

**“What it means to be Reformed”; Session # 28 – Sola Gratia – “Considering God’s Reprobation”, Prepared for the Adult Sunday School class on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, by Pastor Paul Rendall.**

**God’s electing of some persons to eternal life, and His rejection of others, leaving them in their sins, has a different basis of consideration in His holy mind.**

God, who has created all men, permitted the Fall of all men in the first man Adam. In the decree of election God saw all men fallen in Adam, and He exercised His sovereign right to show undeserved mercy to some in electing them to eternal life. But in the decree of reprobation (His rejection of all the others whom He has not chosen) He has shown His just and holy determination to pass them by and not show them mercy. He does this, not because He is cruel or unfeeling in relation to the non-elect, but because He knows that they truly deserve to be punished eternally, having loved their sin more than God. In this act of preterition, God determined before the foundation of the world, even from eternity to leave them to themselves and their sins; and according to His justice, He then determines to punish them for all of their sins, which they justly deserve. In the outworking of these decrees God’s Justice is glorified.

Turn with me over to 1st Thessalonians chapter 5, verses 8-11 – “But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.” “For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Notice here that it is not God’s will that any person whom He chooses unto salvation and eternal life will fall away and end up in hell. God’s appointment for everyone who believes in Jesus is that they will most certainly obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Dear Christian, this is truly a great reason to take heart. “Christ Jesus died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.” “Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.”

Why does God appoint certain people to wrath? It is for their sins; because this is what they most surely deserve, and not because He arbitrarily created them to destroy them. It is for the glory of His justice and that He might make known the riches of His glory on vessels of mercy. William G.T. Shedd – Dogmatic Theology, Vol. 1, P. 433 is very good on this subject. Also Pages 441-448.

Jeremiah 6: 27-30    Ezekiel 18: 23-32    Proverbs 16: 4    Romans 9: 17-24

**Therefore we ought to glory in being called the elect of God, and we ought to be willing to endure all things for their sakes in our service to Christ.**

Colossians 3: 12 and 13    2nd Timothy 2: 10

And to everyone who is a sinner who sees that they need a Savior, let it be understood that God’s sovereignty in election does not at all hinder your personal responsibility to come to Christ, for the Lord Jesus said in John 6: 37 – “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will not cast out.”

**Quote from Shedd on P. 433 of his Dogmatic Theology -**

W.G.T. Shedd – “Reprobation comprises preterition, and condemnation or damnation. It is defined in the Westminster Confession Chapter 3, Paragraph 7 as a twofold purpose: (a) To pass

by some men in the bestowment of regenerating grace; and (b) To ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin. The first is preterition; the last is condemnation, or damnation. Preterition must not be confounded with condemnation. Much of the attack upon the general tenet of reprobation arises from overlooking this distinction. The following characteristics make the difference between the two. (a) Preterition is a sovereign act; condemnation is a judicial act. God passes by, or omits an individual in the bestowment of regenerating grace, because of his sovereign good pleasure (eudokia). But He condemns this individual to punishment, not because of His sovereign good pleasure, but because this individual is a sinner. To say that God condemns a man to punishment because He pleases is erroneous; but to say that God omits to regenerate because He pleases is true. (b) The reason of condemnation is known; sin is the reason. The reason of preterition is unknown. It is not sin, because the elect are as sinful as the non-elect. (c) In preterition God's action is permissive; inaction rather than action. In condemnation, God's action is efficient and positive."