



# PREDESTINATION AND FREE WILL

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*Wesley Methodist Church, 8 September 2022*



**ONCE SAVED,  
ALWAYS SAVED?**

**ARE OUR LIVES FIXED  
AND PREDETERMINED?**

# **PREDESTINATION AND FREE WILL**



**HONEST, SINCERE AND  
DEVOTED CHRISTIANS  
CAN DIFFER**

**SOME TERMS**

# PREDESTINATION

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- God's predetermination of persons to a specific end.
  - Heaven or hell
  - = Double Predestination



# ELECTION

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- “The unchangeable purpose of God whereby, before the foundation of the world, out of the whole human race... He has, according to the most free good pleasure of His will, out of mere grace, chosen in Christ to salvation a certain number of specific men, neither better nor more worthy than others...”

# ATONEMENT

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- To avert punishment, especially the divine anger, by the payment of a ransom.

# A LONG BATTLE

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- **Pelagius vs Augustine**, 4th century
- **Pelagius**, a British monk, 354-418 AD:
  - emphasised primacy of human effort in salvation, human's basically good human nature
- **Augustine**, Bishop of Hippo, 354-430 AD:
  - condemned Pelagius
- Synod of Orange, 529 AD

# A LONG BATTLE

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- **Duns Scotus** and **William of Ockham** in the Middle Ages questioned Augustine's position
- **John Duns Scotus**, Scottish Franciscan Friar and philosopher, about 1265 -1308 AD:
  - God allows man free will
- **William of Ockham**, English Franciscan Friar and philosopher, about 1280 - 1349:
  - also placed great trust in man's natural reason and human nature

# A LONG BATTLE

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- **Erasmus vs Luther, 16<sup>th</sup> century**
- **Desiderius Erasmus**, Dutch Catholic priest humanist and Greek scholar, 1469-1536
  - rejected predestination, the will is free to resist grace
- **Martin Luther**, German reformer, 1483-1546
  - God knows everything, He wills what He knows, so everything we choose God first wills.

**PREDESTINATION**

ETHAN HAWKE SARAH SNOOK AND NOAH TAYLOR  
**PREDESTINATION**

TO SAVE  
THE FUTURE  
HE MUST PROTECT  
HIS PAST

IN THEATERS  
**JANUARY 9<sup>TH</sup>**

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MPAA RATING: R. PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED. SOME MATERIAL MAY BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 17. LANGUAGE, DRUGS, AND SOME SMOKING.

www.predestinationmovie.com

# LAMBETH ARTICLES

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- ▶ November 1595 at Lambeth
- ▶ Clear statement of the predestinarian system
- ▶ Meant as an appendix to the Anglican 39 Articles



# LAMBETH ARTICLES

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1. God from eternity hath predestinated certain men unto life: certain men he hath reprobated
2. The moving or efficient cause of predestination unto life is not the foresight of faith, or of perseverance, or of good works... but only the good will and pleasure of God.

# LAMBETH ARTICLES

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3. There is predetermined a certain number of the predestinate, which can neither be augmented nor diminished.
4. Those who are not predestinated to salvation shall be necessarily damned for their sins.
5. A true, living and justifying faith, and a sanctifying by the Spirit of God is not extinguished... it vanisheth not away in the elect, either finally or totally.

# LAMBETH ARTICLES

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6. *A man...who is endued with a justifying faith is certain, with the full assurance of faith, of the remission of his sins and of his everlasting salvation by Christ.*
7. *Saving Grace is... not granted, is not communicated, to all men, by which they may be saved if they will.*

# LAMBETH ARTICLES

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8. No man can come unto Christ unless it shall be given unto him, and unless the Father shall draw him; and all men are not drawn to the Father, that they may come to the Son.
9. It is not in the will or power of every one to be saved.

**NOT  
APPROVED  
BY QUEEN  
ELIZABETH 1**



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*Lambeth Articles*

**TOTAL DEPRAVITY**

# UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

**LIMITED ATONEMENT**



**IRRESISTIBLE GRACE**

# **PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS**

- Total Depravity
- Unconditional Election
- Limited Atonement
- Irresistible Grace
- Perseverance of the Saints

**TULIP**

# ROLES OF GOD

- Calvinist view only focuses on God as Righteous Judge and Sovereign King
- Fails to see God as Loving Father



# ARMINIANISM



# JACOBUS ARMINIUS

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- ▶ 10 October 1560 - 19 October 1609
- ▶ Professor of Theology at Leiden, Holland
- ▶ accused of being a Pelagian

# REMONSTRANTS

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~ after *Remonstrantiae* (1610) against Calvinism

~ resulted in Synod of Dort (1618-19)



# OUR PREDESTINATION

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- God's pre-decision to save those who repent and believe
- Based on God's foreknowledge of the way people will freely reject or accept Jesus Christ

# REMONSTRANT ARTICLES

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1. Predestination is conditional on a person's response
2. Christ died for each and every person but only believers are saved
3. A person is unable to believe by oneself and needs the grace of God

# REMONSTRANT ARTICLES

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4. Grace is resistible
5. Whether all the regenerate will persevere requires further investigation

# RESISTIBLE GRACE

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- ▶ Grace can be resisted - eg Jesus Christ
  - ▶ John 5:39-47
  - ▶ Matthew 23
  - ▶ Acts 7

# JOHN 5:39FF

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*39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. 41 I do not receive glory from people. 42 But I know that you do not have the love of God within you. 43 I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive him.*

# MATTHEW 23:29-31

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*“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous, 30 saying, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ 31 Thus you witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.*

# MATTHEW 23:34-35

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*34 Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, 35 so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, [f] whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.*

# ACTS 7

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*51 “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. 52 Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered...”*



# ORIGINAL SIN

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- ▶ Jesus Christ came to take away sin and regenerate us
  - ▶ John 16:8-11
  - ▶ James 1:15
  - ▶ John 1:29

# JOHN 16:8-9

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*8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; 11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

# JAMES 1:15

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*15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*

# JOHN 1:29

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*The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”*

## OUR METHODIST ARTICLE 8

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- The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

# SALVATION FOR ALL

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- ▶ The clear message of the NT is Salvation is for ALL
  - ▶ 2 Peter 3:9
  - ▶ 1 John 2:1-2
  - ▶ John 3:16
  - ▶ 2 Corinthians 5:19

# 2 PETER 3:9

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*9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*

# 1 JOHN 2:1-2

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*My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*



# JOHN 3:16

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16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son,  
that whoever believes in him should not perish but  
have eternal life.”

# 2 CORINTHIANS 5:19

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*19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.*

# ELECTION CONDITIONED BY FAITH

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- ▶ Our election is by Faith
  - ▶ 1 John 4:15
  - ▶ John 3:16
  - ▶ Ephesians 2:8
  - ▶ Romans 10:9-11

# 1 JOHN 4:15

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*15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.*

# EPHESIANS 2:8

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*8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,*

# ROMANS 10:9

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*...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*

# SPIRIT WITNESS

- ▶ We can know that we are saved
  - ▶ 1 John 4:13
  - ▶ Romans 8:16
  - ▶ Hebrews 10:15-22

# 1 JOHN 4:13

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*13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us,  
because he has given us of his Spirit.*



# ROMANS 8:16

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*16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God...*

# HEBREWS 10:15-22

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*15 And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,*

*16 “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds,”*

# HEBREWS 10:15-22

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*17 then he adds,*

*“I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”*

*18 Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.*

# HEBREWS 10:19FF

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*[This Section has the subtitle  
'The Full Assurance of Faith']*


*19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter  
the holy places by the blood of Jesus...let us draw near  
with a true heart in full assurance...*

# WESLEYAN-ARMINIANISM

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- ▶ Resistible Grace
- ▶ Original Sin
- ▶ Salvation for All
- ▶ Election Conditioned by Faith
- ▶ Spirit Witness

**ROSES**



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THE  
BLACK TULIP

BY ALEXANDRE DUMAS

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WITH ORIGINAL AND CLASSIC ILLUSTRATION

**SOME TRICKY VERSES  
(FOR THE OTHER SIDE)**



# ROMANS 9-11

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*Difference between Corporate Election and  
Individual Election*

# ROMANS 9:18

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*So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.*

# ROMANS 9:18

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- Taken out of context
- Context is that God has mercy and hardens people in response to what they do
- To Jews who assumed that their standing before God was based on their works and/or their nationality, God's choice appears arbitrary. But Paul insists that God has the right to have mercy on people simply because of their faith if he so chooses.
- cf Romans 9:30-31 "That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; 31 but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law."

# ROMANS 8:29-30

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*29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*

## ROMANS 8:29-30

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- Calvinists cannot rely on this verse for **foreknowledge** otherwise it implies that there are others God did not foreknow (“those whom he foreknew”)
- This passage refers to **corporate** election
- foreknew προεγνω is not just intellectual knowledge but also **intimate love**
  - God fore-loved His people
- Entirely possible that there are still individuals who reject God’s love

# ROMANS 8:29-30

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- Not about cause and effect but about how God works in salvation
- Is there really 'foreknowledge' if God sees all time and eternity at once?
- Foreknowledge then cannot be deterministic or prescribed

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How Romans 9-11 (and Romans 8)  
make me Arminian”

<https://www.theologyproject.online/post/how-romans-9-11-and-romans-8-make-me-arminian>

*-Matt O'Reilly*

# EPHESIANS 1

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*4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,...*



# EPHESIANS 1

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- **Corporate** election, not individual - it is about the new nation of Israel and the Christians
- God doesn't chose us to be in Christ, He chooses us to be holy and blameless in Christ
  - ie that whoever is in Christ is holy and blameless

# FOR FURTHER READING

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- John Wesley's sermons "On Predestination" and book "Predestination Calmly Considered".
- *What I am not a Calvinist* by Jerry Walls and Joseph Dongell
- Articles on "The Battle of the Will" in The Gospel Coalition, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/battle-will-part-1-pelagius-augustine/>
- Matt O'Reilly, <https://www.theologyproject.online/post/how-romans-9-11-and-romans-8-make-me-arminian>

**IS THIS THE HEART OF  
METHODISM?**

# **THE CHARACTER OF A METHODIST**

**THANK YOU**

