

B. The Decree and Omniscience

1. The decree of God is the sum total of God's plan designed in eternity past relating to all events of every classification collected into one single all-comprehensive whole through the omniscience of God.
2. The omniscience of God is the key to understanding the decree. God has three categories of divine knowledge: **(a)** Self-knowledge: Each person of the Godhead has infinite and eternal knowledge about Himself and the other two members of the Trinity. **(b)** Omniscience: God knows all the knowable simultaneously about creatures, both the actual and the possible, but only the actual is programmed into the decree. **(c)** Foreknowledge: It merely acknowledges what is in the decree but does not make anything certain; the believer still has free will that is uncoerced.

C. The Decree and Election

1. Election is the sovereign right of God over His creation. It is the expression of the sovereign will of God for every believer in eternity past for fantastic blessings both in time and in eternity.

Ephesians 1:4 God the Father has elected us for Himself in Christ before the creation of the world for the purpose that we keep on being set apart to God, holy and blameless in His presence. (EXT)

2. Election and Predestination provide equal privilege and equal opportunity for all believers.
3. The equal privilege of election is God's decision to make every Church Age believer a royal priest forever.
4. The equal opportunity of election is God's provision of logistical grace support for every Church Age believer.
5. The equal privilege of predestination is God's decision to enter every Church Age believer into union with Christ forever through the baptism of the Holy Spirit and resultant positional sanctification.
6. This results in the creation of a new spiritual species.
7. The equal opportunity of predestination is God's provision of the divine dynasphere for the Church Age believer in time.

8. Under the omniscience of God, all decrees were simultaneously known to God and simultaneously decreed by God in eternity past. There never was a time when God did not know all that was knowable.
9. Divine knowledge about creatures is programmed into the computer of the divine decree. While the possible and alternatives to reality are known to God, only the reality is programmed into the computer of the divine decree.

D. The Will of God and the Divine Decree

1. God did not decree Himself to be. God eternally existed before and separate from the decree. Therefore, the decree does not act upon God, but God acts upon the decree.
2. God's decrees are efficacious, determining all that ever was or will be, including the directive, permissive, and overruling will of God.
3. All things depend on God's will and nothing is certain apart from God's will. There comes a point in theology where God's will and the decrees must be understood as synonymous.
4. God's decrees originate from His own omniscience in eternity past separating fact from fiction.
5. Therefore, distinction must be made between the omniscience of God and the foreknowledge of God.
 - a. God's decrees do not originate from His foreknowledge.
 - b. The foreknowledge of God makes nothing certain; it merely perceives what is certain, what is decreed. Only the decrees or foreordination makes anything certain.
 - c. Therefore, nothing can be foreknown until it is first decreed. This means you never have to run to God and say, "Oh God, help."
 - d. Foreknowledge is cognizance of what is decreed.
6. Distinction has to be made between the decrees of God and the desires of God. The decrees include a lot of things which are not God's desires, because the decrees include all things you think, say, or do. Many things in the decrees are not the desires of God.
 - a. Sin, human good, and evil are not the desires of God but are in the decrees because they are performed by our free will.

- b. God desires His perfect will and sovereignty, but both angelic and human creatures use their God-given free will and self-determination to violate the desires of God. So the decrees contain both the will of God and desires of God. The decrees are the all-inclusive will of God.
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- c. God does not desire to cast His creatures into the lake of fire forever, but it is so decreed under the printout of retribution for all who express negative volition at God consciousness and at gospel hearing.
- d. God does not desire the discipline of believers, but it is decreed for all carnality and reversionism.

E. Conclusion

- 1. Sin's liability creates punitive action from God.
- 2. Therefore, while all sins are judged at the Cross, personal sins carry liability from God under the law of volitional responsibility.
- 3. However, at the Great White Throne judgment, the unbeliever is never indicted on the basis of his sins because his sins were judged at the Cross, but on the basis of his good deeds. You cannot commit a sin without it effecting someone else, without it hurting someone else. The liability for personal sins does not extend outside of time. Sin is not a liability outside of time, i.e., in eternity. Therefore, there is no contradiction between your liability for personal sins in time and the judgment of all personal sins on the Cross.
- 4. In the function of the rebound technique of 1 John 1:9, the purpose is to recover fellowship with God and to recover the filling of the Holy Spirit through citing personal sins to God the Father. As a result, two things can happen to the believer with regard to the liability of sin: the believer is forgiven and the sin liability is completely removed, or the believer is forgiven and the sin liability continues and punitive suffering is replaced by suffering for blessing.