

# PREVAILING LOVE

A STUDY ON DIVINE PREDESTINATION



# DELIGHTING IN **GOD'S** PREVAILING LOVE

**Applying** the Doctrine of Divine Predestination

FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons  
through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,  
**to the praise of his glorious grace**, with which he has  
blessed us in the Beloved.

Ephesians 1:4–6

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be **to the praise of his glory.**

Ephesians 1:11–12

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, **to the praise of his glory.**

Ephesians 1:13–14

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, **that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**

1 Peter 2:9

So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God; and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to those that sincerely obey the Gospel.

The Westminster Confession



What is the practical bearing of this doctrine on Christian experience and conduct?

When thus held, the doctrine of predestination—

1. Exalts the majesty and absolute sovereignty of God, while it illustrates the riches of his free grace and his just displeasure with sin.
2. It enforces upon us the essential truth that salvation is entirely of grace. That no one can either complain, if passed over, or boast himself, if saved.

Archibald Alexander Hodge

FOR THE JOY OF MAN

Whatever may be said about the doctrine of election, it is written in the Word of God as with an iron pen, and there is no getting rid of it. To me, it is one of the sweetest and most blessed truths in the whole of revelation, and those who are afraid of it are so because they do not understand it. If they could but know that the Lord had chosen them, it would make their hearts dance for joy.

Charles H. Spurgeon

# 1. Holiness

Election entails responsibility and service, not self-indulgent esteem. God did not (and does not) say to his people, 'You only have I known of all the families of the earth: congratulations!' Rather, he says, 'You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities' (Amos 3:2).

**Paul Jewett**

Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

Ephesians 1:4

There is no election, then, to the rewards of glory, which does not include in itself, as the indispensable means to this end, election to the works of grace.

**Benjamin B. Warfield**

We are elected to make it possible for us to be good, yea, rather, to make it certain that we shall be good, not apart from but through our own efforts. We are not elected that we may not have to fight the good fight, but to secure that we shall fight it to the end, fight it successfully, and so finish the course; not that we may not require to keep the faith, but that we may, that we shall, keep it triumphantly and receive the crown. We are not released by our election from the duties and struggles and strifes, not even from the trials and sufferings, of life: we are elected to be sustained in them and carried safely through them all.

**Benjamin B. Warfield**



## 2. Humility

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, **so that no one may boast.**

Ephesians 2:8–9

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,  
compassionate hearts, kindness, **humility, meekness**, and  
patience

Colossians 3:12

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, **so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.**

1 Corinthians 1:26–29

# 3. Security

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling  
and to present you blameless before the presence of his  
glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty,  
dominion, and authority, before all time and now and  
forever. Amen.

## 4. Comfort

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:35–39



I am persuaded that the doctrine of predestination is one of the “softest pillows” upon which the Christian can lay his head, and one of the “strongest staffs” upon which he may lean, in his pilgrimage along this rough road.

Charles H. Spurgeon

## 5. Evangelism

And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, “Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, **for I have many in this city who are my people.**”

Acts 18:9–10

Therefore I endure everything **for the sake of the elect**,  
that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ  
Jesus with eternal glory.

2 Timothy 2:10

## 6. Prayer

And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore **pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest** to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Luke 10:2

When you pray for unconverted people, you do so on the assumption that it is in God's power to bring them to faith. You entreat Him to do that very thing, and your confidence in asking rests upon the certainty that He is able to do what you ask. And so indeed He is: this conviction, which animates your intercessions, is God's own truth, written on your heart by the Holy Spirit. In prayer, then (and the Christian is at his sanest and wisest when he prays), you know that it is God who saves men; you know that what makes men turn to God is God's own gracious work of drawing them to Himself; and the content of your prayers is determined by this knowledge. Thus by your practice of intercession, no less than by giving thanks for your conversion, you acknowledge and confess the sovereignty of God's grace.

J. I. Packer

7. We Are His



But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the  
iron furnace, out of Egypt, **to be a people of his own  
inheritance**, as you are this day.

Deuteronomy 4:20

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, **a people for his own possession**, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1 Peter 2:9

having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints

Ephesians 1:18

The sum of salvation in Christ is this:  
**God's prevailing love.**

Enlarge and humble our hearts to stand in greater awe of God and rejoice more intently in His love.