

"Note carefully: -- The fact that God wills all men to be saved does not make them safe. This fact itself takes every bit of fatalism out of the Gospel. God, willing that all men should be saved, gives them no security. It certainly gives them privilege but imparts no priority of privilege among men, but rather makes them all equal in possibility of eternal life, imposing upon them full responsibility for their own safety, making them masters of their fate. God will have all men to be saved, but, remember, this does not make men safe. . . .

"Predestination, as a belief, has different definitions according to the different views -- extreme or limited -- of the different groups who hold them. Creeds have been built up round their different notions. There are two outstanding views, which may be stated as follows:

1. God predestinates some to be saved and some to be lost. This fixes the destiny of all at the time of the predestinating process, which occurred in eternity past.
2. God predestinates only some to be saved, and those who are or will be lost have not been predestinated to be so, the loss being only resultant, not intentional.

"Another definition connects predestination with conformity to Christ as its object, and does not attach it fatalistically to salvation as an objective. This aspect can be stated thus:

3. Predestination is the determination of God to make men like Christ because they believe in Him, and not to make men believe in Him because they are meant to be like Him. . . .

"When we consider the kindred truths of God's election and predestination we find they both depend upon foreknowledge. Notice --

1. 'Elect according to the foreknowledge of God' (1 Pet. 1:2).
2. 'Whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate (Rom. 8:29).

"If we will but 'think on these things' we will see the truth to be simple, sublime and satisfactory. Observe --

1. Not 'Foreknown according to the election of God.'
2. Not 'Whom He did predestinate them also He did foreknow.'

"We can thus see that God's foreknowledge is the simple, sublime and satisfactory explanation to faith of God's predestinating purpose. How this fact resolves all perplexities! How this revelation simplifies all things! Removes all queries and doubts. Casts down vain imaginations and religious vanity and intolerance.

"Foreknowledge is FIRST!

"First in priority.

"First in principle.

"Not 'Whom He did predestinate them also He did foreknow,' this would have broken our hearts; but 'Whom he did foreknow them also He did predestinate.' This enlightens our spiritual understanding and makes us realize the wisdom and the warrant of God in saving men by faith. . . .

"Predestination, then, in these mentions and associations, is not such a misgiving fatalistic word after all, for it is His determination to place us in full privilege of sonship, and finally in this circle of sonship stamp the family likeness and perpetuate the image of His Son.