

Divine Principle
Bible Study
201

Predestination

- The concept of predestination is an important teaching, especially within Christianity.
- In this presentation, we will take a look at the meaning of predestination and its implications in life and human history from the Divine Principle perspective.

What is the meaning of Predestination?

Predestination is the doctrine that all actions and events are predetermined by God, including who will be saved and who will be subject to eternal damnation.

- Let us first start with a basic definition of Predestination.
- (Read slide)
- The theory of Predestination, as it is understood and widely accepted today in much of Christianity, is attributed to the writings of the reformer John Calvin in the 16th century.
- Does the Bible support this understanding of predestination?

Biblical View of Predestination



Affirms
predestination

- Prosperity and decline
- Happiness and misery
- Salvation and damnation
- Rise and fall of nations

- Some Bible verses seem to affirm that everything about our lives – our past, our present, our future, and even whether or not we will be saved – is predetermined.
- Some Christians believe that our individual prosperity or decline, happiness or misery, salvation or damnation, and even the rise and fall of nations is predestined by God.
- Most Christians accept the idea that God has a plan for His children, wants to have a relationship with them, and therefore has a hand in human life and events.
- The concept that God is 100% in control, and that the destiny of every human being is completely out of our hands, is sometimes referred to as Absolute Predestination.

Bible Verses that seem to Support the Theory of Absolute Predestination

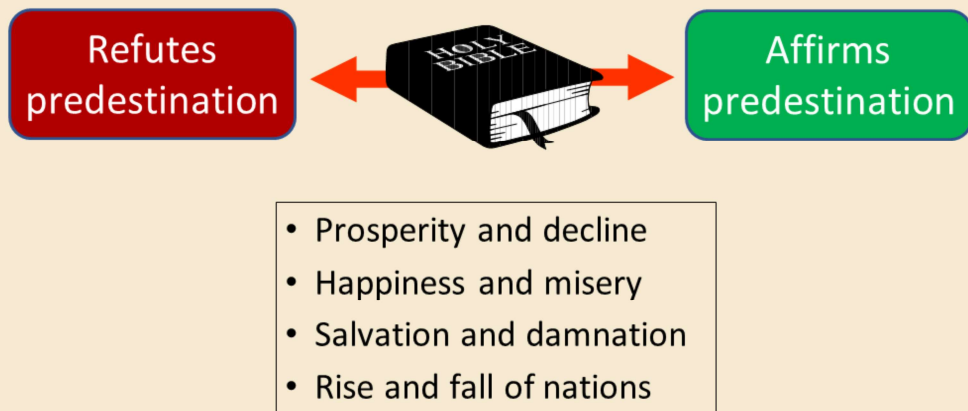
For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy. Rom 9:15-16

Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use? Rom 9:21

Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger." Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." Rom 9:11-13

- Especially in the Book of Romans, Paul's letter to the Romans in the New Testament, Paul emphasized the greatness of God's grace – that we cannot earn our salvation. We can only be saved through the unconditional forgiveness and love of God and Christ.
- (Read quotes)
- Other Bible verses and stories can also be interpreted to mean that the destiny of human beings is predetermined, happening regardless of our decisions and actions.

Biblical View of Predestination



- However, other verses in the Bible contract the view of Absolute Predestination.
- These verses indicate that the decisions we make and the actions we take, based on our own free will and responsibility, are essential in determining the outcome.
- Let's take a look at some of those verses.

Bible Verses that seem to Contradict the Theory of Absolute Predestination

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened." Matt 7:7-8

Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them ... And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well ...
James 5:14-15

"... you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die." Gen 2:17

The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth ... And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth Gen 6:5-6

- In each of these verses, we see clearly that the decisions human beings make and actions they take in respect to God's Word make a difference.
- In Matt chapter 7, Jesus tells the people to ask, seek and knock – and if they do, God can work in their lives. (Read verse)
- In the book of James, we are told that our prayers will result in the healing of sick people. (Read verse)
- In Genesis chapter 2, God gives His commandment to Adam and Eve. (Read verse) It is their portion of responsibility to obey it. If they fail to keep the commandment, God's Will for them to accomplish the 3 Blessings will not be fulfilled.
- Genesis chapter 6 gives us a window into the heart of God after the Fall, and the pain He experienced as a result – even to the point of regretting that He created man. (Read verse) God felt this way because He had trusted that His children would be obedient to His commandment and fully come into a perfect love relationship with Him. If God had predestined man to fall, why would He say He was sorry He created Him?

Certainly God was disappointed and heartbroken at their disobedience.

Importance of having the Correct Understanding of Predestination

- Our understanding of predestination can influence our daily actions.
- If everything is predetermined, what difference do our decisions and actions make?
- The Divine Principle clarifies the meaning of predestination from God's point of view.

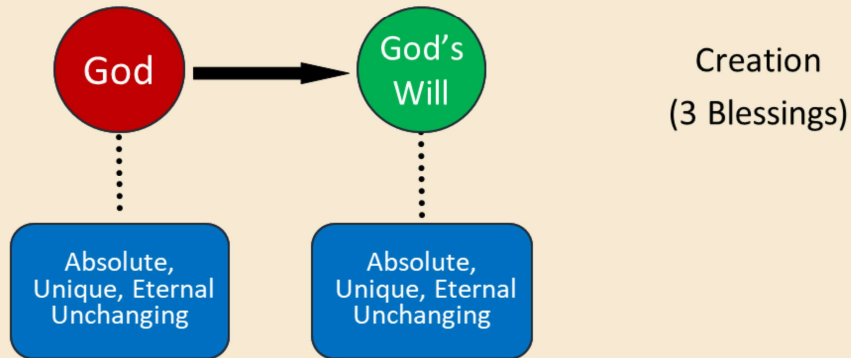
- Why is it important to have a correct understanding of Predestination?
- How we view Predestination in the context of our lives can make a big impact in how we live.
- (Read slide)

The Predestination of God's Will



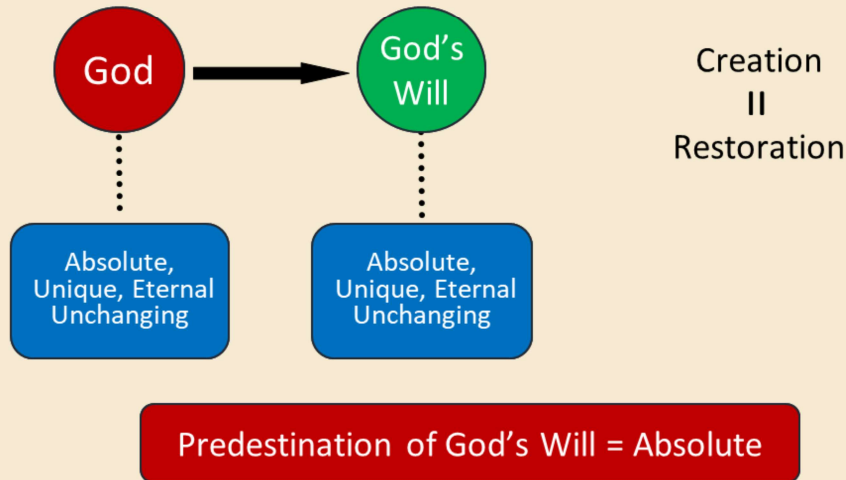
- People say that God's Will is predestined. But what does that really mean?
- Did God predestine the Fall of Man and everything good and evil that has happened in human history?
- God is an Absolute, Unique, Eternal and Unchanging Being.

The Predestination of God's Will



- Since God Himself is an Absolute, Unique, Eternal and Unchanging Being, His Will is also Absolute, Unique, Eternal and Unchanging.
- God expressed His primary Will in the beginning of the book of Genesis – the accomplishment of the 3 Blessings, the Kingdom of God on Earth and in Heaven.
- Jesus also expressed that Will in teaching us the Lord's prayer – "Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven."
- Regardless of what human beings do in their individual lives, God's ultimate Will does not change.

The Predestination of God's Will



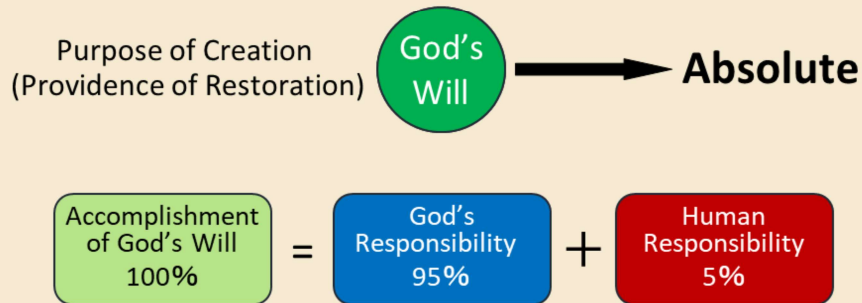
- As a result of the Fall, God had to initiate the Providence of Restoration, as we studied in the Principles of Restoration.
- The purpose of the Providence of Restoration is ultimately the same as the original Purpose of Creation – the accomplishment of the 3 Blessings.
- From this perspective, we can see that the accomplishment of God's Will is absolutely predestined – whether that would have been accomplished at the time of Adam and Eve, or when that will be accomplished through the completion of the providence of restoration.

The Predestination of God's Will



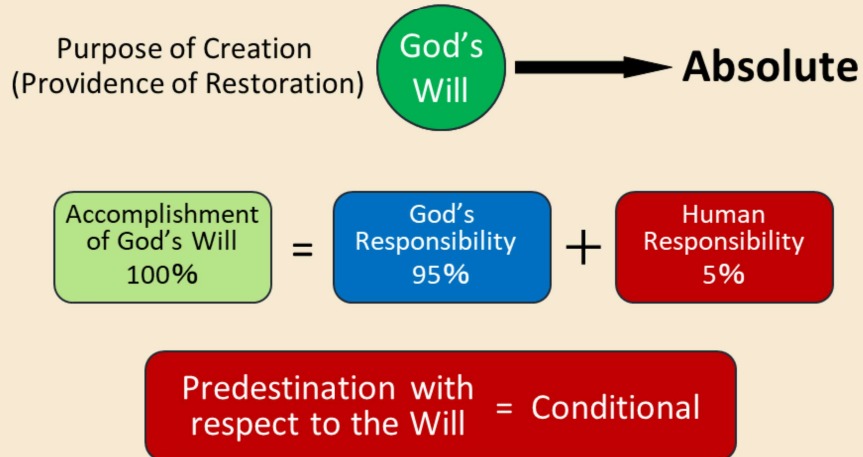
- Since God is absolute, there is no question that His Will, which is the fulfilment of the Purpose of Creation, will be accomplished.
- That Will did not change after the Fall of Man. What changed was the path that human beings would have to take in order to fulfill their purpose, the 3 Blessings.

The Predestination of God's Will



- God is 100% determined to accomplish His Will. He will not rest until it is fully accomplished.
- As we learned from the Principle of Creation and the Principles of Restoration, God's Will is fulfilled when God does His responsibility and human beings fulfill their responsibility.
- God created man with free will and responsibility in order that He can have a relationship of true love with His children. Without free will and responsibility, true love cannot exist.
- This principle is true on the individual, family, societal, national and worldwide levels.
- God, being an absolute God of Love and Truth, always fulfills His portion of responsibility.
- However, without human beings fulfilling their portion of responsibility, God's Will cannot be accomplished.

The Predestination of God's Will



- So, then, what can we conclude in terms of correctly understanding the theory of Predestination?
- While the final accomplishment of God's Will is absolutely predestined, the accomplishment of any particular step along the path of restoration for fallen human beings is conditional, based on whether or not human beings fulfill their responsibility.
- In light of the Principle, let us examine several Bible passages related to Predestination ... (next slide)

God's Promise to Those who Responds to His Word

The Lord is ... not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. 2 Peter 3:9

(Peter says) "... In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him." Acts 10: 34-35

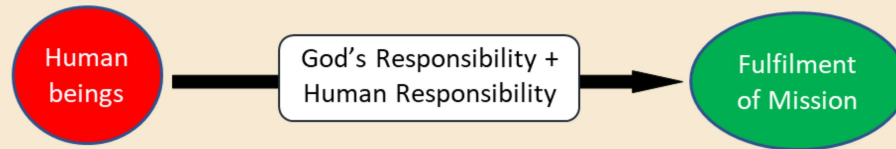
And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15

... God ... desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 1 Tim 2:3-4

- With Absolute Predestination there would be no reason to try to teach anyone the gospel of Christ if God has already decided who is going to be saved and who is going to be lost.
- The Bible makes it clear that God wants all to receive His Word, to believe and be saved.
- It is the responsibility of those who have heard God's Word to be obedient to it.
- And it is God's hope and desire that those who have received His Word will share it with others, that they may receive salvation and

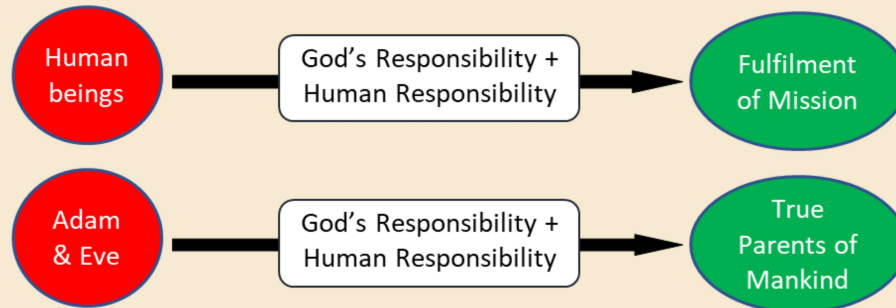
come into the realm of His Love for eternity.

Predestination of Human Beings



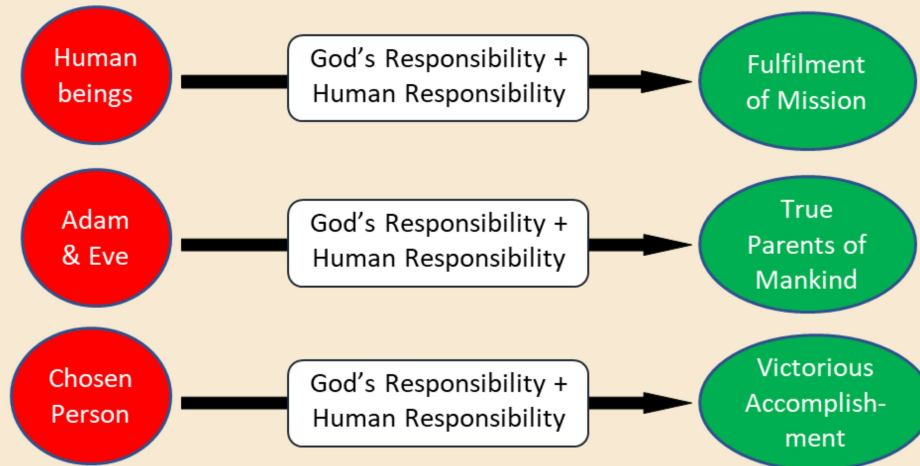
- Throughout human history, God has chosen various individuals, families, tribes or nations to fulfill a providential mission.
- That means He has prepared them for that purpose, and that they have the potential to accomplish that mission.
- God always does His portion of responsibility in preparing the people and circumstances that will allow the success of the mission.
- It is then up to the human beings involved to fulfill their 5% portion of responsibility.

Predestination of Human Beings



- In the case of Adam and Eve, their destiny was to become the True Parents of Mankind.
- God prepared them and their environment – everything that was required for them to help create and live in the Kingdom of God on Earth.
- However, in order for this purpose to be fulfilled, Adam and Eve had to obey the commandment given by God and avoid the temptation from Lucifer.
- If they had done that, they would have surely stood in the position of the True Parents and Original Good Ancestors of mankind.

Predestination of Human Beings



- In the course of Restoration, God chose certain people for a mission – such as Cain and Abel; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; Moses and Joshua; Kings Saul, David and Solomon; Jesus and the nation of Israel.
- In each situation, they had a portion of responsibility to fulfill.
- If they accomplished that responsibility, their mission was successful, and God's providence could advance. If they failed to accomplish their responsibility, God's Will was not accomplished and had to be postponed.
- Predestination with respect to human beings is always **CONDITIONAL**, based on whether or not the 5% human portion of responsibility is accomplished.

Criteria for the Selection of Central Figures

- The nation in which they live (such as the chosen nation)
- The ancestral foundation they stand on
- Their personal character
- Conditions they established in their own lives
- The time and place required by Heaven for the mission

- God chooses specific individuals, or central figures, to fulfill particular missions. The criteria for selection include:
 - The nation in which they live (such as the chosen nation) – e.g. Israel, or Christian nations
 - The ancestral foundation they stand on (Old Testament emphasizes lineage, including the lineage of Christ)
 - Their personal character (humble heart, dedication to God)
 - Conditions they established in their own lives (prayer, fasting)
 - The time and place required by Heaven for the mission. (Critical junctures in human history, e.g. David or Moses)

Chosen People are Required to Fulfill their 5%

- *God told Samuel the prophet, "I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments." (1 Sam 15:11)*
- *Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it. (Jonah 3:10)*
- *And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles. (Acts 1:26)*

- Even though God chooses a person or people, they must still fulfill their own 5% portion of responsibility based on their free will.
- There are many examples in the Bible where God chose an individual or nation, and they did not act as God desired.
- 1 Samuel 15:11 (read) – God had chosen Saul to be king and hoped that Saul could be obedient. Saul failed, and God regretted His choice.
- Jonah 3:10 – God had told Jonah the prophet to tell the people of Nineveh that God would destroy them due to their sin and disobedience. When The people repented, God decided not to punish them. Jonah even got upset with God, saying that God's mercy made Jonah look like a fool.
- Acts 1:26 – Judas Iscariot was chosen to serve the Messiah as one of the 12 disciples. Instead, he gave into temptation and betrayed Christ. He was then replaced by Matthias.

Bible Prophecies Reveal Multiple Paths

- Although God's Will is always that man will obey His Word, God knows man's imperfection and his potential for failure.
- Obedience to God's Word brings God's desired outcome and the quickest path to restoration, while disobedience leads to a different, prolonged path.
- The Bible often reveals more than one scenario. The actual outcome depends on human beings' response to God's Word.
- Prior to Christ's birth in Israel 2,000 years ago, God revealed the possible outcomes through various prophecies. (Isaiah 9, 11, 60; Luke 1:31-33; Isaiah 53)

- (Read slide ...) As already discussed in the chapter on the Purpose of the Messiah, there were 2 kinds of prophecies concerning Jesus' fate.
- Luke 1:30-33 Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."
- This passage from Luke prophecies a glorious destiny for Mary's child – that he would be welcomed as the King of Israel and spread God's kingdom throughout the earth.
- From the Old Testament, Isaiah 9 gives a similar prophecy: "For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever."
- However, the same prophet, Isaiah, had a completely different vision of the coming of the Messiah in Isaiah 53: "Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We

have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ... And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.”

- Ultimately whether or not Jesus would be welcomed as the King of Israel and lead the people to establish God’s kingdom on earth depended on whether or not the people of Israel would fulfill their own portion of responsibility.

Clarification of Romans 8:29-30

- 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 8:29-30

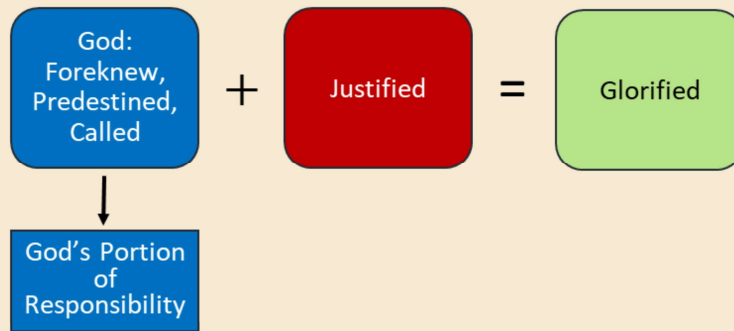
- Let us take a closer look at these Bible verses which have often been referenced as an affirmation of the theory of Absolute Predestination.
- Romans 8:29-30 is often used to support the theory of absolute predestination.
- (Read quote on slide)

Clarification of Romans 8:29-30



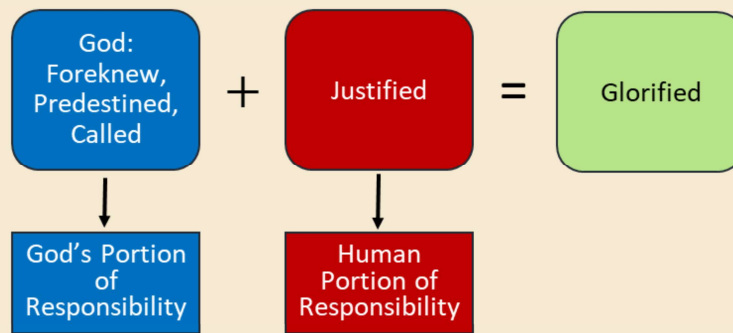
- Let's take a closer look at this passage from Romans in light of God's Principle of Predestination.

Clarification of Romans 8:29-30



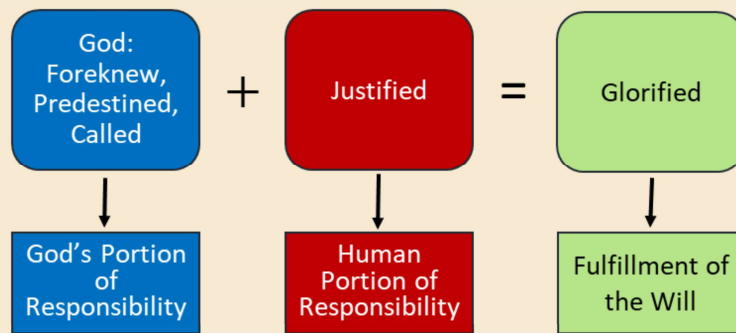
- God predestines those he foreknows
- Then He calls upon them to fulfill the purpose of the providence.
- Calling the person is God's responsibility. When God calls someone, it means He has already prepared all the necessary conditions for the person to succeed.

Clarification of Romans 8:29-30



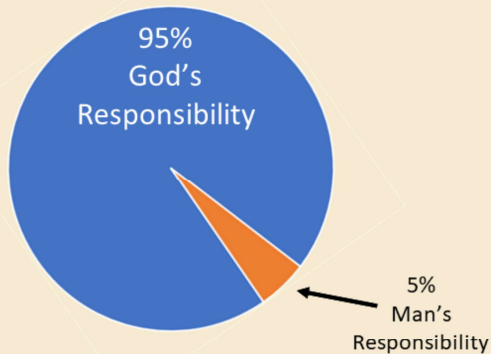
- To be justified is commonly understood to mean to be made right with God. In other words, God accepts us based on our faith in word and deed.
- Only when the person completes his responsibility after being called by God is he justified.
- So when a person has been called by God, when they can demonstrate faith in Him, he can justify that person's relationship with Him.
- As shown earlier, there are many examples in the Bible where God has called someone, but they failed their portion of responsibility and ultimately lost their position and relationship with God.
- Although God called them, they could not be justified if they had not fulfilled their responsibility in obedience to God's Word.

Clarification of Romans 8:29-30



- We can conclude, therefore, that God's predestination concerning an individual's glorification is thus contingent on the fulfillment of his portion of responsibility.

The Fulfillment of God's Will



- The Principle of human responsibility by which God created His children does not change in the providence of restoration.
- God created the universe, created human beings, and has been working unceasingly to guide his children so that they can return to Him. God invests Himself 100% into His creation.
- However, in order for love to exist as the core principle of creation, God had to allow human beings a portion of responsibility.
- In order for God's Will to be accomplished, human beings must also invest themselves 100% in faith and obedience to God's Word.
- Compared to God's responsibility, man's responsibility is extremely small. We say God's responsibility is 95% and man's responsibility is 5% to emphasize that in relationship to the full accomplishment of God's Will, man's part is very small.

Why God Gave Human Beings a Portion of Responsibility

- In order for them to stand in the position as His sons and daughters
- So that He could love them more than any other being in creation
- To make them worthy to be the lords of creation by having them take after His creative nature

- Why did God give human beings a portion of responsibility which is required to fulfill His ideal?
- God wanted human beings to be not only created objects who must obey the laws of nature, but to be His sons and daughters who can be like Him in heart and love.
- By fulfilling a portion of responsibility in co-creating themselves, human beings accomplish something that no other created being can accomplish. Therefore, God can love them more than any other being in creation.
- In order for human beings to have the authority to have dominion over the creation, they must stand in a higher position than the rest of creation, taking after God's own creative nature.

Why God Gave Human Beings a Portion of Responsibility

Had Adam and Eve not fallen, they would have become monarchs of love who, by perfecting themselves as God's incarnations would fulfill their portions of responsibility, connecting the realms of direct and indirect dominion on earth through God's love. Then God would live in the hearts of Adam and Eve, and the spirits of Adam and Eve would become God's body. They would become one body. Together, they would share and breathe divine and human love eternally.

Rev. Sun Myung Moon, *Cheon Seong Gyeong* p. 732

- In this passage from Cheon Seong Gyeong, Rev. Moon explains the importance of human beings fulfilling their responsibility and the relationship with God that results from that.
- (Cheon Seong Gyeong is one of the 8 Great Textbooks canonized by Rev. Sun Myung Moon.)

Thank You Very Much!