

those neighbors who are rich, and despise those who are poor, are guilty of respecting persons, and are transgressors of the law. The principle here seems to be that we ought not to obey the law which commands men to love their neighbors as themselves because we find something lovable in those neighbors, but because we owe obedience to God and because we love Him and desire to please Him. Whether our neighbors are lovable, worthy of our love, or able to benefit us, are factors which are extraneous to the issue of obedience.

(6) 1 Pet. 1:17 -- "And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:"
in the surrounding verses Peter urges his readers to holiness of life, both in retrospect of Christ's great redemption and in prospect of His glorious revelation. Once again, in verse 17 the context is that of judging, and God is said to judge each man, not according to external factors, but according to the moral quality and value of his own works. The thrust again seems to be that God will look, not upon a man's appearance, his race, his nationality, his cultural background, his economic or social status, his organizational standing, nor any other extraneous factors, but only at the quality of his works.

Now we must return to the objection (finally!). The doctrine of predestination is said to violate the scriptural principle that God is not a respecter of persons, because the doctrine portrays God as discriminating between elect and nonelect men, both in their selection and in their treatment.

In these fourteen scriptural instances of the concept "respect of persons", what have we discovered? in most of the cases the context is one of making judgments (either formally or informally). in these cases the person judging (whether God or man) of necessity discriminates. The issues appears to be whether the person judging, judges according to the appropriate basis or according to some extraneous factor(s). in the few cases in which the context is not that of judgment, the meaning of the term "respect of persons" is quite different from that intended in the objection.

Now we must ask, Does predestination portray God as respecting persons? Do unconditional election and preterition portray God as choosing some men and passing by others on the basis of any factor(s) extraneous to His sovereign good pleasure? in fact, do they portray God as electing or passing by on the basis of anything at all in man?

What about precondemnation? Does it portray God as a respecter of persons? Does precondemnation portray God as precondemning the nonelect on the basis of any factor(s) extraneous to their sins?

If the answers to these questions are negative, then the objection appears to fall to the ground.

2. "This doctrine destroys the love of God, and limits His mercy."

in effect, this objection states that since God loves all men, and since His mercy is everlasting, then He cannot consistently elect some to salvation and reprobate others to perdition.