Predestination Explained: Calvinist vs Arminian vs Servant



Foreword Predestination
Calvinist vs Arminian vs Servant

Questions of predestination and free will have shaped Christian thought for centuries, raising tensions between divine sovereignty and human responsibility. The Servant perspective offered here seeks to clarify God's perfect knowledge and plan, and the reality of genuine human choice. It begins from the conviction that, before the creation of time itself, God established a perfect plan in which every soul born unto this earth would be given a real opportunity, ***free-will choice***, to accept or reject Christ. The following essay defines predestination within this framework, traces the outworking of God's perfect plan, clarifies the biblical meaning of "**the chosen**," and compares the Servant position with both **Calvinism** and **Arminianism**, supported by Scripture.

Defining Predestination in Classic and Servant Perspective

Classical Predestination refers to God's eternal decree concerning individuals' destiny—specifically, His sovereign determination of who will receive eternal life and, in some formulations, who will not. The term derives from the Greek proorizo ("**to determine beforehand**") and appears in key passages such as **Romans 8:29–30** and **Ephesians 1:4–5, 11**. At its core, the doctrine affirms that God, who "works all things according to the counsel of his will" (**Ephesians 1:11**), has a purposeful plan for humanity that precedes creation itself.

Servant's definition of biblical predestination is not an arbitrary decree that fixes individuals' eternal destiny apart from their response, nor is it merely God's passive observation of what individuals will do. It is the prior establishment of a perfect plan that guarantees every soul a genuine opportunity, a free-will choice, to accept or deny Christ. **Predestination**, as stated in the

Holy Bible, **is a sovereign God's foreknowledge of the results of His plan**, due to the restraints of time, which the Holy Bible states has a beginning and an end, ***momentarily after its creation in a timeless environment.*** **The chosen**, as stated in the Holy Bible, are not beneficiaries of an arbitrary decree, but those God chose to help carry out His perfect plan.

God's Plan and the Enabling of Free Choice

God's perfect plan for creation gives each soul the ability to choose freely whether to accept or deny Christ. **John 6:44** is understood in this light: the Father draws people to the Son precisely so that they may decide. The drawing is not an irresistible compulsion that overrides the will; it is the Spirit's work of releasing the person from the bondage of the world and of Satan so that a genuine free-will choice becomes possible. In this way, divine initiative and human responsibility stand together: no one comes to Christ unaided, yet the aid does not cancel the decision.

Divine Foreknowledge and the Creation of Time

God's foreknowledge flows from His existence outside time. When He created the heavens and the earth, He created time itself. Because He resided beyond the temporal sequence, the entire history of creation—from its first moment to its final moment—was present to Him at once. The end arrived, from His vantage, as swiftly as the snap of a finger. Consequently, He knew who would accept Christ and who would deny Him, not because He caused the rejection, but because the completed story was already known to Him before the first day began.

The Preparation of Culture and the Timing of the Savior

God shaped the culture into which His Son would be born and established the laws that governed it. He chose both the time and place for the Savior's appearance. **The Roman Empire provided the unique historical conditions**—relative peace, a common language, road systems, and a legal framework—through which the Good News could be carried to the nations. This was not an arbitrary selection but part of the same perfect plan that had been set in motion before time.

The Meaning of "the Chosen"

In Scripture, "**the chosen**" are those whom God selects—individuals or groups such as the Jewish people—to fulfill His perfect plan for creation and redemption. He uses and blesses them as instruments in that plan. Being chosen, however, does not itself grant or guarantee salvation. Salvation is not something God unilaterally confers on the chosen; it is received through a free-will response of faith.

God's election in this sense is primarily vocational and instrumental: He chooses people (and peoples) for service and blessing so that His purposes are accomplished. For example, He chose Israel so that through them the covenants, the law, the promises, and ultimately the Messiah would come, bringing blessing to all nations. That national calling did not automatically save every Jew; each person still had to respond in faith. The same is true for individuals: God may

choose or call someone for a role in His plan, but eternal salvation comes only when that person freely believes and trusts in Him.

In short, the chosen are instruments and recipients within the larger purpose God is accomplishing. Election points to God's initiative and purpose; free-will faith is the necessary response that results in salvation. God does not force or grant salvation apart from that personal choice.

The Servant View and Calvinism: Points of Agreement and Difference

Both the Servant perspective and classical Calvinism agree on several core points: God has an eternal, perfect plan; no one can come to Christ apart from the Father's drawing; God knows the end from the beginning; and history unfolds according to His sovereign purpose.

They differ sharply, however, on how that drawing works and on the basis of election.

Classical Calvinism teaches that the Father's drawing is effectual and irresistible and is given only to the elect. Because of limited atonement and unconditional election, those whom God has chosen will certainly believe.

The Servant view understands the drawing of John 6:44 differently. It is an enabling that is extended in such a way that it makes a free response possible for all who are drawn, without restricting the genuine offer of the gospel to a predetermined subset of people. Election is therefore understood primarily as God's choice of individuals for particular roles and blessings within His plan, not as the sole cause that produces saving faith. Because the enabling does not override the will, human rejection remains a real possibility.

Scripture presents the offer as genuine and the human response as decisive: "Choose this day whom you will serve" (**Joshua 24:15**, ESV), and "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil… therefore choose life" (**Deuteronomy 30:15, 19**, ESV).

The Servant View and Arminianism: Points of Agreement and Difference

The Servant perspective agrees with Arminianism on several key points. Both teach that God's grace can be resisted and that people make a genuine free choice to accept or reject Christ. Both reject the idea that God unconditionally decides in advance who will be saved and who will be lost, without regard to anyone's response. Both also affirm that God truly knows the future and never forces anyone to believe.

The two views differ, however, in how they understand the relationship between God's knowledge, his plan, and time, and in how they define election.

Arminianism typically holds that God elects people based on his foreknowledge of the free faith they will exercise. In other words, he sees in advance who will freely believe, and he elects them on that basis.

The Servant view, by contrast, roots God's foreknowledge in the fact that he exists both within and outside of time. Because giving every soul the genuine opportunity of free choice was the reason for creation in the first place, God's sovereignty does not override or change the results of people's free decisions. He knows the outcome in advance, yet he does not use that knowledge or his sovereignty to alter the free choices that were the very purpose of creation. **Election is therefore understood less as a decree that simply responds to foreseen faith, and more as God's calling and equipping of those who receive faith so that they can serve the outworking of his perfect plan**. Being chosen does not itself constitute salvation; rather, God chooses and blesses those He uses to fulfill his perfect plan for creation.

The Servant view focuses on how God actively prepares the moment in which a person freely decides, and on the vocational role of those he chooses to carry out his plan. It is not primarily about God electing people simply because he foresaw that they would believe, nor is it about God using his sovereignty to override or change the free choices that were the very reason he created.

"The Spirit and the Bride say, '**Come.**' And let the one who hears say, '**Come.**' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price" (**Revelation 22:17,** ESV).

Conclusion

The Servant perspective sees predestination as God's already complete plan, which gives every person a genuine opportunity to accept or reject Christ. History and culture are results and by-products of this perfect plan as time develops within it.

God exists both outside of time and within it. Outside of time, He sees the entire story—beginning, middle, and end—at once. Within time, He actively works: the Holy Spirit draws people, frees them from spiritual bondage, and places them in particular times, cultures, and circumstances so that their response can be truly free.

The chosen are those who accept Christ's free gift of salvation. They are then chosen to assist in the fulfillment of God's perfect plan. Being chosen does not itself save them; accepting the gift does.

Compared with Calvinism, this view keeps God's initiative and perfect knowledge, but rejects the idea that His drawing is irresistible and limited only to some in a way that makes genuine refusal impossible.

Compared with Arminianism, it keeps human free response and the possibility of resisting grace. At the same time, it roots God's foreknowledge in His existence both in and outside of time. History and culture arise as results and by-products of the plan rather than as something

God actively prepares, and **election has a vocational purpose** (being set apart to assist in the plan), not merely a saving one.

The result is a view in which God's perfect, complete plan—and the history and culture that result from it—and each person's free decision exist together without one canceling the other.

Matthew 23:11: "But the greatest among you shall be your servant."

