who in their natural state are spiritually dead, lack the ability to respond to God. First, God has to select them and make them alive, otherwise they can't respond to Him.

Its interesting to note that during His time on the Earth, Jesus did not raise many people from the dead. In His 30+ years of life on Earth, most of the people who died in the towns that Jesus lived in were not raised from the dead. They stayed dead and were buried. But Jesus, for His own purposes, chose Lazarus and a few other dead people and commanded them to come to life.

Did Jesus do something wrong? Wasn't this unfair to all the other dead people Jesus didn't raise from the dead? No. Dead people do not deserve to be raised from the dead, they deserve to be buried in the ground. The fact that Jesus chose a small number of them to raise from the dead was a demonstration of His grace and compassion, because none of the dead deserve to be raised back to life! More importantly, the end result of this miracle is that Jesus and God the Father received the praise and glory for this miracle, not Lazarus!

In a similar fashion, all men are spiritually dead and unable to respond to God. By their very nature, all men deserve to spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. The fact that God chose some of them and decided to make some of them come alive spiritually, so that they could receive eternal life, is not unfair to those who remain spiritually dead. God's selection of some to receive eternal life is a demonstration of His grace and compassion because no one deserves to be given eternal life! More importantly, the end result of this miracle is that Jesus and God the Father will receive glory for this miracle, not the people who became Christians!

Key Point: *Without predestination, no one would choose Christ!*

For a detailed study on the doctrine of Depravity please see, "Man's Depravity" at:
<http://gciweb.org/2011/04/youth-bible-study-materials-michael-r-daily/>

A Chess Analogy

Imagine the following. God is playing chess with a human. This chess game represents a man living his life and making decisions with his free will and God asserting His divine will in the man's life. Each player has 16 pieces to play the game with. With only 32 total game pieces, the total possible combinations of moves for the two players (i.e. the Shannon Number) is about 10^{43} . That's 1 with 43 zeros behind it or one billion trillion trillion trillion total possible moves in a single chess game.

In 2018, the world's fastest computer could perform 125 petaflops or 125×10^{15} calculations per second. It would take this computer 25 million trillion years to brute force analyze and compare every possible move combination in a single chess game (modern computers beat humans because they use a combination of brute force calculations and a database of shortcuts based on human Grand Master chess patterns).

At all times during the game the human is free to make whatever moves he wishes to make, but his ability to anticipate and evaluate all the possible combinations of future game situations generated by his moves and God's moves is extremely limited. But God is an infinite being in all dimensions. Unlike a computer, in less than a trillionth of a second God evaluates all future 10^{43} move combinations and selects the one that will fulfill His purpose and plan. The human is making decisions using their free will but at no time is God's plan in any danger of not being fulfilled. The human is hopelessly outmatched by their inability to foresee all possible future combinations of moves.

But there is not just one human. The world has billions of people. So, now imagine that God is playing billions of chess games at the same time (In 1922, José Raúl Capablanca, the World Champion, played 103 opponents simultaneously in Cleveland. He scored 102 wins and one draw). Remember, God is an infinite being. So, as a person is in the process of moving one of the game pieces in one game, God has already analyzed all possible future combinations of moves and selected the best one to achieve His purposes before the human has completed moving his game piece. In less than a trillionth of a second, God makes His move then goes to the next game with a different human. In a fraction of a second, God has made His moves in billions of games with billions of people.

But God is an infinite being. In the real world, He is not limited to moving 16 game pieces. All things in creation are His game pieces. Let's imagine that every atom in the created universe was one of His game pieces and He can move them as often as He wishes. He is not limited to one move at a time. Although each human only has 16 game pieces, God has over 10^{80} (the number of atoms in the physical universe) game pieces! Although the scale of combinations vastly exceeds anything in the created universe, God is quite comfortable working at this scale. God is not stressed. He is not working even close to His limits, because He has none!

Jeremiah 32:17

Ah Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for You,

But God also has complete foreknowledge. Before any of the humans were created by Him, He already knew all the moves that each human would make during the game and all the moves He would also make, from the start of the games through to the last move by the last player of the last game. At no time is God surprised by anything, He already knew it would happen. In addition, God was the one who designed the rules of the game and He also designed the humans who are playing the game. He designed them with their limitations and tendencies, of which He is intimately familiar. At no time was there even a remote chance that God's purpose, plan or program would not go according to His good pleasure. God's will has been predetermined and predestined to occur. Nevertheless, each human has been in total command of their decisions at every point in the game, using their free will.

If we were to quit our analogy at this point we would have a better understanding of God's sovereignty and Man's free will but there is still more to discuss. Man, in his natural state, is an enemy of God and is spiritually dead and unable to contribute positively to God's plan, purpose, and program. Even so, God's purpose would be accomplished, God would easily win all the chess games!

But then God did something you will never see in a real chess game. God decided that He would give some of the humans something they did not deserve. He decided to move around to the other side of the game table and help some of the humans with their part of the game! By His grace and mercy He selected some of the humans and supernaturally gave them the ability to respond positively to Him even though they were naturally dead spiritually and not able to respond. By His kind intention He made them an active component of His purpose, plan, and program which included great benefits for them personally.

Although such an action is surprising, it was not unfair for God to do this. We are astonished when someone decides to help their mortal enemy, but we don't find it unfair when someone chooses to not help an enemy. Just because God decided to help some of his enemies, but not all of them, it is not unfair, because God did not owe any of them anything!

We could stop here but there is still more to discuss. Because God, as the designer of humans, also builds them to fulfill His purposes. As a young engineer, I used to design engineered components for various applications. How odd it would have been if one of my components started complaining about how I designed them or questioned me as to why they were designed to be different from another component that I had also designed. As the designer, I have different purposes for the two components that they don't know about. For example, I may design a component for a commercial airplane's "black box" that has to be designed to be so robust it can operate through and survive the most severe airplane accident. Another component I may design to fail quickly and predictably in an accident, such as in a car's airbag system.

As the designer I have no interest at all in the opinions of the components about why I designed them the way I did. My purposes are so far beyond the comprehension of the components' they couldn't understand even if I tried to explain it to them. And I would have felt no interest or obligation to explain it to them if they had questioned me. When an engineer designs a new component, he may design it however he wishes in order to suit his desire and purposes. In the same way, God designed certain people to achieve His purposes. For example, the king's heart was designed by God and can, and is, directed by Him.

Proverbs 21:1

The king's heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.

So, now God decides that out of all the humans that He did not select to receive His help, he wants some of them to make specific decisions at certain points in the game. So, as the designer of the humans, He intentionally designs some of them, for example, Pharaoh, so that at a certain point in the game, their hearts become hardened and they make a decision to oppose God. Why would God do that? He does it for His good pleasure. Perhaps He wants a certain level of dramatic intensity to more effectively achieve His purposes. He would have achieved His purposes anyway, but this effect would be more perfect for His purposes.

Acts 4:27-28

For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, ²⁸ to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.

So, because God is the Creator/Designer, He designs the person such that at the exact time in the game, the human, using their free will, makes the dramatic decision, exactly as how God designed them to.

Romans 9:11-23

for though *the twins* were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to *His* choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls, ¹² it was said to her, "THE OLDER WILL SERVE THE YOUNGER." ¹³ Just as it is written, "JACOB I LOVED, BUT ESAU I HATED." ¹⁴ What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! ¹⁵ For He says to Moses, "I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION." ¹⁶ So then it *does not depend* on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. ¹⁷ For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH." ¹⁸ **So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires. ¹⁹ You will say**

to me then, “Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?”²⁰ On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, “Why did you make me like this,” will it?²¹ Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?²² What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?²³ And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory

Was it fair for the Designer to design some humans this way? Yes, just as its fair if I design one component to be robust in order to serve its purpose and another component to fail quickly in order to serve its purpose.

God's Desires & Wishes Compared to His Decrees

“Oh, but Mr. Daily, what about the verses that say that God doesn't want anyone to perish but for all to be saved?”

I Timothy 2:3-4

This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

II Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

Compared to orders and decrees, desires and wishes are relatively weak words that express emotions, not determined intent. In these verses, God is sharing with us the emotions and feelings He has concerning the eternal destiny of men (see also **Matthew 23:37**).

In the Civil War, generals sent their soldiers marching uphill toward the enemy lines and into the gunfire. Until the 20th century, guns were such that it took a significant amount of time to reload between shots. If you sent enough soldiers marching toward the enemy positions, the enemy would not have enough time to reload and shoot before eventually being overrun by your soldiers, who would then win the battle. In sending their men, marching shoulder to shoulder, to attack the enemy, the generals knew full well that all of the first group of soldiers would die, but those following them might prevail and win the battle.

(II Samuel 11:15)

He had written in the letter, saying, “Place Uriah in the front line of the fiercest battle and withdraw from him, so that he may be struck down and die.

Imagine that you are talking with the attacking general the night before the battle. You ask him what he thinks of his soldiers as people. The general tells you how proud he is of them and what great people they are. You ask him what his heart's desire is for each man tomorrow. The general thinks for a moment and says, “My heart's desire is that all of them come through the battle unscathed. My deepest wish is that none of my brave men perish in the battle”.

The next morning the soldiers are assembled for battle and the general makes it a point to talk to the men in the first 3 rows of the attack column. He shakes the first man's hand and pats him on the back and tells him how proud he is of him and what a great soldier he is. The general asks the soldier about his wife and children. The young soldier pulls out a picture (i.e. a daguerreotype) of his wife and four young children. The general asks about how the children are progressing and what new skills each has recently learned. The soldier recounts the stories with a smile. The general shakes his hand again and moves to the next soldier. After doing this with every soldier in the first 3 rows, the general removes his hat, bows his head, and leads his army in a short prayer.

Then what does the general do? He mounts his horse, draws and raises his sword, and he shouts a loud command carrying the force of law, ordering his soldiers to march toward the enemy - and die.

Did the general know that all the men in the first three rows would die? Yes. Could the general have prevented the certain death of his men? Yes. He could have chosen to not attack. If the general didn't want his men to die then why did he order the attack? Because there was something larger and more important going on that was worth more than the death of those men.

If the Union generals had been unwilling to attack, the United States of today would not exist. Our split nation would not have become the superpower it is today that has prevented totalitarian governments (Nazi, Empire of Japan, Communism) from taking control of the world. With the US missing, modern Israel would likely not exist today, slavery might not have ended, and the world would have little hope. In the first few years of the US Civil War, the Union Army was led by Gen. George B. McClellan. Gen. McClellan refused to use his army to attack the enemy. As a result, the Union was losing the war until President Abraham Lincoln finally found a general who was willing to attack (Gen. Ulysses S. Grant).

Although the orders and commands of President Lincoln directly led to the violent deaths of over 600,000 soldiers and civilians, we consider him to be one of our two greatest presidents. The other one was George Washington, the commander of American troops during the Revolutionary War. He also knowingly sent large numbers of people to their deaths. Nevertheless, we glorify Lincoln and Washington, and praise them, even today, for being the great leaders they were and for their willingness to do what was necessary to establish and preserve the United States of America.

God has a plan for human history, from Adam to the New Jerusalem. Someday, when we are in the New Jerusalem in our resurrected bodies, we will fully understand God's plan and its implementation, and we will be so moved emotionally by its perfection that we will be overcome with a desire to praise, worship, and give glory to Him for what He did.

Glory: *praise, honor, or distinction extended by common consent*

(Isaiah 43:7)

Everyone who is called by My name, And whom I have created for My glory, Whom I have formed, even whom I have made.

But today, we can't see the whole plan. And the parts we can see we struggle to relate to, because the value system of our sinful flesh and our finite knowledge distorts our ability to understand the goodness of God's plan. Another confounding factor is that all of the people struggling to understand predestination are members of the elect. Being of the elect is the only experience any of us have had. Its difficult for us to relate to or understand people who are unresponsive to God.

(Ecclesiastes 3:11)

He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.

(I Corinthians 2:7)

but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God predestined before the ages to our glory;

From what God tells us, His plan requires that a majority of humans spend eternity in the Lake of Fire.

Matthew 7:13-14

Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. ¹⁴ For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Someday we will understand and agree that this was a necessary part of the very best plan for human history. But today we believe this is true by faith in what God says is true, and in the goodness of His character.

END OF PART 2

BEGINNING OF PART 3

Why Free Will Doesn't Solve The Problem of Fairness

As stated previously, it is impossible for the limited, sinful human mind to fully understand how predestination and free will operate at the same time. As a result, people tend to drift toward either predestination or free will at the expense of the other, which causes problems.

Many people feel that if predestination is true then God is not being fair. The truth is that if God treated us fairly no one would go to heaven! But then they will make the mistake of thinking that if we downplay predestination and emphasize man's free will, then all of the problems of God's unfairness that predestination seems to raise are solved. But this isn't true.

In this section we will look at why emphasizing man's free will at the expense of predestination has the same apparent problems with "unfairness" that predestination does!

If there is no predestination and men are saved by the decisions they make of their own free will, then for God to be fair to everyone, the following things would have to be true for them to make a fully informed decision:

- 1) **God must provide the same life opportunities to hear the gospel to all individuals.**
But in reality, we know that some people are born into families that attend churches where the gospel is presented regularly and some people are born into families that don't go to church, or go to churches where something other than the gospel is preached, or into families where the parents worship satan. That isn't fair!
- 2) **When the gospel is shared, the people sharing it must all do an excellent job communicating it.**
But in reality, when some Christians share the gospel it is difficult to understand. Important doctrines are left out or they use "church speak" which most non-Christians don't understand. Others share the gospel in ways that are clear, complete, well practiced, and easily understood. That's not fair!
- 3) **God must make the playing field level for everyone in all the nations of the world.**
For example, a person born in Saudi Arabia would need to have the same spiritual benefits available to them as Americans do. But in reality, Bibles and evangelical churches are illegal in Saudi Arabia. It is a crime to share the gospel in Saudi Arabia. There are no Christian bookstores or radio or TV stations. In the United States, all these things are available and you can go into any small or large town and there will be at least one evangelical church in it that is easily identifiable. If you want to, you can go there on Sunday morning, tell everyone you have never been to church before, and ask them to tell you what God wants you to know. If you do that, someone will share the gospel with you! That is not an option for people in countries like Saudi Arabia. That's not fair!
- 4) **God must make the playing field level for everyone at all times in history.**
But in reality, God doesn't do this. While God was revealing Himself to Noah, what was God doing in China? Nothing. While God was speaking to Abraham, what was God saying to the people in Africa? God was silent. While God was working through King David and ancient Israel, what was He doing with Russia or the Native Americans? Nothing. That's not fair!
- 5) **God must bring each person to the same point of decision having a complete understanding of the consequences of the decision they are about to make.**
But in reality, God doesn't do this. God doesn't bring everyone to a full understanding of the gospel and the consequences of the decision. If He did, then everyone would choose Christ. Imagine there are two large pots in front of you. In one pot is boiling oil. In the other pot are gold, silver, and precious stones. You are brought to the pots to make a decision. You are told that if you immerse your hands into the boiling oil you will experience excruciating pain and will lose the use of your hands forever. But if you immerse your hands in the other pot and grab as much gold, silver, and precious stones as possible, you will be rich for the rest of your life. What will your decision be? What would everyone's decision be?

So, if men are not really spiritually dead and unable to respond to God, and free will really is the mechanism of salvation, not predestination, then why doesn't everyone become a Christian?

It would have to be because God has failed to bring everyone to a complete understanding of the consequences of the decision they are about to make.

God could do that if He wanted to. God knows each person intimately. He knows exactly what He would have to do for each person to fully understand the consequences of the decision. But He chooses to not do it. Its God's fault!

(Mark 4:11-12)

And He was saying to them, "To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables,¹² so that WHILE SEEING, THEY MAY SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE, AND WHILE HEARING, THEY MAY HEAR AND NOT UNDERSTAND, OTHERWISE THEY MIGHT RETURN AND BE FORGIVEN."

Imagine you have a 5 year old son. You pull him aside and say, "Now pay close attention. I'm only going to tell you this one time. It is very important that you study hard in school and get good grades for the next 13 years so that you will be able to get into college, graduate, and get a good job." But you never mention it again and you don't do anything to help him. When he is 18 and he fails to qualify for college you say, "Well, I told you when you were 5 years old to study hard or you wouldn't get into college. You decided not to study. That's your fault." But in reality the parent is mostly at fault. The parent could have done more. A 5 year old cannot fully understand the consequences of not studying, but the parent does. People are like 5 year olds when it comes to understanding eternity in the Lake of Fire. They can't really understand it. But God could have done more. He knows exactly what it would take for each person to fully understand the consequence of eternity in the Lake of Fire. But God chooses not to do those things.

Imagine you set out two bowls of items in a room full of small children who are visiting your house. One bowl is full of snacks and candies. The other bowl is full of colorful items that are actually rat poison. You tell the children they can eat from the snack and candy bowl but that they are not allowed to eat from the other bowl or they will get sick and die. Then you leave the room. Although most of the children are enjoying their snacks and candy, eventually one of the kids decides to eat the colorful rat poison and dies. Whose fault is it? "Well", you say, "I warned them of what would happen. I told them not to eat from that bowl. So, its not my (the adult's) fault." Will the police agree? No. You are the adult. You could have done more to prevent the child from dying. But you didn't do it. You are responsible for the child's death. In the same way, people are like children in their understanding of eternity in the Lake of Fire. They can't really understand it. But God could have done more to help them understand. He could have, but He didn't. So, whose fault is it that these people are going to hell? Its God's fault!

Key Point: *If you think predestination is unfair, then free will is also unfair and assigns even bigger moral failings to God. If you are having trouble accepting predestination, free will doesn't solve that.*

Predestination Helps Us Be Better Witnesses

Some people are concerned that if we believe in predestination then we will become less effective witnesses. In reality, the opposite is true. Predestination makes us better witnesses because the enormous weight of other people's eternal destinies no longer sits on our shoulders. And the reason we witness and share the gospel is because God commands us to do it.

Matthew 4:19

And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Acts 1:8

but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.

If we don't share the gospel, that is the sin of disobedience.

John 14:15 & 21, & 23-24

15 "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

21 He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. 24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.

Our level of love for God is revealed in our obedience to Him. We witness because we love God. To not witness is to not love God! This is true whether you believe in predestination or not.

Notice in the verses below how Paul relates witnessing and predestination.

II Timothy 2:10-13

For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory. 11 It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; 12 If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; 13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

Titus 1:1-3

Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness,² in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,³ but at the proper time manifested, even His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior,

We endure hardship and inconvenience in order to share the gospel so that those who have been chosen for eternal life receive it. God will see to it that it will happen one way or the other. The question is, "Do you want to get in on the action and the rewards, or not?"

Predestination Frees Us From Guilt in Witnessing

If there is no predestination, then the weight of the enormous consequences of an eternity in Hell for people falls on our shoulders. I remember as a college student and young Christian, how odd it felt walking to classes everyday with hundreds of students passing by me and thinking that I should somehow pull each of them aside and share the gospel with them. Perhaps I would be the only person in their life that would ever share the gospel with them! Even so, there was no practical way to do it.

What about the times when I could have shared the gospel but didn't? Perhaps I wasn't prepared. Perhaps I was just disobedient to God's leading. Perhaps someone was now going to spend eternity in Hell because of my disobedience.

No. Because of predestination, no one is going to Hell because of my disobedience! I may lose some eternal rewards I would otherwise have received. I may not be the person God uses to lead someone to Christ. But no one is going to Hell because I was disobedient, or didn't pray enough, or didn't do a better job sharing the gospel. That lifts a great burden off of me.

What about your family members? What if they die without Christ? You could have done more. You could have prayed more, pressured them more, something, anything. The stakes are too high not to. Now they're lost forever and, maybe, its your fault.

No. Predestination frees us from this guilt and distorted thinking.

Key Point: *No one is going to Hell because of something you did or didn't do.*

Predestination Enables Us To Enjoy Witnessing

Since God has removed the responsibility of people's salvation from our shoulders, we can relax and witness with confidence, kindness, and respect. We prepare the gospel presentation using eleven verses of scripture and we practice it so that we have confidence we are providing all the information needed as clearly as possible. Then, we ask someone if we can share with them how we became Christians. If the person says, "no" our job is done. We thank them and go back to what we were doing until the next opportunity comes along with someone else. If they say, "yes" we share the Bridge Illustration with them. At the end we ask them if they would like to pray to receive Christ. If they say "no" we thank them for letting us share with them and we look for the next opportunity to share with someone else. If they say "yes" we pray with them to receive Christ. That's it. We don't have to pressure, manipulate, or convince them to become Christians. That's not our job. Instead we can act like ambassadors and treat people with kindness and respect, the pressure is off!

For a detailed study on how to witness effectively please see, "Good Works, Witnessing, & Evangelism" at:

<http://gciweb.org/2011/04/youth-bible-study-materials-michael-r-daily/>

Predestination Enables Us To Fulfill Our Other Responsibilities

The consequences of an eternity in Hell, even for one person, are so large that everything else in life pales by comparison. If there is no predestination, then the responsibility to get people into the kingdom becomes ours.

How can you go to class when your classmates have not heard the gospel?

How can you go to work when your neighbors are still not Christians yet?

How can you spend time watching a movie when there are people all around you on their way to Hell?

If we really believed that people are on their way to Hell and there was no predestination, the responsibility to save them would be so great that it would outweigh all the other responsibilities we have in life. We would have to do nothing else but witness!

Predestination restores balance to our lives. We pray for opportunities to witness and God gives them to us. But we don't have to become eccentric or neglectful of our other responsibilities in doing so. No one is going to Hell because I didn't share the gospel with them.

Predestination Enables Us To Love Non-Christians

If there is no predestination we can end up getting angry at non-christians. We share the gospel and they reject Christ. Its frustrating. What about the bars, drug dealers, strip clubs, pornography, casinos, false teachers, false religions, criminals, etc. If there is no predestination these things are keeping people from becoming Christians - and we can get angry at them. But because of predestination none of these things are stopping anyone from becoming a Christian. We don't support them, of course. But we also don't waste time getting mad about it. There's no reason to.

We can love our non-christian children and relatives without manipulating or pressuring them to become Christians, which is tempting to want to do because we care about them so much. We can have peace in the family because of predestination.

Predestination Protects Us From Physical and Moral Danger

If there is no predestination it all falls on us. But who is going to witness in the topless bars and to the prostitutes and criminals on the street? The consequences are so high that we can convince ourselves to expose ourselves to physical and moral danger in order to share the gospel. Although some people may receive special callings from God to do so, we are not under compulsion to do so, in general. I don't share the gospel with women that I interact with regularly because it could expose me to moral danger. Predestination enables me to set boundaries like this without guilt.

Predestination Protects Us From Compromising Doctrine

The stakes are so high that, if there is no predestination, we need to do whatever is necessary to get people into the kingdom, even if that means avoiding topics like Hell or repentance or adding in promises of prosperity and blessings that are not in the bible. The bible may not be enough. Perhaps we need to add in some type of mystical or other experiences to get people to become Christians. Predestination protects us from the temptation to do these kinds of things when we are witnessing. We can relax and just share the actual gospel using the Word of God.

Conclusion

The Bible teaches that both predestination and free will are true and active at the same time. Although we cannot fully understand how they work together in this life, we will understand and fully appreciate both of these things as part of God's perfect plan for human history when we are in the New Jerusalem. The result being that we will want to give glory to God for what He has done. For now, we believe by faith, that what God has said in the bible is true trusting in the goodness of His character.

Appendix – Other Verses Related To Predestination

Exodus 8:12-15

Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried to the LORD concerning the frogs which He had inflicted upon Pharaoh. ¹³ The LORD did according to the word of Moses, and the frogs died out of the houses, the courts, and the fields. ¹⁴ So they piled them in heaps, and the land became foul. ¹⁵ But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

Exodus 4:21

The LORD said to Moses, “When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go.

Exodus 14:4-18

Thus I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will chase after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD.” And they did so. ⁵ When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his servants had a change of heart toward the people, and they said, “What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?” ⁶ So he made his chariot ready and took his people with him; ⁷ and he took six hundred select chariots, and all the *other* chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. ⁸ The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he chased after the sons of Israel as the sons of Israel were going out boldly. ⁹ Then the Egyptians chased after them *with* all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and they overtook them camping by the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon. ¹⁰ As Pharaoh drew near, the sons of Israel looked, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they became very frightened; so the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD. ¹¹ Then they said to Moses, “Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt? ¹² Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” ¹³ But Moses said to the people, “Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you while you keep silent.” ¹⁵ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶ As for you, lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, and the sons of Israel shall go through the midst of the sea on dry land. ¹⁷ As for Me, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. ¹⁸ Then the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD, when I am honored through Pharaoh, through his chariots and his horsemen.”

John 6:37, 39, 44, 65

37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

39 This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.

44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.

65 And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.”

Colossians 3:12

So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

I Thessalonians 1:4

knowing, brethren beloved by God, *His* choice of you;

I Peter 2:9

But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR *God’s* OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

II Peter 1:10

Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

Romans 11:5-8 & 25-28

In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God’s gracious choice. 6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace. 7 What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened; 8 just as it is written, “God gave them a spirit of stupor, Eyes to see not and ears to hear not, Down to this very day.”

25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; 26 and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.” 27 “This is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.” 28 From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers;

Deuteronomy 2:30-31

But Sihon king of Heshbon was not willing for us to pass through his land; for the LORD your God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, in order to deliver him into your hand, as *he is* today. ³¹ The LORD said to me, ‘See, I have begun to deliver Sihon and his land over to you. Begin to occupy, that you may possess his land.’

Joshua 11:19-20

There was not a city which made peace with the sons of Israel except the Hivites living in Gibeon; they took them all in battle. ²⁰ For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, to meet Israel in battle in order that he might utterly destroy them, that they might receive no mercy, but that he might destroy them, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Revelation 17:16-17

And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire. ¹⁷ For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled.

Proverbs 16:4

The LORD has made everything for its own purpose, Even the wicked for the day of evil.

II Thessalonians 2:11-12

For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false,¹² in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

I Peter 1:1-2

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen ² according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

Genesis 20:2 & 6

Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." So Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.

⁶ Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you have done this, and I also kept you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her.

Proverbs 19:21

Many plans are in a man's heart, But the counsel of the LORD will stand.

Proverbs 21:30

There is no wisdom and no understanding And no counsel against the LORD.

Matthew 24:22-24 & 31

Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. ²³ Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him. ²⁴ For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

³¹ And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

Mark 13:20-27

Unless the Lord had shortened those days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days. ²¹ And then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ'; or, 'Behold, He is there'; do not believe him; ²² for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect. ²³ But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance. ²⁴ "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken.²⁶ Then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷ And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven.

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: *Predestination & Free Will*

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Psalm 147:5*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Psalm 118:1, Mark 10:18*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Isaiah 46:10*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: *Predestination & Free Will*

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Ephesians 1:3-11*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Romans 8:28-33*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Acts 2:22-23*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: *Predestination & Free Will*

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *John 10:26, John 6:37, 39, 44, 65*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Romans 10:9-13, John 3:16, John 6:35&40*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Hebrews 9:27, Luke 22:21-22*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: *Predestination & Free Will*

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Romans 11:33-34*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Ephesians 2:1-10*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *John 11:43-44, Jeremiah 32:17*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: *Predestination & Free Will*

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Proverbs 21:1, Acts 4:27-28*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Romans 9:11-23*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *I Timothy 2:3-4, II Peter 3:9, Matthew 23:37*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: *Predestination & Free Will*

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Isaiah 43:7, Ecclesiastes 3:11, I Corinthians 2:7*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Matthew 7:13-14*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Mark 4:11-12*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: *Predestination & Free Will*

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Matthew 4:19, Romans 1:16, Acts 1:8*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *John 14:15, 21, 23-24*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *II Timothy 2:10-13, Titus 1:1-3*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?