

**Daniel Perrin – L8: Free Will, Love, and Divine Providence –
Wednesday, February 19: God's Ideal and Remedial Wills**

1. **Ephesians 1:7-12** – *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace⁸ which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,⁹ having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,¹⁰ that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.¹¹ In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, **being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,**¹² that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.*
2. What does it mean to predestine?
 - A unilateral pre-determination that structures the minute details of your future FOR YOU.
 - That's not actually the idea that Paul is expressing.
 - The Greek word used here (*pro-orizo*) actually just means to decide something in advance.
 - Other Bible translations express this idea.
 - **NLT** – *Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God, for he chose us in advance, and he **makes everything work out** according to his plan.*
 - **NirV** – *We were also chosen to belong to him. God decided to choose us long ago in keeping with his plan. He works out everything to fit his plan and purpose.*
 - **CEV** – *God always does what he plans, and this is why he appointed Christ to choose us.*
3. The 4th paragraph in Wednesday's lesson says: "*Ephesians 1:11 proclaims that God 'works all things according to the counsel of His will' (NKJV). Does this mean that God determines everything to happen just as He desires? [Some of those same translations I just read express that idea] ... Read in isolation, Ephesians 1:9-11 might seem to affirm this view. However, this interpretation would contradict the many texts we saw earlier that show that people sometimes reject 'the will of God' ...*"
 - This is such an important statement that encourages us to read ALL of God's Word to get a full picture
4. The Point: God is NOT the ONLY one making decisions
 - I decide things in advance all the time. But not everything happens according to what I decide.
 - WHY? There are other players on the field?
 - The team captain calls a plan (IN ADVANCE), then as the game progresses, the decisions of players on the field influence whether that plan can be carried out exactly as planned.
 - The players have to make adjustments ... to get to the same goal.
 - We do that when driving.
 - I plan my trip, but because of an accident, I have to take a detour
 - Same goal in mind / same destination / more gas and wear-and-tear on the vehicle
 - But I'm not going to plow through the emergency vehicles on the road
 - As a teacher, I would make year-plans / unit plans / lesson plans
 - BUT in the classroom, ... students have decisions to make
 - As one Principal would say, "we are at the mercy of teenagers"
5. Shouldn't God be able to work out His perfect plan WITHOUT DETOURS?
 - Remember, He's given us freedom
 - If it's real freedom, then we must be freedom to detour
 - Because God permits detours, He is flexible.
 - He doesn't change His destination, but when we end up in a ditch or off in a field, ...
 - He directs us to the SAME destination — STARTING from exactly where we are
 - SO God instructs, He admonishes, He allows consequences, He sends Prophets
 - AND He sent His Son.

- His IDEAL will is that we remain on the Highway He paved for us
 - His REMEDIAL will is the road back to the main highway from the places where we got off track / stuck.
 - It's not His will that you're stuck out there, but He has a way for you to get out (IF YOU ARE WILLING)
 - This is the idea being expressed in **Romans 8:28-30** – *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.*
 - EVEN WHEN WE TAKE DETOURS — God *can* work those for good TO bring about what He decided beforehand.
6. EXAMPLE: It was NOT God's will that David took Bathsheba as his wife when she was Uriah's wife.
- BUT when we look at the genealogy of Jesus, it was through that relationship that Jesus came.
 - It's as if God says to us, If you are willing, I can so overrule the effects of sin so as to make it seem like I orchestrated every step along the way.
 - God can weave our broken lives into His plan so it looks like a seamless fabric.
 - Thief on the cross: What crime would he want to hold on to and say, God orchestrated this crime
 - YET, each crime led to the point where He was able to choose Christ — as if God had planned it that way.
 - Satan can't get the last word (if we are willing to let God speak).
 - God's IDEAL Will was expressed in Eden: Trust God – eat from the tree of life / don't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
 - God DECIDED BEFOREHAND that Adam and Eve would live forever
 - They didn't have natural immortality IN THEMSELVES – they received life from God
 - God's decision BEFORE creation was that they would live forever — that was His IDEAL will
 - BUT they had freedom to Choose: Accept or Reject God's Ideal Will
 - PRAISE GOD that He has a Remedial Will
 - If He didn't, where would we be?
 - AND PRAISE GOD, He has an Ideal Will
 - THAT is what He wants to restore us to — His Perfect Will lived out IN US
 - **Philippians 2:12-13** – *...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*
 - God wants to work out His will in us — but we must cooperate.
7. **Romans 11:33-36** – *Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! ³⁴ "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?" ³⁵ "Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?" ³⁶ For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.*