



Free Will vs. Predestination → What does the Bible Say?

- There are **29 verses** in the Bible on “**Predestination**”
- There are **31,154 verses** in the Bible on “**Free Will**”

There are **four major understandings/ applications/ interpretations** of what the word “Predestination” means and how it applies to our daily life as a Christian.

In this brief study, I will list all four interpretations. They are:

1. **End Times vs. Individual Free Will**
2. **God’s promise to reach** those who **WANT to understand**
3. It is a **Mystery**
4. **Man** actually does **NOT** have a **Free Will!**

1. End Times vs. Individual Free Will

This is the **strongest, clearest** and **simplest** understandings/ applications/ interpretations of God’s Word on the subject of “Predestination” There are three major reasons why this could be accurate.

i. The Clear Message of Scripture

There are 31,173 total verses in the Bible. There are **29** verses in the Bible on “Predestination” and **31,154** verses in the Bible on “Free Will”

Predestination is a **side** subject in the Bible. It is **NOT** a **major** subject but is simply a **rabbit trail** that the Apostle Paul traveled to explain **how God’s Purpose** in the **End Times** will be fulfilled.

Scripture has **many examples** of how God is able to **fulfill** his **promises** and yet **NOT** violate man’s individual free will. Perhaps Mordecai said it best when he told Esther:

*Esther 4:14 For **IF you** remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews **WILL ARISE** from **ANOTHER** place, but you and your father’s family will **PERISH**. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?”*

This verse in Esther really closes the subject on the possibility that you have no choice in your eternal destiny. Please read it again carefully.

Mordecai makes it **VERY CLEAR** to Esther that **GOD’S PURPOSES** are totally and definitely going to be **FULFILLED**. In addition, he makes it clear to Esther that she has a **CHOICE**. If she chooses to cooperate, she will be blessed. If she resists God, she will pay the price, but God’s will in the overall purpose and plan God has cannot be stopped.

Here is another example of Jesus explaining that Predestination has more to do with God’s end times plan than about individual free will.

Matthew 18:7
Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin.
*Such things **MUST COME***
*But **WOE** to the man **THROUGH WHOM** they come.*

Notice how clearly Jesus states that God’s **ETERNAL** plan will be **fulfilled** and it is **IMPOSSIBLE** for it to **not** take place ...**BUT** each person is **RESPONSIBLE** for **how** they **CHOOSE** to participate or resist God’s plan.

ii. The main subject of Romans 9.

Of the 29 verses on predestination in the Bible, 25 of them are in Romans 9. The **MAIN SUBJECT** of Romans 9 is that God has PRE-DESTINED that there will be a time during the **End Times** when there will be a Great In-Gathering of the Jewish people.

Every other comment in Romans 9 is simply expansions and explanations about how God can promise that there will be a Great In-Gathering of the Jewish people at the End Times.

Now let's read what the Bible says about Pharaoh. It is also significant that Paul chose Pharaoh as an example of "Predestination", since we are told that Pharaoh hardened his OWN heart. It seems fairly simple that Pharaoh **CHOSE** to harden his heart and that God accelerated the process. In fact, Exodus makes this very clear. **TEN TIMES** Exodus tells us that Pharaoh **HARDENED** his **OWN** heart. Exodus 5:2, 5:4-9, 5:17-18, 7:13, 7:22-23, 8:15, 8:19, 8:32, 9:7, 9:34

God simply **SEALED** the Deal when he hardened Pharaoh's heart.

iii. The Logic of the concept

It is actually a simple subject. Each individual man has free will but God's overall purpose for humanity will prevail.

2. God's promise to reach those who WANT to understand

There is only one verse in the Bible that EXPLAINS the subject of "Predestination". It is:

Romans 8:29
*For those God **FOREKNEW***
*he **ALSO PREDESTINED***
to be conformed to the likeness of his Son,
that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

It is also significant that Paul intentionally wrote this verse one chapter before he wrote the Romans 9 subject of the End Times gathering of the Jews.

"Predestination" could be an explanation of one of the questions that rings in the heart of every passionate Christian. Here is a rough paraphrase of that question.

*"Father, I will live my life to bring you glory and to bring others to you, yet my heart grieves for those who have **NEVER HAD A CHANCE** to hear the Gospel! What about them Father?"*

Romans 8:29 could be seen as a **promise** from our Father that he knows **every heart BEFORE** they are born. In His Goodness and Love, He is promising us that He will **make sure** that everyone who **WANTS** to come to Christ will be **given the opportunity**.

3. It is a Mystery.

Paul also alluded to this in Romans 9 when he stated that this subject is beyond human comprehension.

4. Man actually does NOT have a Free Will.

The deeper you look into this fourth doctrine the more aberrant & evil it becomes.

- It requires a decision to **ignore** tens of thousands of verses about human choice. Words like “**Chose, Choice, Because, If, Should, Be, Do, Do Not, Therefore, Consequently**” etc. must be “**Explained Away**” in studying the Bible.
- It requires a decision to **ignore** the fact that the entire gospel is based on choice
- It requires a decision to **ignore** the fact that God is Love and the basis of Love is Free choice.
- It requires a decision to **ignore** the weird secondary doctrines that arise out of this doctrine. There are a LOT of them!
- It requires a decision to **ignore** the lack of fruit in the lives of those who passionately teach this doctrine.
- It requires a decision to **ignore** the weak Bible Study of those who passionately teach this doctrine.

Personally, I am **very comfortable** with all **three** of the **first three** *understandings/ applications/ interpretations* of God’s Word on the subject of “*Predestination*”.

I have listened and studied carefully those who are passionate about the fourth *understandings/ applications/ interpretations* of God’s Word on the subject of “*Predestination*” and I do not see this as an accurate study of God’s word.

Below are the strongest scriptures that clearly state that each man has a choice in his eternal destiny.

Mt. 18:12-14 “What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? ¹³And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. ¹⁴In the same way **your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.**

II Peter 3:3-9 First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. ⁴They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.” ⁵But they deliberately forget that long ago by God’s word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. ⁶By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. ⁷By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

⁸But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, **not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.**

1 Timothy 2:3-4 **This is good, and pleases** God our Savior, ⁴who wants all men to be saved **and to come to a knowledge of the truth.**