

(2) Critique of the view

This view introduces an element of strong conflict into the relationship of the redemptive decree and the elective decree in God's eternal plan. In the redemptive decree God's general, indiscriminate love for all men moved Him to send His Son as the redeemer of all men. But in the elective decree God's special, discriminate love for some men moved Him to elect those men to receive the benefits of Christ's redemption, including the benefits of sins forgiven and eternal life. Thus there are included in God's eternal purpose two conflicting subpurposes. At one point God purposes to redeem all men by Christ's redemption; at another point God purposes to redeem some men only by Christ's redemption. The difference between these two subpurposes may be shown by the following considerations. At first God, out of His great love for His creature man, established an Impossible arrangement, by providing a redemption through a redeemer which could be received by faith alone, the meanwhile disregarding the fact that no man would or could exercise saving faith, the net result of which is that no man would be saved. God, now seeing that such an arrangement would be totally ineffectual, decided instead to elect certain men to salvation, and to apply Christ's redemption to them by effectually quickening them and granting to them the gift of faith. This scheme thus posits conflicts in the mind and plan of God. First He loves men indiscriminately, then He loves men discriminately; first He is moved by general love, then He is moved by special love; first He intends to redeem all men, then He intends to redeem some men only; first He disregards man's total inability to believe, then he takes into account man's total inability to believe; first He does not seem to see that on one will be saved by a hypothetically universal redemption, then He does seem to see the problem, and takes steps to resolve it. This tends to make God look like a planner who has much enthusiasm, but very little foresight, very poor judgment, and a very spasmodic and jerky planning style. In addition to introducing an element of conflict in the mind of God between the redemptive and the elective decrees, Amyraldianism introduces a second element of conflict: God is said to purpose what He does not intend to effect. Charles Hodge puts this problem very nicely. He says:

"It cannot . . . be supposed that God intends what is never accomplished; that He purposes what He does not intend to effect; that He adopts means for an end which is never to be attained. This cannot be affirmed of any rational being who has the wisdom and power to secure the execution of his purposes. Much less can it be said of Him whose power and wisdom are infinite. If all men are not saved, God never purposed their salvation, and never devised and put into operation means designed to accomplish that end. We must assume that the result is the interpretation of the purposes of God. If He foreordains whatsoever comes to pass, then events correspond to his purpose; and it is against reason and Scripture to suppose that there is any contradiction or want of correspondence between what He intended and what actually occurs. The theory, therefore, which assumes that God purposed the salvation of all men, and sent his Son to die as a means to