

B. Development of the Doctrine

Question 7 of the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* asks, "What are the decrees of God?" and answers, "The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass."

in this statement God is spoken of as foreordaining all things. Foreordination refers to God's decrees concerning all things. God foreordains to cause some things; others He foreordains to permit.

Predestination has to do with that aspect of God's foreordination that pertains to salvation, and includes election (His predestination of those fallen men upon whom He determines to bestow His favor and grace) and reprobation (His predestination of those fallen men whom He determines to pass by and justly condemn for their sins).

Accordingly, the following may serve as an outline of these concepts:

- Foreordination (God's purpose as respects all events)
- Predestination (God's purpose as respects salvation)
 - 1. Election
 - 2. Reprobation
 - a. Preterition
 - b. Precondemnation

1. Election

a. Definition

(1) According to Louis Berkhof, Election is "that eternal act of God whereby He, in His sovereign good pleasure, and on account of no foreseen merit in them, chooses a certain number of men to be the recipients of special grace and of eternal salvation."

-- *Systematic Theology* Fourth Edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), p. 114.

(2) According to Abraham Booth, God, "having determined to create man and to leave him to the freedom of his own will, foreseeing he would certainly fall; of his free distinguishing love, chose a certain number out of the apostate race of Adam, and ordained them to a participation of grace here, and to the enjoyment of glory hereafter. in the execution of which purpose, by means every way becoming himself, he determined to glorify all his infinite excellencies. Such is that immanent act of God which is commonly called election, . . ."

-- *The Reign of Grace* (Swengel, PA: Bible Truth Depot, n.d.) p. 55.

b. Scriptures pertinent to the doctrine

(1) Romans 8:28-30

"And we are knowing that for those who are loving God, for those who are called according to (His) purpose (πρόθεσιν), all things are working together for good. For whom He foreknew (προέγνω), He also predetermined (προώρισεν) to share the likeness (συμμόρφους) of the image of His Son, in order that He