

This view holds that God's first decree is the election to salvation of one class of men, and the reprobation to perdition of a second class of men, both classes viewed as creatable and fallible (*creabilis et labilis* in the mind of God (i.e. as possibilities, certain to be created and to fall, but not yet decreed to be created and to fall).

The thrust here is that if God decides to create men, He will create them in two classes the elect and the reprobate. God's second decree is actually to create these two classes of men; and His third decree is to permit both classes to fall. His fourth decree, then, is to accomplish the redemption of the elect through Christ; and His fifth decree is to justify and give eternal life to the elect through application of Christ's redemption, and to condemn and leave in their sins the nonelect.

Supralapsarianism builds on the rational principle that in planning, the mind first chooses a goal and then decides how to attain it. Accordingly, the view depicts God as first choosing an ultimate end (His glory), and then choosing the means to that end (electing some men to salvation and reprobating others [as a sovereign act] to His glory, creating these men to His glory, permitting them to fall to His [eventual] glory, accomplishing redemption through Christ for the elect [as a manifestation of His love, grace, and righteousness] and condemning the nonelect [as a manifestation of His wrath and justice] to His glory).

(2) Critique

Supralapsarianism, in making all of the means contribute toward the end of God's glory, is said to be the most logical and unified of all the views of the order of the decrees. It is also said to be the view which most adequately magnifies the sovereignty of God in His relations with His creatures. These claims must be evaluated.

To begin with, this view unifies God's purposes by making all others subordinate to the purpose of magnifying His glorious sovereignty in the eternal salvation of some, and the eternal perdition of other rational creatures. However, in doing so it elevates the glory of God's sovereignty above the glory of God's grace and justice. In fact, God's creation, His permission of sin, and the manifestations of His grace and justice, become subordinate means to the end of magnifying the end of God's glorious sovereignty.

However, if God's glory be understood as the magnificence, the brightness, the splendor, the superabundant excellence of all of God's attributes; and if God's sovereignty be understood as God's absolute right and power and freedom to manifest His glorious divine attributes and prerogatives and will in whatever way He may choose; then perhaps God's creation, His permission of sin, and the manifestations of His grace and justice do not need to be viewed as subordinate to God's sovereignty; perhaps God's creation, His permission of sin, and the manifestations of His grace and justice may be seen equally to be sovereign expressions of God's glorious attributes. Then, instead of viewing God's decrees as initiating in God's sovereignty and culminating in God's glory, we can see all of God's purpose and every aspect (decree) of it as expressive of God's sovereignty and God's glory!