

problems, the chief of which concern God's electing to salvation and reprobating to perdition not actual men certainly decreed by God, but only possibly created men and only possibly fallen men.

Does infralapsarianism stand up under the same kind of logical analysis? Can it be said to be more logical, more in accord with the laws of true thought than supralapsarianism? It would appear, from the preceding analysis, that this claim can be sustained.

However, what about the unity of God's eternal purposes? Has something been sacrificed by a logical ordering of the decrees of God? Louis Berkhof suggests some particulars in which this view appears to have problems in the direction of maintaining unity in the decrees. He says:

The infralapsarian position does not do justice to the unity of the divine decree, but represents the different members of it too much as disconnected parts. First God decrees to create the world for the glory of His name, which means among other things also that He determined that His rational creatures should live according to the divine law implanted in their hearts and should praise their Maker. Then He decreed to permit the fall, whereby sin enters the world. This seems to be a frustration of the original plan, or at least an important modification of it, since God no more decrees to glorify Himself by the voluntary obedience of all His rational creatures. Finally, there follow the decrees of election and reprobation, which mean only a partial execution of the original plan.

-- *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), p.124

Berkhof's point is well made. If God's first decree is the creation of fallible men (men able to fall), and His second decree is a foreordination of the fall, and His third decree is the election of some fallen men to eternal salvation and the passing by of other fallen men; then it would seem that God has one purpose at one time and another purpose at another time. That is, there does not seem to be one end in mind, but various ends at various points in the development of God's eternal counsel. Supralapsarianism appears to have overcome this problem of unity by seeing all the decrees as subordinated to the predestinating decree, and framed to secure its fulfillment. However, by doing this, supralapsarianism has entangled itself hopelessly in the problem of a lack of inner consistency among the decrees.

If the glory of God be identified as His final purpose, then the possibility arises that God can be seen as decreeing all of these decrees to His glory, not by decreeing creation toward one end, the fall toward another (seemingly contrary) end, and predestination toward yet another end, but by simultaneously decreeing all the parts of His purpose as a unified plan, with all aspects contributing to His glory, and all of His attributes and prerogatives and powers being expressed in the varied aspects and facets of His eternal decrees, to the manifestation of His eternal glory!

in such a scheme God's glory would be clearly manifested in the expression of power and wisdom manifested in the handiwork of His creation; God's glory would be manifested in the expression of divine