Thursology 121: God DESIRES to Save Everyone…But DECREES That Only a Few Will Be Saved??? (Book of Life-Pt 3)

(*Thursology Live!* 3/6/2025)

--The Lamb's Book of Life:

--Revelation 20:11-15: Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it…And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books…and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds…And if anyone's name was not found written in *the book of life*, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

--The "TULIP" of Classical Calvinism:

--Total Depravity

--Unconditional Election ("*Double* Predestination")

--Limited Atonement

--Irresistible Grace

--Perseverance of the Saints

--Predestination and the Reformed Concept of Unconditional Election:

--The Westminster Confession: "By the *decree* of God, for the manifestation of His own glory, some humans and angels are *predestined* unto everlasting *life*, and others *foreordained* to everlasting *death*"

--Edwin Palmer: "…all things are ordained by God—including sin and unbelief—thus, God has ordained *who* will be *unbelievers*…"

--Henry Sheldon: "God *foreordained* that the fall would involve, *beyond any chance* of *rescue*, the eternal ruin and damnation of the *majority* of the human race.

--The implications of the doctrine of Unconditional Election:

--Implication #1: Biblical words like "sinners," "world," "whosoever," "any," and "all"…must be *interpreted* in a very *unusual* way

--Whosoever: Joel 2:32: *Whosoever* shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved

--Implication #2: The Gospel *isn't* for *all* people

--Acts 10:42-43: And He *ordered us to preach* to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name *everyone* who believes in Him *receives forgiveness of sins*."

--Implication #3: Jesus isn't the Savior of the *whole* world

--I John 4:14: And we…bear *witness* that the Father has sent the Son to be the *Savior* of the *world*."

--Implication #4: If salvation comes alone from God's *decree*…then God should have decreed that *everyone* would be saved

--Implication #5: God loves *only* the *elect*

--Steven Houck: "It *cannot be* that God loves *everyone*. Since God's love is sovereign and therefore always is a saving love, *only those* who experience the salvation of the Lord can be the objects of His love."

--**Implication #6: God must have two _____**

--A response to a dilemma: If God is totally _____…why doesn't His will to *save* _____ happen?

--Truth #1: It's God's explicit _____ for _____ to be saved

--II Pet 3:9: The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but *for all to come to repentance*.

--I Tim 2:3-4: This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our *Savior*, who *desires all men to be saved* and to come to the *knowledge* of the *truth*.

--Truth #2: Most people are _____

--Matt 7:13-14: Enter through the *narrow* gate; for the gate is *wide* and the way is *broad* that leads to destruction, and there are *many* who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is *narrow* that leads to life, and there are *few* who find it.

--Calvinism's two wills of God: His will of _____…and His will of _____

--John MacArthur—God's TWO wills":

--"There is a *distinction* between God's *desire* and His *eternal saving purpose*, which must *transcend* His *desire*. God does not want men to sin…God does not want people to remain wicked in eternal hatred of Him. Yet, God, for His own glory, and to manifest that glory in wrath, *chose* to endure "vessels…prepared for destruction" *for the supreme fulfillment of His will*. In His eternal purpose, He chose *only the elect* out of the world and *passed over the rest*, leaving them to the consequences of their sin, unbelief, and rejection of Christ. Ultimately, God's choices are *determined* by His sovereign eternal *purpose*, *not* His *desires*."

--John Piper:

--"Therefore, I affirm with John 3:16 and I Tim 2:4 that God loves the world with a deep compassion that *desires* the salvation of *all* men. Yet I also affirm that God has *chosen* from before the foundation of the world *whom* He will save from sin. Since not all people are saved, we must choose whether we believe that God's will to save all people is restrained by *His commitment to human self-determination* or whether we believe that God's will to save all people is restrained by *His own sovereign will*. I believe that Scripture teaches the latter."

--A response:

--Dave Hunt: "Calvinists claim that human's actions cannot be in conflict with God's will. For that would make humanity greater than God. That position concerning God's sovereignty drives them to propose that the two wills that are in conflict are not *God's* will and *humans'* will, but *two wills of God*. In other words, they claim that the battle is *not* between God and man, but rather *God's will against Himself*."

--God has *One* Will*!!!*

--II Pet 3:9: "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not *wishing* for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."

--I Tim 2:3-4: This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who *wants* *everyone* to be *saved* and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

--Rev 3:20: Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if *anyone* hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.

--Key Concept: Christ's "_____ knock" taps *persistently* at the heart of _____ human

--Why Isn't *Everyone* Saved???

--"But if God *wishes* all to be saved, *why* doesn't He make it to be so? He has infinite *benevolence* which, nevertheless, is not in all points worked out by His infinite *power*. If anybody asks why it is so, *I cannot tell them*."

--Calvinism's irreconcilable contradiction:

--Statement #1: "This is His wondrous love towards the human race, that He desires *all* men to be *saved*, and is *prepared* to bring *even the perishing* to safety. God is prepared to bring *all* men to *repentance*, so that *none* may *perish*."

--Conclusion #1: Calvin teaches…*explicitly*…that God ____ prepared to save _____*!!!*

--Statement #2: "Everything depends upon the mere will of God; if some are *damned* and others *saved*, it is because God has created some for *death* and others for *life*. God saves *whom He wills* to save and does so of *His own good pleasure*."

--Conclusion #2: Calvin teaches…*explicitly*…that God is _____ prepared to save _____*!!!*

--John Piper: "My contribution is to show that God's will for *all* people to be saved is *not at odds* with the sovereignty of God's *election of only some*. That is, my answer to the question about what restrains *God's will to save all people* is His supreme commitment to display His glory through the *sovereign demonstration of His wrath and mercy* for the enjoyment of *His elect*."

--The response to this contradiction:

--Dave Hunt: "Piper has found what he believes is an ingenious way to affirm that God loves and *really desires to save* those whom *He has predestined to damnation*. He tries to explain this obvious contradiction away by proposing that God has 'two wills.' In other words, while His two wills *directly contradict* each other, they are actually in *secret agreement*. My response: Have words and logic lost all meaning? God does not contradict Himself! Piper tries to reconcile what he calls "two wills" of God to show that they are in "*agreement*," even though they directly *disagree* with each other. He fails to reconcile the disagreement because it is *impossible* to do so. A contradiction is a contradiction, and there is no honest way that two contradictory propositions can be "massaged" into agreement."

--The resolution to the confusion:

--The resolution: The Bible teaches that God…by His own sovereign *will*…has given humans the power of _____ …or *non*-_____ …to His saving grace

--Why won't everyone be saved? Because the essence of salvation is a _____ relationship…and God won't _____ anyone to love Him

--The entire dilemma dissolves by acknowledging one simple concept: God…by His own sovereign decision…has given humans the _____ power of _____*!!!*

--Implication #7: Ultimately…*no one* can know *for sure* whether they're _____…until _____ they die

--Matt 7:21-23: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. *Many will say to Me* on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, *you who practice lawlessness*.'

--The REAL salvation question: It isn't "Am I one of the _____?"…rather…it's "Am I _____ the *Master*?"

--Matt 7:15, 17-20: "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will *know* them by their *fruits*…So every good tree bears *good fruit*, but the bad tree bears *bad fruit*. A *good* tree *cannot* produce *bad* fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. *Every tree that does not bear good fruit* is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by *their fruits*."

--Key Concept: _____ *isn't* the distinguishing feature of those who are *saved*…rather…the *distinguishing* feature of the *saved* is a _____ life… and _____ to the will of God.

--John Piper: "We believe in eternal *security*…the eternal security of the *elect*."

--"…the *only* basis for *assurance* of salvation, of getting to heaven, is the Doctrine of *Predestination*."

--A fundamental precept of Calvinism: Reformed theology's basis for _____ is found *only* in being one of the _____

--J.I. Packer: "The predestination of *who* would be _____ was decreed by God in the past and this decree is _____ to us."

--Westminster Confession:

--"True believers may have the *assurance* of their salvation *shaken and diminished*…by God *withdrawing* the light of His *presence* and *allowing* even those who fear Him to *walk in darkness and have no light*…"

--Kenneth Gentry:

"Assurance is subjective because *assurance requires a revelation beyond Scripture*. The Bible doesn't talk of the specific individual in question. For instance, in my own case, since nowhere in the Bible does it ever say, 'Kenneth Gentry is among the elect,' *there's no way that I can have absolute assurance that I will be saved in the end*."

--Dave Hunt:

--"*Not one verse* in the Bible tells us how to *know* we have been *elected*. If *being* one of the *elect* is the *basis* for *assurance* of salvation, then *there can be no assurance*."

--Real Assurance:

--Philippians 1:6: "…being confident of this, that *He* Who *began* a good work in you *will carry it on to completion* until the day of Christ Jesus."

--Romans 8:38-39: For I am *convinced* that *neither* death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, *will be able to separate us from the love of God*, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Thursology 120: Has God Predestined Who Will be Saved and Who Will be Lost??? (Lamb's Book of Life/Revelation 20-Pt 2)

(*Thursology Live!* 2/6/25)

--The three main points of The Revelation:

--Main Point #1: Revealing the *exalted* majesty, awesome power, and absolute preeminence of *Christ*…the Coming One*!!!*

--Main Point #2: Be *ready*…because He's coming like a *thief!!!*

--Main Point #3: In the *end*…what matters is having your *name* in the *book!!!*

> --Revelation 20:11-15: Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it…And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books…and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds…And if anyone's name was not found written in *the book of life*, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

--Predestination and Salvation Theology:

--The "TULIP" of Classical Calvinism:

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

--Predestination and the Reformed Concept of Unconditional Election:

--The definition of Unconditional Election from the Westminster Confession: "By the *decree* of God, for the manifestation of His own glory, some humans and angels are *predestined* unto everlasting **LIFE**, and others *foreordained* to everlasting **DEATH**"

> --John Calvin: "Everything depends upon the mere will of God; if some are *damned* and others *saved*, it is because God has created some for *death* and others for *life*."
>
> --Edwin Palmer: "…all things are ordained by God—including sin and unbelief—thus, God has ordained *who* will be *unbelievers*…"
>
> --Henry Sheldon: "God *foreordained* that the fall would involve, *beyond any chance* of *rescue*, the eternal ruin and damnation of the *majority* of the human race.
>
> --Lorraine Boettner: "The doctrine of Predestination holds that some are *foreordained to death* as truly as others are *foreordained to life*…We believe that from all eternity, *God has intended to leave some of Adam's race in their sins*, and that the *decisive factor*…is to be found *only in God's will*."

--The implications of the doctrine of Unconditional Election:

--Implication #1: Biblical words like "sinners," "world," "whosoever," "any," and "all"…must be **INTERPRETED** in a very **UNUSUAL** way

--"Sinners"

> --I Tim 1:15: "It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*…"

--The problem: In Reformed theology…the term "sinners" must be re-defined to mean, "the **ELECT** among sinners."

--How I Tim 1:15 would read if Unconditional Election/Double Predestination were true: "It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *the elect*…"

--"Whosoever:"

--Joel 2:32: "*Whosoever* shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

--John 3:16: "God so loved the *world* that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

--The problem: In Reformed theology…the words "*world*" and "*whosoever*" must mean…"The **ELECT**"

--John 3:14-15: *As Moses lifted up the serpent* in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that *whoever* believes *will* in Him have *eternal life*.

--Numbers 21:6-9: The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. So the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, because we have spoken against the Lord and you; intercede with the Lord, that He may remove the serpents from us." And Moses interceded for the people. Then the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that *everyone* who is bitten, when he looks at it, he will live." And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit *any* man, *when* he looked to the bronze serpent, he *lived*.

--Implication #2: The Gospel *isn't* for **ALL** people

--Reformed view: The Gospel is preached so the **ELECT** can have it preached to **THEM**

--Acts 10:42-43: And He *ordered us to preach* to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name *everyone* who believes in Him *receives forgiveness of sins*."

--The Apostles' view: The Gospel is preached so that **EVERYONE** who believes will **RECEIVE** forgiveness of their sins

--The Great Commission:

--Mark 16:15: "Go into *all* the world and preach the gospel to *all* creation."

--The Great Commission from the Reformed Perspective: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to *The* **ELECT**."

--Implication #3: Jesus isn't the Savior of the **WHOLE** world

--John 4:39-42: From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all the things that I have done." So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. Many more believed because of His word; and they were saying to the woman, "It is no longer because of what *you* said that we believe, for we have heard for *ourselves* and *know* that this One is *indeed* the Savior of the *world*."

--I John 4:14: And we…bear *witness* that the Father has sent the Son to be the **SAVIOR** of the **WORLD**."

--Implication #4: If salvation comes alone from God's **DECREE**…then God should have decreed that **EVERYONE** would be saved

--***WHY*** did God choose to save only ***SOME*** people…and reject ***MOST*** people…when He could have saved ***EVERYONE***???

--Reformed answer #1: For His **PLEASURE**

--John Calvin: "God saves *whom He wills* to save and does so of *His own good pleasure*."

--James Boyce: "God saves *only* those whom He is *pleased* to save."

--Reformed answer #2: For His **GLORY**

--Westminster Confession: "By the decree of God, for *the manifestation of His own glory*, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others *foreordained to everlasting death*.

--Edwin Palmer: "God…for the *glory* of His own power, ordained some to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the *praise* of His *glorious* justice."

--***Why*** did God choose only to save some people when He could have saved everyone?

--God *chose* to save only *some*…and…the reason is **HIDDEN** in His own **SECRET** counsels

--John MacArthur: "*God determined* before time began *to love and save some* people…His purposes for choosing some and rejecting others are *hidden* in the *secret counsels* of His own will…"

--Implication #5: God loves **ONLY** the **ELECT**

--Michael Horton: "The Calvinistic view of love actually intensifies *God's love* by *limiting it only to those who believe*. That sure beats the indiscriminate, general benevolence of God that we seem to be hearing so much about today."

--Steven Houck, "It *cannot be* that God loves *everyone*. Since God's love is sovereign and therefore always is a saving love, *only those* who experience the salvation of the Lord can be the objects of His love."

--The fundamental REASON behind ALL salvation: "God so **LOVED** the **WORLD**…"

--Application: *Every* thinking believer is at risk for identifying their PARTICULAR articulation of the Gospel…as the REAL Gospel*!!!*

--R. C. Sproul: "The titans of classical Christian scholarship are Calvinists."

--The London Declaration of the Alliance of Reformation Christians: We call upon evangelicals to return to the once-held biblical view that to lay claim to *Calvinism* as true is not spiritual arrogance, but a biblical duty."

--John Gerstner: "We believe that *Calvinism* is just another name for *Christianity*."

--Leonard Coppes: "Calvinism is pure biblical Christianity in its clearest and purest expression."