

View #3 -- Foreknowledge (of cognition) of elect fallen men as the basis of predestination.

This view sees foreknowledge in the sense of factual knowledge as coming between God's election of some fallen men to salvation and God's predetermining of them to conformity to Christ. Because God has elected some men, He knows who they are; and these He predestines to become like Christ.

This construct would comport with Rom. 8:29, but appears to have difficulty with 1 Pet. 1:1-2. Rom. 8:29 states, "whom He foreknew, He also predetermined to share the likeness of the Image of His Son." However, as we have previously noted, 1 Pet. 1:1-2 speaks of "elect ones, according to foreknowledge of God the Father." Here foreknowledge appears to be prior to election, instead of consequent upon it. This is seemingly an insuperable difficulty!

View #4 -- Foreknowledge (of personal relationship) of fallen men as the basis of election; foreknowledge (of cognition) of elect fallen men as the basis of predestination. Although at this point the weary scholar may be tempted to apply Occam's razor, yet this view should at least be given a brief perusal.

The view adopts the following order of steps: (see following page)

- (1) God determined to bestow His love upon certain fallen men.
- (2) God foreknew these men with the knowledge of personal relationship.
- (3) God elected these men to salvation.
- (4) God foreknew (factually) that these men were elect ones.
- (5) God predetermined what He would do for and to these men thus foreknown (in both senses) and elected.

This view is a proposal calculated to "fit" all the Biblical data. As such it may be guilty of "multiplying entities." However, it is really no different from View #2, with the exception that it makes explicit what was already implicit between steps (3) and (4) of View #2. And it has the additional advantages of taking into account both uses of "know" in Scripture, and of comporting with both Rom. 8:29 and 1 Pet. 1:1-2. It is to be admitted that it is the most complicated of these views (a distinct disadvantage when attempting to explain these things to the average Christian); but it certainly avoids the difficulties of View #3, and is perhaps slightly more sweeping in its explanatory power than View #2. And it certainly avoids the problem of overcoming the effects of depravity and the lack of scriptural basis for prevenient grace found in View #1. (Perhaps it was wise, after all, not to have applied Occam's razor too hurriedly!)