

“For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:11, NKJV)



New England Christian Bulletin

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The Bible Basis for the Second Amendment of the US Constitution

By James Moriello

Our founding documents are a reflection of the Judeo-Christian heritage of our great country. Therefore, it should be no surprise that the Bible supports various aspects of them. For those who wish to rip up our Constitution and our heritage and turn us into the United Soviet Socialist States of America, there is only disdain and irrational anger against these truths. But for God-fearing men and women, Bible-based constitutional principles are worth speaking up for.

The Second Amendment of the United States Constitution reads, “A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.” It has been argued by some that the reference to the militia was made in lieu of a standing army. But if a well regulated militia and a standing army were intended to be correlated here, we could logically conclude that it was implying that the government should not infringe upon the bearing of weapons by its own soldiers in the event of a standing army, which would be stating the obvious, and would hardly need a Constitutional Amendment. That is a ludicrous interpretation, and the courts have always rejected it.

Let us then look at the intent of the founding fathers regarding the Second Amendment. Biblically, there are two reasons for having an armed citizenry. First, there is the right to protection of life and private property, which is a deterrent to crime. This is based in the Mosaic Civil Law. “If the thief is found breaking in, and he is struck so that he dies, there shall be no guilt for his bloodshed” (Exodus 22:2). Jesus says this, “When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace” (Luke 11:21). Second, an armed citizenry is a safeguard against government tyranny. When the Israelite people were oppressed by their Philistine overlords, they had no recourse because they had nothing with which to fight. “Now there was no blacksmith to be found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, “Lest the Hebrews make swords or spears”” (1 Samuel 13:19). If you had thought that government tyranny is not possible in this country, all the overly heavy handed Covid lockdown measures that happened should have changed your mind.

Now to the practical application. If we are going to take the position that the intent of the Second Amendment is that private American citizens have the right to bear arms, then some regulation is in order. But we must always look at the least restrictive options, and we must not seek to unduly restrict the rights of responsible gun owners. When government begins to overreach, they do the very thing for which purpose the amendment was written, and stoke the fears of government tyranny. Why then should Second Amendment advocates voluntarily give an inch? I don't know the answer as to all the details of the solution to the debate. But from a biblical perspective, the right of private citizens to bear arms is affirmed as a check on two things—crime and government that abuses its legitimate authority.



Photo by Brian Chevalier

From Dancing My Way to Hell to Dancing My Way to Heaven

By Scott Lanctot

Looking at my own life prior to becoming a Christian, I was dancing my way to hell. And truth be told, I didn't care. I was living life for my self-seeking pleasures. It was all about what I wanted, what made me feel good. I had callous disregard for others. It was always about me. Little did I know, judgment was at the door, and I was on the way to being separated from God forever, and an eternity in torment. As a Christian man today, I am still a sinner always in need of the Savior. His word cut to the heart, and my belief and faith in my Lord, God, and Savior today is priceless. By continual confession of sin, Jesus Christ is Master of my life today. His precious blood cleansed me. I am a child of the Most High God today. I praise my God and give Him all the glory. The Scripture that encapsulates my life is John 3:36. “He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

By Rick Meunier

Often times I have been asked, "How do I best study the Bible?" At first, I used to say, "Whatever works best for you." I realized that probably wasn't very helpful, particularly to a new convert. So I put together my method for Bible study, that has worked well for me. You can adopt this procedure for yourself, or just take out bits and pieces, and add them to what you already do. Either way, it is important that you have some kind of system to help you study the Bible, that you can document, and store doctrine that you learn, so that you can teach others, (2 Timothy 2:2), no matter where God has called you to serve. Below, I have listed a structured plan that works best for me.

- 1) Read the scriptures each day. Read at least 1 chapter from the OT, and at least 1 chapter from the NT daily. As you grow in your Christian faith, attempt to gradually increase your daily reading. With notebook and pen close by, write down anything the Holy Spirit is teaching you.
- 2) Pray before you start. Put to memory Psalm 119:18, and meditate on it before you begin your study each day.
- 3) Read the word, and meditate on it. It is best to be alone, and have a quiet room to do this.
- 4) Read with reference to yourself. Don't ask God, "How does this affect others?" Always ask, "How does this affect, and apply to me?"
- 5) Read with faith. Read it as the Word of God, and not as statements that you may or may not believe. Rest upon the promises.
- 6) Don't just read it to read it. Read it to obey it. Be a doer, and not just a hearer of the word (James 1:22-25).
- 7) Use a good concordance, and a good reference Bible. I find the Old Scofield Study Bible, or Thompson Chain, the most helpful resources, especially to new believers. Comparing Scripture with Scripture is the best Bible study there is (1 Corinthians 2:13).
- 8) You can use commentaries if you'd like, but only as a last resort. Remember, commentaries aren't inspired writings, but merely the thoughts of men. Looking to a commentary for the answer is the lazy man's method of Bible study. Besides, if you are diligent in your study, God may share something with you that He didn't share with them.

Investigate Scripture like a detective (John 5:39, 2 Timothy 2:15). The Scandinavian word for "search" in John 5:39 is "rannsaka", meaning to search, or seek. We get our English word ransack from it. Friends, ransack the Scriptures.

Use the following questions to search the Scriptures;

- 1) Who ?
- 2) What ?
- 3) When ?
- 4) Where ?
- 5) Why ?
- 6) How ?

I hope this will be a help in your journey to explore God's Word. Always work hard in your study of the Scriptures, for the reward will be well worth the effort.

Yours in the Lord,
Rick Meunier

Publication Information, Contact Information,
and an Invitation to Firm Foundation Church

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*Firm Foundation Christian Church meets at 84
Cumberland Street, Woonsocket, RI. We meet
every Sunday for Worship Service at 10 am, and
also every Friday for Bible Study and Prayer at 7
pm. We are a Soul Winning, Great Commission,
Christian Bible Church. In addition to an active
evangelistic ministry, we host tent revivals, do
street evangelism, and offer beginner to advanced
level independent study classes, all free of charge.
All of our preaching and Bible Study is directly
from the Word of God. We invite you to stop by
and visit us.*

We believe in the inspired Word of God which is
without error in all that it affirms. Scripture (The
Bible) provides the basis for our Christian faith
(2 Timothy 3:16).

We believe in the Divine Nature of the Trinity:
God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the
Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 5:6; John 1:1-3; 1 Cor-
inthians 2:10-11).

All men and women are sinners by nature in
need of a Savior. We need God's grace and mercy
(Romans 3:10-23; Isaiah 45:22).

That Savior is Jesus Christ, who paid for all our
sins at the cross (Hebrews 10:12).

Those who trust in Him in faith (believe upon
His work and promises) attain to eternal life

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only
begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should
not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not
send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but
that the world through Him might be saved. He who
believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does
not believe is condemned already, because he has not
believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God"
(John 3:16-18).

The Romans Road to Salvation

By *NECB Staff*

The Romans road to salvation is a tried and true method of Christian evangelism. There are many variants to this approach of sharing the gospel, but here is a commonly used five step method.

1. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). This is the bad news. Romans 3:10-18 gives more detail on this point.
2. “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23). Sin brings spiritual death, but wait, there is good news!
3. “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). Jesus Christ died for us!
4. “That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9). Romans 10:13 can be added or substituted here. If any sinner will trust in Christ’s death and resurrection for salvation, then that sinner will become a sinner saved by God’s grace and mercy.
5. “Therefore, having been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1). Romans 8:1 and Romans 8:38-39 can also be applied here.

This is one example of one Bible method of leading a soul to salvation in Christ Jesus. The important thing is that you are sharing your faith and hope with other souls that are dying all around you. This is the Great Commission, which is God’s will for all of His people. Pray for at least one opportunity to share your faith today, and then when God sets it before you, seize the opportunity. Somebody’s eternal life depends upon it. Godspeed.



The Good News After the Bad

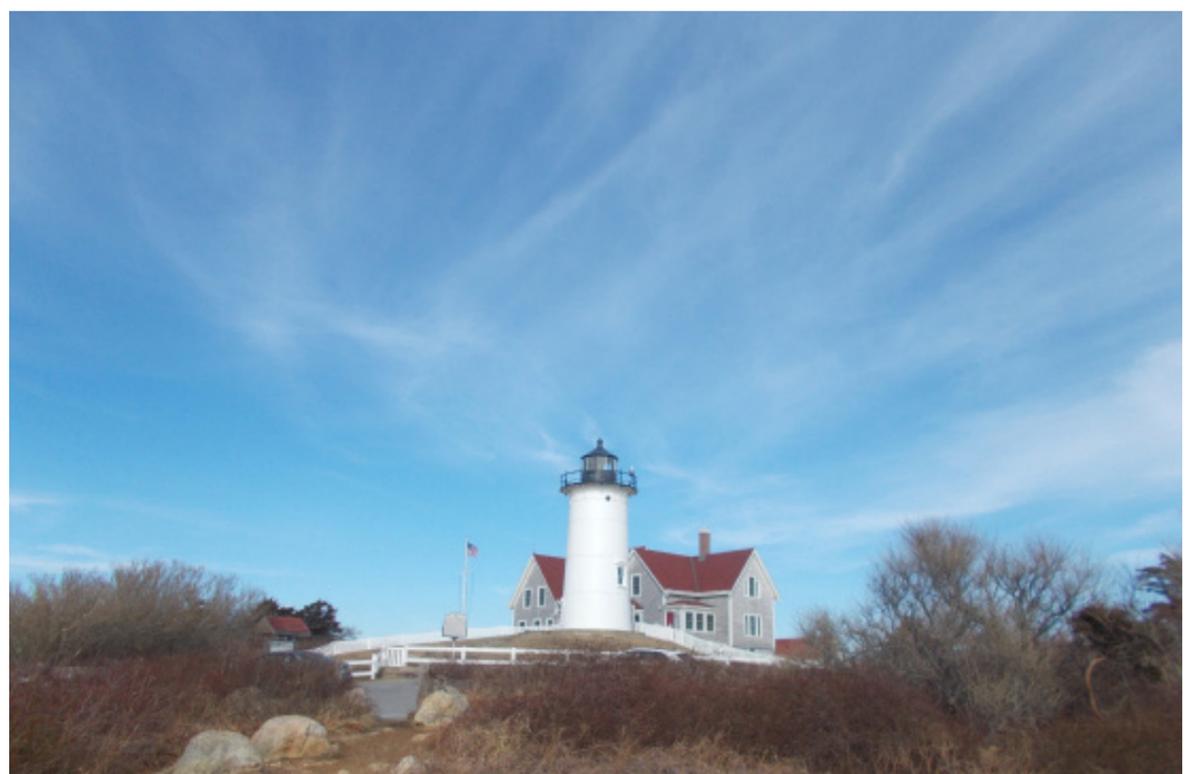
By *Judy Aurelio*

The Old Testament Book of Micah begins with a picture of Jehovah coming to judge, and it ends with Jehovah coming to bless. Chapter 1:1-2 states, “The word of the Lord that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. Hear, all you peoples! Listen, O earth, and all that is in it! Let the Lord God be a witness against you, The Lord from His holy temple.”

In Micah 7:18-20, there comes the hope and good news. “Who is a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy. He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea. You will give truth to Jacob And mercy to Abraham, Which You have sworn to our fathers From days of old.” There is the good news after the bad! Let us consider two life applications that arise from this.

One would be to sincerely and with a true repentant heart confess that in our sinful nature we need our Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior. And as an individual, along with the nation we all are a part of, there needs to be a coming back to our first love—the love of God and His righteousness (Revelation 2:4). It is necessary to have a healthy fear of God, for He is just, and will judge us all.

Another application would be to remember His forgiving love, His redeeming power, and His unfailing faithfulness. That even when we are at our worst, there is always hope in Christ Jesus. He is there for the seeking and wants none to be lost (2 Peter 3:9).



Old Time Preaching Ministry

If you are looking for doctrinally sound Bible preaching and teaching, tune in to WNRI 1380am and 99.9fm on Tuesday at 7pm, and Saturday at 4pm. Where the “Old Book” is still used.

Psalm 138:2 (KJV): “I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy loving-kindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.”



*What does the Bible say about dance?
Here are a few Scripture verses from the Bible.*

Psalm 149:3

“Let them praise His name with the dance; Let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp.”

Job 21:11

“They send forth their little ones like a flock, And their children dance.”

Ecclesiastes 3:4

“A time to weep, And a time to laugh; A time to mourn, And a time to dance”

Photo Credit: Tanya Hay

Wicked Men Inconsistent With Themselves, An Excerpt from the Sermon

By Jonathan Edwards, 1738

Matthew 11:16-19 (KJV), “But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.”

The things that wicked men choose imply an inconsistency in their own nature. The things which they would have are impossibilities and self-contradictions.

1. They would have a sufficient Savior, and not a holy one. They would not have a holy Savior, because such a Savior does not at all agree with their lusts. But yet they would have a sufficient Savior, one that is sufficient to save them from hell, and so one that is sufficient to make a proper atonement for all their sins, to make full satisfaction to the justice of God, that they may escape the penalty of that justice. But these things prove a great inconsistency, for how is it possible that a Savior, who is not perfectly holy himself, should make satisfaction for the unholiness of others? How is it possible that one who deserves to suffer the eternal wrath of God himself for his own sin, should by his sufferings appease God’s wrath for the sin of others? They would have a worthy Savior, as appears in this; when they are awakened, and in some measure sensible of their guilt, they dare not come to Christ, because they cannot see that he has worthiness enough to commend them to God. They are afraid that he is not worthy enough. And yet they dislike Christ because he is a holy Savior! And what an inconsistency is this! How can he be a worthy Savior, and not a holy one? So that their choice does in effect contain this inconsistency in it, that they would have a Savior who is infinitely worthy, without worthiness.
2. They wish for salvation from misery without salvation from sin. They do not love misery any better than others, and hope to be saved from it. And some of them are in distress for fear of misery. But yet they would have it without being parted from their sins, which is in its own nature impossible, for the creature that is sinful, must be miserable. For misery consists in separation from the fountain of happiness, and an enmity between the creature and the chief good. But sin implies in its own nature such a separation. It is a separation from that God who is the fountain of good, and is enmity against him, and therefore necessarily brings enmity from that being against the sinner, if it be continued. Sin is the seed of misery. Misery is the necessary fruit of it. It is necessary from the nature of God, who, being infinitely holy, necessarily hates it, and so necessarily arrays himself against that being who remains under the pollution and guilt of it. And it is necessary from the nature of man, and the nature of sin. Misery is the natural fruit of sin, as the bud and blossom are the natural fruit of that on which they grow, and is so spoken of, Eze. 7:9, 10, “And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense thee according to thy ways, and thine abominations that are in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I am the Lord that smiteth. Behold the day, behold it is come; the morning is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed; pride hath budded.” Natural men would be freed from hell without being saved from sin, which is an inconsistency and impossibility. For where sin remains the reigning power, it will necessarily kindle up the flames of hell, and will bring on the torments of hell. Indeed, while men remain in the body, in the midst of the carnal objects of this world to engross the mind, to please the carnal appetites, to stupefy the conscience, and lull the soul asleep, they may avoid the torments of hell for a little while. But when the body comes to be dissolved, and all worldly objects, diversions, and entertainments come to an end, and the polluted and guilty soul comes to be stripped and turned out naked, infernal horror and misery will naturally and necessarily arise in such a soul. So that there is no such thing as being saved from hell, without being saved from sin.

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Wicked Men Inconsistent With Themselves, An Excerpt from the Sermon *Continued from Page 5*

3. They desire happiness without holiness. Wicked men have as earnest a desire of happiness as others. They are restlessly saying, “Who will show us any good?” And yet they are enemies to holiness. Here also they are inconsistent with themselves, for there is no such thing as happiness without holiness. The happiness of the creature consists in holiness. It is as great an inconsistency to suppose that a creature should be happy without being holy, as that a man should enjoy all the strength, and ease, and activity, and other comforts of health, in sore sickness; or that the notes of a tune should be harmonious that are disproportionate and discordant. So that they would be happy, and yet would not be happy. The thing they choose contains as great an inconsistency as if they should choose light or brightness, consisting in the blackness of darkness.

4. In things that do most nearly concern them, they will neither choose nor refuse. The things of religion are things that concern them in the highest degree. It is no matter of indifference to them, whether they will betake themselves in good earnest to the business of religion or not, whether they will obtain heaven, or be content with a portion in this life. But yet many natural men seem to remain in suspense about these things all the days of their lives. They are always at a loss, always halting between two opinions, which Elijah reproveth, 1 Kin. 18:21, “And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.” No wonder that they had nothing to answer, for their unreasonableness and inconsistency too manifestly appeared in it. Many, who hear of these subjects from their infancy, never come to a thorough conclusion in their own minds, whether they will continue to go on in the way to hell, or whether they will do what must be done to escape it. They neither resolve that they will forsake all their sins, nor yet that they will retain them. They do not determine to hearken to the warnings and counsels given to them, nor yet do they fully reject them. They have life and death set before them, one or the other, but they never come to a determination which they will choose.

Letter to the Editor

From an Unborn Baby

My name is James. I was conceived eight weeks ago. I was created by God. There are no atheists in the womb.

I have been listening to the radio and the television from here over the past two months. I even hear some who profess the Christian faith. They speak for the mother. They speak for society. They say I am a cost. They say I am a mistake. They say I am inconvenient.

They debate how I got here, or why.

I don't know how I got here. All I know is that I'm a baby, dependent upon my mothers and others. I hear that someone has made an appointment at Planned Parenthood for early Friday morning.

Who will speak for me?

Will you?

Questions Regarding Predestination

By Steve Jackson

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified” (Romans 8:28-30).

1. What about free will?

a. Scripture indicates that humans do indeed have free will. In Joshua 24:15, a clear choice is given to the Israelites to choose to serve the LORD God or other gods of surrounding nations. 1 Kings 18:21 offers a similar choice to the Israelites to serve the LORD or Baal. And in 1 Tim 2:1-4, we are exhorted to pray for all men and world leaders with thanks and supplications and intercession. For God “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” Furthermore, in Acts 17:30 we are commanded to repent. Meaning we certainly don't have to, but there is typically a consequence that follows neglected commands. And finally, we have our own personal experience to confirm that we are free to choose our own path in life. The Bible instructs us in the means of godliness and the way unto salvation, but God has given us the ability to reject Him.

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Tune into Firm Foundation in Christ Television for some In Depth Verse by Verse Teaching through the Books of the Bible!

In Northern Rhode Island-Cox Channel 18/Verizon Channel 23, Tues-
days at 10 am and Saturdays at 10 am

Statewide in Rhode Island-Cox Channel 14/Verizon Channel 33,
Wednesdays at 3:30 pm and Sundays at 4 pm

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not
need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”
(2 Timothy 2:15)

Someone is Right. Someone is Wrong. What Does the Bible Say?

By Scott Lanctot

I recently came in contact with a Jehovah's Witness, and he talked to me about his beliefs. And my question to him was, "Have you ever read Revelation 22:18-19, where we are warned not to add or subtract from God's Word?" A Scripture passage that came to mind was Isaiah 40:8. "The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever." God's Word has stood the test of time, and as stated, it will continue to do so forever. So my next question to him was, "Do you believe Jesus Christ is God?" His answer was, "No, Jehovah is God." From my knowledge and study of the Jehovah's Witnesses, they have many different doctrinal beliefs that they claim are biblical. But they are not from the Holy Bible (therefore they have re-translated Scripture to fit their false doctrines). I then quoted John 1:1-2. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God." This is a clear Scripture passage of Jesus Christ's deity. As Christians, we are to compare Scripture with Scripture, that we might know truth from error. Whenever we have an argument or a debate, we must go to the Bible, and see what it says. So we go to another Scripture passage, and we read, "Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also" (1 John 2:22-23). This passage is clear that they are both inseparable. What does Scripture say? "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). God made it simple. For one's salvation, one must believe upon Jesus Christ. Bear fruit of a worthy repentant sinner, and have life abundantly. Reject Him and perish, banished from His presence, into torment forever. Hell is a real place. "And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" (Luke 16:23). So the conversation ended with, "Just because you believe something to be true doesn't make it true". Read your Holy Bible to find out truth, and let people know the truth.

Editors Notes:

- 1) Jesus is the Creator. Genesis 1:1 teaches that God is the Creator. Colossians 1:16 teaches that "all things were created through Him and for Him". The writer of Hebrews tells us that God the Father affirms that Jesus "in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth" (Hebrews 1:10).
- 2) Jesus is eternal. By definition only God can be eternal (Psalm 90:2; 1 Timothy 1:17). John 1:1-18 speaks of the eternal Son of God who was there in the beginning. He will be there forever too. The Bible also says that His "years will not fail" (Hebrews 1:12).
3. Jesus has the essential nature of divinity. "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9). This means that the divine nature exists in Christ, and He is therefore God.
4. Jesus Christ has the authority to forgive sins. Only God can forgive sins (Luke 5:20-24; Psalm 103:12). Therefore, Jesus must be God.
5. Jesus Christ is sinless (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22). Since only God is without sin, Jesus must be God. This also qualifies Him to redeem and justify sinners (Romans 3:23-24).
6. Jesus accepted worship (Matthew 28:9; John 20:28-29). No man or angel would ever accept worship.
7. Jesus had the power to raise Himself up from the dead. He claimed this for Himself and He did indeed prove all of His claims by His Resurrection from the dead (John 2:18-22; Romans 1:4; 1 Corinthians 15:3-7).

Questions Regarding Predestination *Continued from Page 6*

2. Is salvation one of those free choices?

a. Jesus said that “whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). However, He also said “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him” (John 6:44). Scripture teaches us that apart from the gift of faith, humans are morally incapable of turning to God on their own, and need divine intervention to open their hearts. Romans 3:11 tells us that no one understands or seeks after God. And John the Baptist aptly stated in John 3:27, “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.” Moreover, Ephesians Chapter 2 has much to say about this. In verse 1 we are told that we were dead in our trespasses, but God has made us alive with Christ when we are saved (verse 5). And in verse 8, we are explicitly told that we have been saved, not by our own doing, but by the grace of God, which is a gift. In fact, every aspect of our salvation is a gift from God from start to finish.

3. Does that mean God predestines people to hell?

a. Nowhere in the Bible is this taught or implied. It is nothing more than a temptation to doubt the justice of God, and only due to our fallen nature that we would even consider to question such things. Romans 1:18-32 teaches that all men are aware of their creator and choose to ignore Him. Though God’s wrath is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness, men rather choose to suppress the truth in their unrighteousness. While they believe themselves to be wise, they prove themselves to be fools by attempting to create their own gods and idols in their own image. For this reason God has chosen to give them over to their corrupt minds and vile passions. God does not predestine anyone to hell, but all people will naturally choose to ignore Him and live a life of unrighteousness.

4. Doesn’t this contradict itself?

a. Isaiah 55:8-9 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.” There is no true contradiction, but our fragile human minds are not capable of understanding the infinite mind of God. There are dual parallel truths in the Bible that we cannot understand without speculating. But the fact that God has not revealed the detailed workings of His mind means that we are not meant to know them (Deuteronomy 29:29). And most often, our speculations lead to blasphemy and/or insult to God’s holy and divine nature.

i. Men are free to choose and they all choose sin. Therefore all men justly deserve punishment (Josh 24:15, 1 Kings 18:21, Rom 3:11, 23).

ii. At the same time, men are not capable of living a sin-free life due to their fallen nature (Rom 5:12-14).

iii. On the other hand, God has mercifully provided a means of salvation, free to all who believe in His Son (John 3:16, Rom 3:21-22).

iv. Yet men are not capable of this belief without divine intervention (John 6:44, Rom 8:7-8).

5. Is the foreknowledge of God really just foresight? In that He sees who will or won’t choose Him and responds accordingly?

a. No, it is not. If this were true, it would imply that God waited for us to act in order to make His choices. Or rather, that His decisions are contingent upon our decisions. The Idea is contrary to the sovereignty of God Almighty. The Bible does not say or imply any such teaching. Eph 1:4-5 teaches us that we were chosen before the foundation of the world, predestined to adoption according to the good pleasure of His will. It has nothing to do with us and everything to do with Him. When we attempt to claim credit for our salvation we are actually taking away from the glory of His grace. Continuing on in Eph 1:7-9, we see that our redemption and the forgiveness of our sins are in Him and through His blood according to the riches of His grace. It is all according to “His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself.” Our salvation is entirely a gift, and when we say such things as “God looked into the future and saw who would choose Him”, this robs Him of the glory and praise of His true love, mercy, and wisdom. Our King died for us while we were sinners (Rom 5:8). While we were dead in our trespasses (Eph 2:1), unable to respond to His light, He opened our hearts. We did not choose God. We could not choose Him. He chose us, and we only love Him because He first loved us (John 15:16, 1 John 4:19).

6. So what does it mean that we are predestined? How much of our life is predetermined (for the purpose of salvation)?

a. Predestination is the same as predetermined; A decision made in advance, the outcome determined ahead of time. In Romans 8:28-29 we are told that God foreknew us and predestined us to be conformed to the image of His Son. Well in advance of our poor sinful choices, God made a decision to love us and arranged our lives in such a way as to bring us to His mercy and grace. When did He choose us? Once again, Eph 1:4 tells us that this decision was made before the foundation of the world. Why did He choose us? In order to truly understand why we were chosen, we must comprehend that it was not primarily for our sake. Our predestination does have a purpose, but this purpose is not primarily for our benefit. From our perspective, there is jubilant rejoicing to be considered children of God, and rightfully so. However, the primary purpose of our salvation is found in Rom 8:29 as mentioned above, “to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” The highlight being the latter half of this statement. We were chosen, not because of anything we did, and certainly not because of anything we deserve, but exclusively for the purpose of His Son, that He might be glorified to His Father’s goodwill and pleasure. God the Father desires that His Son, Jesus Christ be exalted. And for this reason Christ has been given all authority in heaven and on earth. And that we may all know the depths of His love and the riches of His glory, Christ humbled Himself by taking the form of man and giving Himself as a slave to the purpose and plan of God, obedient even unto death. His selfless actions have redeemed mankind and paved a way into His kingdom for those who love Him and whom He will call brethren. And thus, His name shall forever be exalted and stand above every name to the glory of His Father (Mat 28:18, Phi 2:5-9). We were chosen that Christ would have a kingdom full of those who adore Him and worship Him. Who understand what He did and where they would be without Him. Not only granted the saving grace to avoid the pits of hell, but adopted into His family, to be called His brethren and share in His inheritance. All thanks to Jesus, the firstborn, the preeminent Son who shall inherit the throne of His Father; Our King, our Lord, our Savior.

7. How much of our life was predetermined for this purpose?

a. Does it truly matter? Are we not exceedingly grateful beyond the need of this answer? Suffice it to say, and with faith understand, that Scripture does not teach that our choices are robotically decided by God. We are given the choice to follow Christ or reject Him. And He has promised that all who come to Him will by no means be cast out.

So, this question is one of paradox that we will not know until we enter heaven. Yet we have this promise as well, “that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” Therefore brethren, let us remember that our salvation was for the glory of Christ and it was for this purpose that we have been called. And as such, let us determine this if nothing else, to be worthy of our calling (John 6:37, Rom 8:28). May the peace and joy of God our Father, who has called you according to His purpose be with you always. Amen.

Editor’s note: Good men may disagree on this doctrine, but may the reader honestly test the doctrine against the Scriptures presented. And that this doctrine by no means gives us liberty not to seek to win souls, since the command to do so still remains.