

A FINAL NOTE...

There are some real dangers attached to the Doctrine of Decree, yet danger is simply the atmosphere in which every true Christian lives, and he cannot be honest unless he faces up to the imposing truths that he encounters, and learns to find a way of dealing with them. Calvin, strongly warns of the perils facing those who attempt to come to grips with this subject. He warns about two attitudes:

- That of unrestrained curiosity on the part of those who rush in where angels fear to tread, and consequently find that they "enter an inextricable labyrinth." In matters where God has been pleased to conceal himself, it is our duty that "we should not apprehend but adore" (Inst.III.21.1).

That means that we should not try to go beyond or behind what God has shown us in Scripture, to solve the ultimate mysteries that God has reserved for himself.

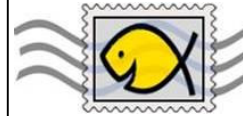
- That attitude which manifests itself in ignoring or passing over the subject altogether. It is not uncommon among evangelical Christians who think that belief in God's predestination will cut the nerve of evangelism - even though Paul who says most about it, was the foremost of evangelists!

In a very helpful passage Calvin says: "For Scripture is the school of the Holy Spirit, in which as nothing useful and necessary to be known has been omitted, so nothing is taught but what it is of importance to know. Everything, therefore, delivered in Scripture on the subject of predestination we must beware of keeping from the faithful lest we seem either maliciously to deprive them of the blessing of God, or to accuse and scoff at the Spirit, as having divulged what ought on any account to be suppressed." He goes on to urge the readers to attend carefully to all that God says, but to cease his enquiry at the point where God has not spoken (Inst.III.xxi.3).

Therefore,

The right response toward a Sovereign God is childlike trust as we go out and share the gospel with confidence that God will succeed.

TODAY'S MEMORY VERSE (ROMANS 9:16)



**THIS, THE SCRIPTURES
TEACH AND THIS WE
BELIEVE ABOUT...**

GOD'S ETERNAL DECREE



**GOD'S DECREE'S ARE OVER CREATION & ETERNITY.
THEY COME TO PASS THROUGH THE WORK OF A
TRIUNE GOD**

GOD'S ETERNAL DECREE

Romans 9:1-26

Most people object to the notion of God being the first and determinative cause of all things. However, if there is any area of the universe, any condition in creation of which God does not have absolute sovereign rule, then He cannot be, by definition, God. If there is anything outside of God's power, then it is also above God's power.

However, having acknowledged the sovereignty of God, we must also be willing to examine its implications and not water down the truth in order to pander to what sinful men and women think.

GOD'S DECREE IS OVER CREATION

There is nothing anywhere that God does not control perfectly (Ps 13:19; Eph 1:11). God's sovereignty makes His decree (will, plan) certain, and the person who fulfills it, does so freely.

1. What does Acts 2:23 say about the certainty of God's decree and the freedom of man to act according to his own nature?

2. What does Matthew 7:17-19 say about mans control over his own nature?

Therefore,

Creation is subject to the purpose of God. Yet, we maintain the freedom of both God and man to act according to their respective natures. God's actions are real and binding and so are mans.

GOD'S DECREE WAS MADE IN ETERNITY

God alone determines the salvation of His people. (Rom 9:15-16)

- He gives to some what they deserve for their actions (9:22)
- He gives others what they do not deserve (9:23)
- It is God who makes the difference, not man (9:11, 21)
- The reason is hidden in God (9:15, 18, 21)

3. In light of the promise the serpent made to Eve (Gen 3:4-5), why are the above truths so difficult to receive?

Therefore,

God's decree's cannot be altered. Eternal life is a gift, decreed by God before the world was and to be received with humility for the glory of God and the joy of undeserving people.

...GOD'S DECREE'S COME TO PASS THROUGH A TRIUNE GOD

The purpose and plan of God in redemption comes to His children through:

- God the Father in election (John 10:26-29)
- God the Son in atonement (John 10:11)
- God the Spirit in Conversion (John 15:26;) 1 Cor 2:9-12)

These three are sovereign and they are one in purpose.

Therefore,

God's eternal decree cannot fail. Hence, His decree is the basis of our assurance in salvation and confidence in evangelism. His decree includes both the goal of salvation (an assured peace with God) and the means of salvation (evangelism).