**Chapter Three: Predestination**

**A. St. Paul and Predestination**

1. Meaning of the word: The prefix “Pre” signifies an anteriority of dignity and excellence,

not one of chronology.

a. It is a love assignation made on high, a supreme prevenience on the part of love,

not refused, but accepted and finally brought to fulfillment.

b. It is a scriptural doctrine, a part of revelation.

c. There are Catholic as well as Lutheran and Calvinist interpretations.

2. Predestination in Ephesians

a. God has predestined us to be his adopted children.

b. God has enabled the human race to utter their supreme assent.

3. Predestination in Romans

a. “When he predestined, he also called, and whom he called he also justified, and

whom he justified he also glorified.” (8:30)

b. God calls them with his grace and they do not frustrate it. If they assented to

grace, it was because of the divine movement in them, for our assent always

comes from him.

4. If anyone is not predestined, it is because the person refuses the call and not only once,

but repeatedly.

a. Human beings have the terrible power of saying no to God, of making a definitive

refusal that will fix his place forever.

b. One is not among the predestined because it is a consequence of his refusal for

which he bears and will always bear the responsibility.

5. The teaching does not say “God does not predestinate, God abandons and reproves those

whom he knows in advance will refuse his prevenient grace.

a. The church teaches that God does not predestine. God abandons and rejects those

who, as he sees from all eternity, take the first initiative in the final refusal of his

prevenient grace.

**B. Lutheran and Calvinist Views**

1. Some are predestined to heaven and others to hell. God himself drives them to hell and

they cannot escape it.

a. This is double predestination, one to heaven, one to hell.

b. This is because the good act comes solely from God and not from God through

man. There is a two-fold error, because predestination to heaven is ill conceived.

c. Karl Barth, a disciple of Calvin, does not defend Calvin’s position here.

**C. How to deal with the meaning of salvation**

1. If I am predestined whatever I do, and I am sure of salvation, what would be the purpose

of doing good acts?

a. If one asks speculatively, it is good to try to clarify to help see if the person is

ready to deal with the mystery.

b. If one asks from existential concern, no answer may give satisfaction. He must

deal with his anxiety as a cross. The answer is discovered through the Saints who

underwent the dark night of the soul.

2. Romans and the rejection of the Jews

a. Privileges are not the primary thing, the chief thing is love and God dispenses it to

all on account of the death of Christ on the cross. Each person can accept or

refuse it.

b. When the gift of God’s love is refused, he transfers it to others. The Gentiles are

invited. When the Jews become jealous of this, they will repent and come to the

Lord in the church.

c. The Church, since its inception is wholly composed of Jews. God’s Word was

fulfilled because of the remnant who remained. There is Israel according to the

flesh and Israel according to the promise of the Holy Spirit. There are also

Gentiles, to whom grace will be offered.

3. There are two sorts of destinations, vocations and calls

a. There are those concerning the temporal ones at the present time. God freely

chooses them.

b. There are those concerning eternal life, where God is not free to give or withhold

the grace that, if we do not refuse it, will lead us to our true home.God is not free

because he is bound by love.

c. Israel alone received the prophetic vocation concerning the Messiah. God sent the

others hidden graces to orient them toward eternal salvation.

4. There are two planes that must be kept in mind

a. On the one plane of temporal gifts and destinies and charismatic graces, God is

completely free and acts without any injustice.

b. On the plane of the grace of salvation, God is free to give his children difficult

and unequal graces. But God is not free to deprive any soul of what is necessary

to it. He is bound by justice and love to give soul the grace to bring them to

heaven.

5. The Carriers and the promise

a. There must be a distinction between how Jacob is saved (through divine goodness)

and how Esau is rejected (through his bad will).

b. The misrepresenting of the Calvinist position of Romans 9 has come up with the

principle of double predestination.

c. To have a hardened heart means for him to be plunged further into sin by

deliberative positive action on the part of God.

d. God endures with as much patience vessels of wrath destined to perdition, just as

he makes vessels destined for glory.

e. Predestination does not lead to fatalism, but it can become a temptation to

despair. To avoid this one must make firm acts of hope.

**Chapter 4: Justification, Merit and Consciousness of the state of**

**Grace**

**A. Justification**

1. Justification signifies the act by which God moves one who was in a stste of sin into the

state of grace. There is a passing over from the state of non-justice in relation to God to

the state of justice or holiness in relation to God

a. God justifies the person through the assent of the person’s free will; it is an act of

the free will moved by God.

b. God moves natures without doing them any violence

c. The exception of Original Sin is transmitted by way of generation, without any

personal culpability on their part. God does not require of them any personal act

for justification.

d. The children’s parents give them natural life; Baptism without the infant’s act of

the will gives them the life of grace.

2. God’s grace comes before hand to prompt the person

a. If one is in sin, God starts by trying to move one to an act of faith, then an act of

remorse, then the fear of the Lord.

b. To anyone who does what lies in him, god does not refuse grace.

c. Nature can never be proportional to grace. However, if you only use nature, it will

only yield natural results.

d. to anyone who does what lies in him by the action of antecedent grace, God does

not deny further grace.

3. Augustine and Paul

a. If an action is really one good in relation to the heavenly life, it is God who gave

you the beginning, middle and end.

b. God is the first cause making your free will bear fruit and the person is the

secondary cause. The only thing the person can do totally on his own is refuse.

c. Grace is present with its antecedent motion and urges one on to justification.

4. What is justification?

a. It is a moment when the sequences of grace being unbroken , all at once the

flower gives its fruit.

b. The love of God invading the soul sets in on the plane of grace and charity,

sanctifies it interiorly and there results the indwelling of the Trinity.

5. Justification happens instantaneously in several aspects:

a. God moves the soul to make an act of the love of God.

b. God moves the soul to make a renunciation of sin

c. God remits the soul’s guilt and purifies it.

6. Is Justification the greatest of God’s gifts?

a. Creation is a greater work than justification of the soul sonce it consists in making

something out of nothing.

b. Justification is greater because the good of creation is the good of a transitory

nature, while the term of justification is the eternal good of the participation in

divinity. It is set on a higher plane.

c. Justification is not a miracle because the grace of justification comes to a soul not

as contrary to, but as superior to its nature.

d. While justification is done against the customary order of things, it is not a miracle

because it happens so frequently. It is the ordinary course of divine goodness to

justify men.

e. However, justification may be a miracle when God all at once overwhelms a soul.

The stages that lead to justification are passed over. Persons who have lived from

God may at the very last moment turn to god without anyone knowing it.

6. A person in a state of grace may well be able to avoid all mortal sin, but not all venial sins.

In his concentration on one virtue, he is in danger of momentarily rejecting its

complement and committing a venial sin.

a. A man in the state of mortal sin cannot remain long without committing fresh

mortal sins. He is drawn into them by the weight of sin in his heart.

b. Mortal sin essentially breaks the relationship with God.

c. Venial sin does not destroy sanctifying grace, but it prevents it from spreading its

light.

d. Sanctifying grace inclines one to God. Venial sin diminishes the light of grace.

e. Deliberate and constant venial sin does give rise to a state of tepidity, digging a

ditch around the soul and with temptation, is in danger of being drawn into mortal

sin.

**B. The doctrine of Merit**

1. God is so good that he places me in his grace, by whose power I can face in the direction

of eternal life, move toward it and adapt myself toward it.

a. Merit is a title to reward in justice.

b. Is there any proportion between what one gives to God, and God’s supreme gifts

of grace and love? No, if we are left to our own merits. Yes if he sets in us the sap

of his grace and love and asks us to make it bear fruit in still further grace and love.

2. Is Merit ours or Christ’s?

a. Protestant view: the merits of man alone are opposed to the merits of Christ. It

pronounces for salvation by the merits of Christ alone and imputes the theory of

salvation by the merits of man alone, which is Pelagian.

b. The Catholic view is that our merits are from God and Christ as the first cause,

and from us as a second cause. If this assent is given, uttered in time and

penetrated by the light of divine grace, it leads one to their final end, entrance into

heaven.

3. God gives man the ability to merit

a. Christ is the vine, we are the branches, he that abides in me will bear much fruit.

b. If the branch remains attached to Christ, the fruit comes from the trunk through

the branch.

c. One cannot merit the first grace of all; it is always an antecedent gift. But once in a

state of charity, one can always through charity merit an even greater degree of

charity.

d. The Gospel says that when you suffer all things, you must be glad and rejoice,

because your reward will be great in heaven.

4. Can a person merit grace for others?

a. Not if it is a question of making the person acting fit to receive the reward.

b. It is suitable if it is by merit de congruo (a work is meritorious only because of

God’s grace.) It is fitting that the Lord should grant the desires of those who love

him.

c. If one is in a state of sin, one can neither merit for himself or others. One can pray

for oneself and others because it is an appeal based on the pure mercy of God.

d. Prayer is a grace by which God invites one to approach him, so that in the end, he

may forgive him.

5. Can Temporal goods be merited?

a. If God sees that a certain temporal good is for my benefit, he may give it to me

and for the same reason he may send me troubles.

b. All things come equally to the just and unjust as regards the nature of temporal

goods and evils. The difference lies in the use that each makes of the goods and

evils.

c. The only thing that counts before God is the use we make of things and the love

that prompts it, but also that his love is always at hand to urge us on.

6. One cannot merit final perseverance which is the coincidence of the state of grace with

the instant of death.

a. This is because the fruit of the state of grace is not the state of grace. I must hope

that God will keep me in grace at the moment of death.

**C. The State of Grace**

1. In Lutheran teaching, if one has faith, the absolute personal conviction that God regards

me as just on account of Christ, then I am justified.

2. In Calvinism, If I have faith, the same personal conviction, I am certain of being

predestined. The Christian has absolute certainty by divine faith of being justified and

predestined.

3. In the Catholic view, God cannot gaze upon one as his child with love without

intrinsically justifying the person.

a. Certainty of this reality is not absolute and infallible for a person. God may make

known to some that they are in charity and that they will not lose it.

b. We cannot know for certain since grace, being a participation in the divine nature

would have to see God directly. However, our own human sight is unable to

apprehend it .One can have a practical and moral certainty.

4.What does a practical and moral certainty consist of?

a. If the things of God fill my heart and satisfy ny desires.

b. If the things of this world do not hide everything else from us

c. If one has no consciousness of mortal sin.

d. If one has a profound devotion to the Mother of God.

e. God, hidden in the soul, makes his presence secretly felt by his movements,

inspiration and illuminations.

5. In the supernatural order, men are subject to great fluctuations of feeling.

a. Fear, but with confidence

b. Do not have a presumptuous confidence or a comfortable self-assurance. You

must indeed be on the cross.

c. If God were to exact strict justice, we would be lost. Because we are aware of the

love and mercy of God, God’s love will be victorious because it is greater than our

sinfulness.