

Created in God's Image

- An eternal soul/spirit to live on after body dies/
- Think, reason, create, devise, plan
- Communicate speak, write, express ideas
- Emotions: Love, desire, loyalty, self-esteem
- The Past: Memory, Learn from mistakes.
 - Wisdom: learn from previous experience
- The future: anticipation, plans, goals,
- Like the material creation, this image gives us a reflection of God's Divine nature.
- Everything we can do, God can do infinitely better.

Planning for the Future

- The foundation of all motivation for God's people is based the future.
- *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. Heb. 11:13-16*
- We can only see the future because God reveals it.
- *whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Jas 4:14-15*

God's Ability to See the Future

- All that God gave us in His image and likeness are so far higher than our own that we can't even comprehend it.
- *as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts," Isa. 55:9*
- The things that are involved in God's ability to see the future are both amazing and awesome.

God's Infinite Abilities

- *O Lord, You have searched me and known me. 2 You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. 3 You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. 4 For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O Lord, You know it altogether. Ps 139:1-4*
- God knows everything about us. He can read our thoughts and knows exactly what our next decision will be.

Just How Far Does this Go?

- *Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them. Ps 139:16*
- God can see our entire life, before we live it.
- God all the days fashioned when there were none.
- *And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. Heb 4:13*

God is Incomprehensible

- *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it. Ps. 139:6*
- *33 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!*
- *36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen. Rom 11:33-36*

Since We Can't Comprehend...

- *The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law. Deut 29:29*
- There is no way to comprehend so it is impossible to speculate. His abilities are so far above our own we have no point of reference and if we use our own image to assume His we will always fall short.
- But we can use the things that are revealed to make these judgments and assessments. God wants us to learn as much as we can about Him

God's Ability to See into the Future

- God created all material things, giving man complete dominion and “*saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.*” (Gen. 1:31).
- He created the world fully prepared for man, but in His foresight, He knew it was possible that Adam and Eve would choose to sin.
- I say “*possible*” because when God’s foresight meets man’s perfect freewill, God said nothing.
- Maybe He knew man would sin even with freewill
- Or maybe He was prepared for either outcome.
- Since God never revealed it, it is secret Deut 29:29

God Knew All Possibilities

- God knew man could (and possibly would) choose to sin and enter into open rebellion against Him.
- When they did sin God was fully prepared.
- He later revealed that the NT is the “*revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began.*”
Rom. 16:25
- That our “*hope of eternal life*” was “*promised before time began,*” Mt. 25:34
- Of the kingdom: “*inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*” Titus 1:2

After Adam and Eve Sinned

- God had already devised an “*eternal purpose*” which included Christ and the church.
- *from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; 10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, Eph 3:9-12*
- The things revealed here are amazing and incomprehensible to us. Yet they form the basis of God’s foreknowledge and thoughts.

God's Eternal Purpose

- our salvation is *“according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began. 2Tim. 1:9*
- The plan for Jesus to die for them was already in place: *“the precious blood of Christ,” “was foreordained before the foundation of the world.”* (1Pet. 1:19-20).
- This may be enough for some to say God did know. I am too cautious to say it.
- But once their perfect freewill was removed, God knew everything that would occur and how His eternal purpose would be completed

How Foreknowledge is made Reality

- Must stay within the confines of Deut. 29:29
- Has to fit what is revealed about Him.
- God is righteous, just, fair and honorable.
- God is love, always concerned about the needs and best interests of others.
- Any explanation that places God in violation of His character is a false explanation.

How God Works His Purpose

- *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 1Tim 2:3-5*
- *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. 2Pet. 3:9*
- *Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Jas 1:13-15*

How God Works His Purpose

- *who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*
- *not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance*
- *nor does He Himself tempt anyone.*
- God doesn't have to compel or force anyone to do what He needs to be done.
- Because He knows the thoughts and intents, plans and purposes, and all future decisions, all God has to do is choose the right person.
- He puts them in the position He needs and without force allows them to do their own will.

The Exact Explanation

- *What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, Rom 9:22-24*
- They were already vessels of wrath before He chose them. He simply scoured the earth until He found the man or woman who in their own freewill would do exactly what God wanted.
- This keeps His love and righteousness intact.

God Even Told Pharaoh

- *Now if I had stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, then you would have been cut off from the earth. 16 But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth. 17 As yet you exalt yourself against My people in that you will not let them go. Ex 9:15-18*
- He and His people already deserved to die. God could have used pestilence, but to help the vessels of mercy, He purposed to use them in another way.

Man Makes Himself the Vessel

- By our own choices, God makes His decision. If God can see that by working with us and chastening us He can make us a vessel of mercy He will help us.
- If God can see we are beyond His help then He will use us in ways to still help others.
- *But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. 21 Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. 2 Tim 2:20-22*

Christ's Crucifixion

- *“being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death.” Acts 2:23*
- *“those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning Him.” (Acts 13:27).*
- Their ignorance was their own choice, God did not force them to be ignorant.
- God never needs to use force, He only needs to select the exact right people.

Foreknowledge & Fulfillment

- God foretold exactly what would happen nearly a thousand years before it occurred:
- *“The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord and against His Christ. For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.”* (Acts 4:26-29).
Pilate wanted to release Him, it was the hatred and threats of the Jews that forced him to give in, not God. (Mt. 27:22-25).