

8. Under the omniscience of God, all decrees were simultaneously known to God and simultaneously decreed by God in eternity past. There never was a time when God did not know all that was knowable.
9. Divine knowledge about creatures is programmed into the computer of the divine decree. While the possible and alternatives to reality are known to God, only the reality is programmed into the computer of the divine decree.

D. The Will of God and the Divine Decree

1. God did not decree Himself to be. God eternally existed before and separate from the decree. Therefore, the decree does not act upon God, but God acts upon the decree.
2. God's decrees are efficacious, determining all that ever was or will be, including the directive, permissive, and overruling will of God.
3. All things depend on God's will and nothing is certain apart from God's will. There comes a point in theology where God's will and the decrees must be understood as synonymous.
4. God's decrees originate from His own omniscience in eternity past separating fact from fiction.
5. Therefore, distinction must be made between the omniscience of God and the foreknowledge of God.
 - a. God's decrees do not originate from His foreknowledge.
 - b. The foreknowledge of God makes nothing certain; it merely perceives what is certain, what is decreed. Only the decrees or foreordination makes anything certain.
 - c. Therefore, nothing can be foreknown until it is first decreed. This means you never have to run to God and say, "Oh God, help."
 - d. Foreknowledge is cognizance of what is decreed.
6. Distinction has to be made between the decrees of God and the desires of God. The decrees include a lot of things which are not God's desires, because the decrees include all things you think, say, or do. Many things in the decrees are not the desires of God.
 - a. Sin, human good, and evil are not the desires of God but are in the decrees because they are performed by our free will.



- b. God desires His perfect will and sovereignty, but both angelic and human creatures use their God-given free will and self-determination to violate the desires of God. So the decrees contain both the will of God and desires of God. The decrees are the all-inclusive will of God.
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- c. God does not desire to cast His creatures into the lake of fire forever, but it is so decreed under the printout of retribution for all who express negative volition at God consciousness and at gospel hearing.
- d. God does not desire the discipline of believers, but it is decreed for all carnality and reversionism.

E. Conclusion

- 1. Sin's liability creates punitive action from God.
- 2. Therefore, while all sins are judged at the Cross, personal sins carry liability from God under the law of volitional responsibility.
- 3. However, at the Great White Throne judgment, the unbeliever is never indicted on the basis of his sins because his sins were judged at the Cross, but on the basis of his good deeds. You cannot commit a sin without it effecting someone else, without it hurting someone else. The liability for personal sins does not extend outside of time. Sin is not a liability outside of time, i.e., in eternity. Therefore, there is no contradiction between your liability for personal sins in time and the judgment of all personal sins on the Cross.
- 4. In the function of the rebound technique of 1 John 1:9, the purpose is to recover fellowship with God and to recover the filling of the Holy Spirit through citing personal sins to God the Father. As a result, two things can happen to the believer with regard to the liability of sin: the believer is forgiven and the sin liability is completely removed, or the believer is forgiven and the sin liability continues and punitive suffering is replaced by suffering for blessing.

5. The decree of God removes no person from what—within the sphere of his own experience—is the outworking of his own choice based on the function of his own volition.
6. The plan of God and the decrees of God are totally consistent with human freedom and volition. God does not limit and coerce human freedom or violate self-determination. Free will isn't free unless man can decide against God and His plan.
7. However, distinction must be made between what God causes directly (such as the Cross), and what God permits indirectly (such as sin and evil).
8. God created man with a free will. Therefore, He permits human volition to function in self-determination; otherwise, there would not have been the fall of man. It is His permissive will. The permissive will is just as much a part of the decrees which glorify God as the directive will. Remember, the decrees are simply human history in the mind of God in eternity past before any creature existed.
9. God is not the author of sin or evil. Free will and self-determination are the origin and source of sin, human good, and evil.
10. Both sin and the cross are fed into the computer by omniscience. One is the direct will of God. The other is the permissive will of God. But the permissive, directive, and overruling will of God are all a part of the decrees.
11. The sovereignty of God and the free will of man coexist by divine decree. Every decision and desire of God and man were recorded in the divine decree. Omniscience programs this data into the decrees.

Commentary:

In James 4:13–15, James gives the two men in this passage a lecture on their failures to recognize several principles. Let's review the translation of:

James 4:13 Come now, you reversionists who say, "Today or tomorrow [unsure] we will go to this or that city [unsure; wanderlust], and shall work in that place [unsure] about a year [unsure], we shall engage in free enterprise and make a profit [working objects]." (EXT)