



Message One: Predestination
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Today, we begin a series of doctrinal sermons. The topic of today's message is one of the thorniest issues any preacher can preach on, but since I have been commanded by God to teach His Word, I cannot ignore these and other verses:

Ephesians 1:4, 5, 11, He chose us in him before the foundation of the world...In love, he predestined us...In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will. (NIV)

John 15:16, You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. (NIV)

Romans 8:29, For those he foreknew, he also predestined. (NIV)

WHO IS GOD?

God is **God**.

Isaiah 55:8-9, "My thoughts are completely different from yours," says the Lord. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways and my thoughts higher than yours.

Romans 11:33, *Oh, what a wonderful God we have! How great are his riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand his decisions and his methods!*

God is **sovereign**.

Psalm 115:3, *Our God is in the heavens and he does as he wishes.*

He rules with absolute authority and his purpose prevails.

Without sovereignty God would not be God.

God is **good**.

Psalm 119:68, *You are good and do only good.*

God is just, merciful, gracious, loving and kind.

The sovereign purpose and acts of God are not fickle, whimsical acts, but the acts of an all-wise, all-knowing and all-good God.

WHO ARE WE?

We are beings who, outside of Christ, are in a **mess**.

We have an inherited moral defect.

Romans 5:12-18, *When Adam sinned, sin entered the entire human race...death spread to everyone...Adam's sin led to condemnation...death rules over us...*

We are born spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1-3), under condemnation (Romans 5:16-18), spiritually blind (2 Corinthians 4:4), with our wills enslaved (John 8:34), our

righteousness is as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6), and running away from God (Isaiah 53:6).

I have a **right** to be saved.

HOW DOES SALVATION COME TO US?

Salvation is God's gracious **intervention** into our mess.

If you are a believer, how did you come to be saved?

God initiated your salvation by **calling** you.

John 6:44, No one comes to me unless the Father draws him.

He captured your heart, opened your eyes, enlightened your mind, and revealed Jesus to you.

God called you because he had chosen you before you chose him—this is the essence of predestination (Ephesians 1:4-5).

He predestines those he **foreknew** (Romans 8:29).

He predestines according to his **purpose** (Romans 8:28).

He predestines in **love** (Ephesians 1:9).

THEN WHY SHARE THE GOSPEL...WHY PRAY?

God told us to (Matthew 28:18-19, Acts 1:8).

The passion of the Early Christians compels us (Acts 8:4; 1 Corinthians 9:16; Romans 10:8-14).

God not only ordains the ends. He also ordains the means to the end (1 Corinthians 3:5-9).

Nowhere in Scripture are we asked to choose between these two truths – divine sovereignty and human responsibility. The fact that we cannot fully understand how these work together does not deny that they do.