

Objections to Foreknowledge and Predestination Romans 8:28-30

Romans 8:28–30 (NKJV)

²⁸ 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. ²⁹ 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. ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Introduction

In our last few studies of Romans we have become familiar with the terms, Foreknow and Predestination. Both of these terms are filled with wealth of knowledge about God and also mystery.

The mystery only exist because we are finite and cannot comprehend the full depth and meaning of both of theses terms.

God is both omniscience and the one who predestines all things.

Nothing exist or will exist outside His knowledge and His will.

God's knowledge is perfect, absolute and all inclusive. Nothing in the past, present or future is hidden from Him. Even the the invisible thoughts and motives of men are exposed to the brilliant light of His knowledge.

Also we need to add, that God's Predestination of all things is perfect, absolute and all inclusive. There is nothing in the past, present of future that has not been foreordained or Predestined by God.

As Ephesians 1:11 says, God is the one,
“who works all things according to
the counsel of His will,”

Of all the characteristics about God, these 2 are what set God apart from all false god's and idols of men.

Isaiah 40:12–14 (NKJV)

¹² Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His
hand,
Measured heaven with a span
And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure?

Weighed the mountains in scales
And the hills in a balance?

¹³ Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord,
Or as His counselor has taught Him?

¹⁴ With whom did He take counsel, and *who*
instructed Him,
And taught Him in the path of justice?
Who taught Him knowledge,
And showed Him the way of understanding?

Isaiah 40:25–26 (NKJV)

²⁵ “To whom then will you liken Me,
Or *to whom* shall I be equal?” says the Holy One.

²⁶ Lift up your eyes on high,
And see who has created these *things*,
Who brings out their host by number;
He calls them all by name,
By the greatness of His might
And the strength of *His* power;
Not one is missing.

Isaiah 40:27–28 (NKJV)

²⁷ Why do you say, O Jacob,
And speak, O Israel:
“My way is hidden from the Lord,
And my just claim is passed over by my God”?

28 Have you not known?
 Have you not heard?
 The everlasting God, the Lord,
 The Creator of the ends of the earth,
 Neither faints nor is weary.
His understanding is unsearchable.

Isaiah 41:21–23 (NKJV)

21 “Present your case,” says the Lord.
 “Bring forth your strong *reasons*,” says the King of
 Jacob.

22 “Let them bring forth and show us what will
 happen;
 Let them show the former things, what they *were*,
 That we may consider them,
 And know the latter end of them;
 Or declare to us things to come.

23 Show the things that are to come hereafter,
 That we may know that you *are* gods;...

Isaiah 42:8–9 (NKJV)

8 I *am* the Lord, that *is* My name;
 And My glory I will not give to another,
 Nor My praise to carved images.

9 Behold, the former things have come to pass,
 And new things I declare;

Before they spring forth I tell you of them.”

Isaiah 44:6–7 (NKJV)

- 6 “Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel,
And his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:
‘I *am* the First and I *am* the Last;
Besides Me *there is* no God.
- 7 And who can proclaim as I do?
Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me,
Since I appointed the ancient people.
And the things that are coming and shall come,...

False gods could claim to be good and merciful
and gracious , even just and holy.

False gods could claim to be powerful, and
sovereign and even omnipresence

But all of these could be made as abstract claims.
Claimed but not provable.

But the 2 things that separate the True God from
all false gods and idols
is For-knowledge and Predestination.

Isaiah 46:9–11 (NKJV)

- 9 Remember the former things of old,
For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is none like Me,
- 10 Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times things that are not yet
done,
Saying, 'My counsel shall stand,
And I will do all My pleasure,'
- 11 Calling a bird of prey from the east,
 The man who executes My counsel, from a far
 country.
 Indeed I have spoken *it*;
 I will also bring it to pass.
I have purposed *it*;
I will also do it.

God not only knows the future, but He determines the future.

The Future is known to God, not just because he has knowledge of all things, but because he controls and predetermines the future.

We may say that we know what we will do this evening, because we have knowledge and a desire to do what we plan to do.

BUT we do not have absolute assurance that it will happen because we do not have control of the 100 billion other variables and choices that the 7 billion people, and millions of animals, and millions of mechanical and myriad of physical and weather related events that are occurring in the world at any given time.

But God does.

He can plan to do something and absolutely insure that it will happen because He does have absolute control over the

100 billion other variables and choices that the 7 billion people, and millions of animals, and millions of mechanical and myriad of physical and weather related events that are occurring in the world at any given time.

Another thought to add to this is what separated a false prophet from a true prophet.

It was the ability to tell the future....not 50% of the time, not 90 % of the time, not even 99% of the time. But 100% of time.

If you claim to a prophet of God, and you miss once....your dead, literally.

Deuteronomy 18:20–22 (NKJV)

²⁰ But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.’ ²¹ And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?’ — ²² when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that *is* the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

Recently, there was a statement issued by some prominent Charismatic leaders, such as Michael Brown

called the “Prophetic Standards Statement”

It is an attempt to address the undeniable and massive errors in the prophetic ministry in the last year regarding Covid and the Presidential election.

From Kenneth Copeland’s “blowing Covid away” to the bazaar prophetic claims of Paula White.

Literally all were saying Donald Trump was going to be the next president and many were claiming miraculous end to Covid last spring.

There were literally 1000s of prophetic announcements made over and over again only to be proven absolutely false.

The Statement is an attempt to somehow police or reign in or bring some accountability to the movement.

However it falls woefully short and in the end, accomplishes nothing. It only allows a lot of already proven false prophets to determine whether their false prophecies are true.

Biblically, they are not of God and do not speak for God.

God does not get it wrong ever, not in the least. His prophets never miss....Ever.

But beyond the bazaar antics and false prophecies of the leading charismatic preachers and prophetesses.

There have been other attempts to discredit or deny and redefine and minimize the absolute foreknowledge of God and His work of Predestination.

They come from the secular world and the evangelical world..

1 Fatalism

One of the first attacks is the idea of Fate. Everything is just fate.

What will be will be and there is not changing it.

Some point to Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes 2:14–17 (NASB95)

- 14 The wise man's eyes are in his head, but the fool walks in darkness. And yet I know that one fate befalls them both.
- 15 Then I said to myself, "As is the fate of the fool, it will also befall me. Why then have I been extremely wise?" So I said to myself, "This too is vanity."
- 16 For there is no lasting remembrance of the wise man *as* with the fool, inasmuch as *in* the coming days all will be forgotten. And how the wise man and the fool alike die!
- 17 So I hated life, for the work which had been done under the sun was grievous to me; because everything is futility and striving after wind.

But this is all from the perspective that there is not a God. All is useless, and vanity. That all will die and that is it.

The problem with fatalism, it

1. It has no place for a personal God
God is not involved and it has no purpose from Him.
2. It is non-moral, and only physical necessity.
it is not a result a a willful purpose of a Morally Holy And Good God. But random meaningless happenings of one thing bumping into another.

God's Knowledge and Predestination is not a meaningless action on God's part.

Rather it is the intimate involvement of a Morally Holy God who loves and has mercy and justice and wrath with His creation.

He causes all thing to be for His pleasure and all have purpose.

#2 Chance.

Augustine said, “ we say nothing happens by fate —for the simple reason the word “fate” means nothing.

well like fate, chance is nothing.

Chance causes nothing, it can't do anything, it has no power, it has no will, it has no motive, it purposes nothing, it plans nothing.... it is nothing.

To say something happened by chance, is saying it happened by nothing.

R.C. Sproul wrote a book entitled "Not a Chance"

Calvin said, "what are thought to be chance occurrences are just so many proofs of heavenly providence "

Luther wrote, "but if God is thus robbed of His power and wisdom in election what would He be but just the idle, Chance, under whose sway all things happen at random"

The Bible explicitly denies anything happening by chance. Everything is Planned and Purposed by God.

There is such a view today called "Risk Theology" God takes Risk, make choice and it is left up to chance to work out.

Blasphemy !!!

Isaiah 46:9–11 (NKJV)

- ⁹ Remember the former things of old,
For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is none like Me,
- ¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times things that are not yet
done,
Saying, ‘My counsel shall stand,
And I will do all My pleasure,’
- ¹¹ Calling a bird of prey from the east,
 The man who executes My counsel, from a far
 country.
 Indeed I have spoken *it*;
 I will also bring it to pass.
I have purposed *it*;
I will also do it.

Proverbs 16:33 (NKJV)

- ³³ The lot is cast into the lap,
 But its every decision *is* from the Lord.

John 19:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ They said therefore among themselves, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be,” that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says:

*“They divided My garments among them,
And for My clothing they cast lots.”*

Therefore the soldiers did these things.

Acts 4:27–28 (NKJV)

²⁷ “For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together ²⁸ to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.

Acts 2:23 (NKJV)

²³ Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

Genesis 50:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive.

Chance denies God's Providence,
denies God's Sovereignty
denies God's Omniscience
denies God's Omnipotence
denies God's Predestination.

It is the equivalent of saying there is Luck with God

We are explicit forbidden to talk like that in Scripture because it is such a denial of God.

James 4:13–16 (NKJV)

¹³ Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; ¹⁴ whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. ¹⁵ Instead you *ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." ¹⁶ But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

3 Chess Game

Ultimately everything everything is a Cosmic battle between God and the Angels with Satan and demons and Men and there free will.

There are different variations of this depending on how much power you give to each of the persons involved.

But ultimately it boils down to a battle be God and Satan on who gets who in the end.

One well know bumper sticker states

God votes for you, the devil votes against you and you cast the deciding vote.

There are so many problems with this view that it boggles the mind where to start.

Job and Jonah are 2 historic events that contradict this on many levels.

It deny literally hundreds of Scriptures and places Satan and Man on the same level as God.

Satan is not God and neither is Man

Satan is Owned by God

As Luther called him "God's Devil"

Man is owned by God and will not and cannot be manipulated by man.

Scripture clearly proclaims.

Romans 9:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ For He says to Moses, *“I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.”*

Romans 9:17–18 (NKJV)

¹⁷ For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, *“For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.”* ¹⁸ Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

Romans 9:20–21 (NKJV)

²⁰ But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed *it*, *“Why have you made me like this?”* ²¹ Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

Daniel 4:35 (NKJV)

³⁵ All the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing;
He does according to His will in the army of heaven
And *among* the inhabitants of the earth.

No one can restrain His hand
Or say to Him, “What have You done?”

Another attempt to discredit and deny the absolute foreknowledge and predestination by God is

4 Middle Knowledge

The roots of this go back to the Greek philosophers

It was more precisely formulated by a Jesuit theologian named Luis de Molina 16th century

The History and Theology of Calvinism, Curt Daniel pg.215

It is sometime referred to as Molinism

He formed the theory to combat the prevalent orthodox view of Thomas Aquinas and the Dominicans which was also held by the Protestant Reformers.

This Middle knowledge is defined as

“a category in the divine knowing according to which God has a conditional or consequent, rather than absolute or antecedent, foreknowledge of future events.”

In other words, it makes some of the knowledge of God depend on the choice of men.

His knowledge is conditional on what man does.

If man does this then He know that this will happen

If man does that, then He knows that that will happen

But He just doesn't know which choice he will make.

So there are some things that are outside the Predestined plan of God.

It is kind of like the view that says God Predestined a plan, but he does not know yet who will participate.

Or He elected Christ, but does not yet know who will be in Christ until they believe.

This again is a denial of the very clear scriptures that tell us that God does in-fact know all things.

As some Reformed theologians point out.

“God knows all possibilities and conditions but knows nothing conditionally he never says "let's wait and see" or "that depends”.

Acts 13:46–48 (NKJV)

⁴⁶ Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, “It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. ⁴⁷ For so the Lord has commanded us:

‘I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.’”

⁴⁸ Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

This is not God knowing the outcome because a certain condition has been met.

Rather God appointed it. made sure it was done.

The last objection and attempted denial of God’s absolute foreknowledge and Predestination is

#5 Open Theism

Certain extreme Arminians in the early 1980s expanded upon the Middle knowledge view and developed a view called

Open Theism or the Openness of God

A similar view was taught by Aristotle, Cicero, Marcion and Origen many centuries earlier and was revived by the heretical Socinians at the time of the Reformation

This theory says that God is in the process of growing in His being and knowledge, therefore God does not have Omniscience or perfect foreknowledge

This was the application of Evolution to the knowledge of God

Even God is evolving!

All Open Theist are Arminians but not all Arminians are Open theist

“Open theism,” also known as “openness theology,” the “openness of God,” and “free will theism,” is an attempt to explain the foreknowledge of God in relationship to the free will of man. The argument of open theism is essentially this: human beings are truly free; if God absolutely knew the future, human beings could not truly be free. Therefore, God does not know absolutely everything about the future. Open theism holds that the future is not knowable. Therefore, God knows everything that can be known, but He does not know the future.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/open-theism.html>

As it is with most of these views. They are attempts to rescue God from a perceived injustice or as looking unloving.

And it is an attempt to protect the ultimate free will of man.

They see verses in the Bible that seem to indicate God changes His mind, seemingly is surprised or gains knowledge as teaching that God does not know and cannot know all things.

Genesis 6:6 (NKJV)

⁶ And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

Exodus 32:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ So the Lord relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people.

Jonah 3:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ 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.

Genesis 22:12 (NKJV)

¹² And He said, “Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only *son*, from Me.”

Genesis 3:8–13 (NKJV)

⁸ And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

⁹ Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, “Where *are* you?”

¹⁰ So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

¹¹ And He said, “Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?”

¹² Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.”

¹³ And the Lord God said to the woman, “What *is* this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Mark 13:32–33 (NKJV)

³² “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.

All of these verses taken by themselves and isolated from the larger context of Scripture would seem to teach that God is learning and does not know the future free will choices of men.

But that is NOT what the majority of the Scripture says.

It is Clear that God knows all things and nothing is hidden from him

And most reputable theologians in both the Reformed and Arminians camps would say that these are expression of God to relate to man.

Anthropomorphisms

If God always responded to us in with his absolute knowledge, He would never talk to anyone, He would know all and there would be know need.

He know all we need by he wants us to come to him and ask.

Matthew 6:8–9 (NKJV)

⁸ “Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. ⁹ In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.

and Jesus not knowing the date of return was
and expression of Phil 2

and the self emptying of Christ voluntary use of his
attributes, sometimes referred to as the kenosis

So open Theism takes the unclear and makes it
the foundation of its entire system while denying the
very clear

So does God have FOREKNOWLEDGE
is it ABSOLUTE.

Absolutely

1 John 3:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.

John 16:30 (NKJV)

³⁰ Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God.”

John 21:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ He said to him the third time, “**Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?**” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “**Do you love Me?**”

And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.”

Jesus said to him, “**Feed My sheep.**”

Job 36:4 (NKJV)

⁴ ...

One who is perfect in knowledge *is* with you.

Job 37:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Those wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge?

1 Chronicles 28:9 (NKJV)

⁹ “As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.

Jeremiah 17:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ I, the Lord, search the heart,
/ test the mind,
Even to give every man according to his ways,
According to the fruit of his doings.

Hebrews 4:13 (NKJV)

¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.

John 2:24–25 (NKJV)

²⁴ But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all *men*, ²⁵ and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.

Psalms 90:8 (NKJV)

⁸ You have set our iniquities before You,

Our secret *sins* in the light of Your countenance.

Romans 2:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

Ezekiel 11:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Then the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said to me, “Speak! ‘Thus says the Lord:I know the things that come into your mind.”

Psalms 139:1–8 (NKJV)

- 1 O Lord, You have searched me and known *me*.
- 2 You know my sitting down and my rising up;
You understand my thought afar off.
- 3 You comprehend my path and my lying down,
And are acquainted with all my ways.
- 4 For *there is* not a word on my tongue,
But behold, O Lord, You know it altogether.
- 5 You have hedged me behind and before,
And laid Your hand upon me.
- 6 *Such* knowledge *is* too wonderful for me;
It is high, I cannot *attain* it.
- 7 Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your presence?

⁸ If I ascend into heaven, You *are* there;
If I make my bed in hell, behold, You *are there*.

Psalm 139:15–16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from You,
When I was made in secret,
And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the
earth.

¹⁶ Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed.
And in Your book they all were written,
The days fashioned for me,
When *as yet there were* none of them.

Matthew 10:29–30 (NKJV)

²⁹ **Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will.** ³⁰ **But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.**

God even knows what could have been was decreed not to be.

Matthew 11:20–25 (NKJV)

²⁰ Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: ²¹ “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ²² But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. ²³ And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. ²⁴ But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.”

Isaiah 48:18–19 (NKJV)

¹⁸ Oh, that you had heeded My commandments!
Then your peace would have been like a river,
And your righteousness like the waves of the sea.
¹⁹ Your descendants also would have been like the
sand,
And the offspring of your body like the grains of
sand;
His name would not have been cut off
Nor destroyed from before Me.”

