

# A Dummy's Guide to Predestination

Most you are uncomfortable with the doctrine of predestination because you believe that it conflicts with your free-will. Well, dummy, how far has your free-will gotten you so far? I don't know about you, but it seems like my decisions in life have resulted in more messes than successes. It gives me great comfort to know, however, that God still loves me, despite my weaknesses and failings and will someday make things right. That's what predestination is all about.

According to Romans 8:29, "*God knew his people in advance, and he predestined them to become like his Son. that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.*" God planned in advance that you would become like Jesus Christ. Jesus was the first, and we are next. We are all brothers and sisters of Jesus. We are all children of God. We are all included in God's wonderful plan of redemption.

Well, you might ask, if I am one of God's chosen ones and God has decided in advance, or predestinated, that I will become like Christ, why is it taking Him so long? Well, dummy, the problem is that free-will of yours, which you think is such a great thing. God is going to mold you into the likeness of Christ, whether you like it or not. The only question for you is how soon you are going to let that happen and whether you will be entering the Kingdom willingly or kicking and screaming, after enduring much anguish.

According to Jesus, "*the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it.*" Jesus is not saying here that only a few ever make it into the Kingdom, only that very few enter the Kingdom during their current lifetime. After death, we will all be judged according to our works. Some will be judged worthy (in varying degrees) and others will be judged unworthy (in varying degrees) and will be required to take a few more laps around Mt. Sinai, so to speak, before being allowed in. According to Matthew 25:46, some will be "*sent away into "age-during" punishment, but the righteous to "age-during" life.*" The words "*age-during*" are usually mistranslated "*eternal.*" There is nothing eternal about God's punishments. The purpose of God's punishments is that you might be "corrected" and molded into the image of Christ. Your loving Heavenly Father wants only what is good for you, and He has "*predestined*" that you will become like Christ. We all to one degree or another experience the "*refining fires*" of God's judgments in order that we might be purified and created anew in the likeness of Christ. The fires of God's judgments are symbolic of refinement and purification, not torture.

Those "messes" that your free-will has gotten you into are actually blessings in disguise. They are the "*refining fires*" of God's judgments that we all experience before and after death. They are God's way of teaching you the error of your ways and causing you to eventually change the direction of your life and start living your life His way rather than your own.

Richard Goyette