

Important theological BIBLICAL language

Romans 11:33-36

³³Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! ³⁴Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" ³⁵"Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" ³⁶For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Decree – God’s plan for the world and its history that He sovereignly established to come to pass. OR simpler: God’s plan for the world that He established will come to pass.

- See providence; sovereignty; freedom; God’s will; election = these ideas go together

Election – God’s sovereign choosing. God’s eternal election of certain persons to salvation in Christ. (see Eph. 1)

- The key question for election is: How do you get “in Christ?”
- If interested in digging in more here, see document on Arminianism VS Calvinism

Predestined - To predetermine, decide beforehand. In the NT of God decreeing from eternity

Providence (God’s) – The foreseeing and guardianship of God over His creatures...a manifestation of His divine care or direction. (see Sovereign)

- The key question is: How closely does God control the world...?

The doctrine of providence tells us that the world & our lives are not ruled by chance or by fate BUT by God (see Matt. 6:25+)! In God’s understanding and control of our world, He provided ways that He was revealed to people so that man was w/o excuse. Creation, our conscience, Jesus and the Holy Scriptures point toward God and serve to leave man without excuse in their relationship and accountability to Him. Matt. 10:28; Rom. 1:18+; Acts 14:17; 17:22-30.

4 different views of Gods providence – (How closely does He control the world...?)

1.) **Meticulous Providence** – Like Shakespeare to Hamlet (He wrote it...period) **SCRIPT Theory**

- God’s sovereignty means that he controls all events & decisions (every detail)
- Every event & decision in history is pre-scripted by God. We are “actors” in the divine drama, doing exactly what He purposed before the foundation of the world would take place. Even in the darkest times, we can trust that God is in control. He is too good to do evil & too wise to make a mistake.
- These are Calvinistic Folks like: DA Carson, RC Sproul, John Piper

2.) **Active Providence** – Like a captain is to a ship (things happen outside of His will, not outside of His control) **SHIP Theory**

- God’s sovereignty means that He is not accountable to anyone & His plans & purposes cannot be overcome
- God places limits on freedom & evil
- God sometimes intervenes in human freedom...when He decides to
- Some events happen that God does not approve (sin for example)
- God is always actively involved; influencing actions directly and by creating a world where good is reinforced & evil is self-defeating.
- God limits, frustrates, brings good out of the evil events...
- These are folks like: AW Tozer; Gerry Breshears

- 3.) **Free Will Providence** – Like a good king to his servants (ruling but not controlling)
- God’s sovereignty means that He is not accountable to anyone & His own plans & purposes cannot be overcome
 - God conserves, cares for & governs His world as a human king rules His servants
 - He exerts influence upon humans, but also honors human freedom & responsibility.
 - By His own decision, He doesn’t interfere with free decisions even if they are against His will. To do so would be to turn people into robots.
 - These are folks like: Phillip Yancey; CS Lewis; most Wesleyan-Armenians

- 4.) **Open Providence** – Like a president to a country (has significant influence but doesn’t interfere with individuals’ choice)
- God’s sovereignty means that He is not accountable to anyone & His own plans & purposes cannot be overcome
 - God is working along with us in time. He knows all knowable things, but He cannot know in advance the free will decisions of humans.
 - He enjoys discovering wonderful new things as they happen.
 - He gets angry at evil and excited about good
 - He does what he can to influence humans toward good
 - These are folks like: Clark Pinnock; Greg Boyd

Sovereign – God is not accountable to anyone, and His plans and purposes cannot be overcome. (see Providence)

- Alternative Definition: Everything is under God’s rule and authority, and nothing happens apart from His permission.
- Your definition of “SOVEREIGN” should be consistent with your understanding of God’s Providence.
- See above for how the different positions help define “SOVEREIGNTY”

Biblical SALVATION language:



Salvation – Being saved/delivered from something.

A few key questions:

1-Q: Saved when? **A:** The answer is 3-fold –

Past = The “event.” (aka – conversion) (Eph. 2:4-8; 2 Tim. 2:9; Tit. 3:4-5)
(Justification/Regeneration/Reconciliation)

Present = Salvation is an on-going reality. (Phil. 2:12-13; Jms. 4:7-8) (Sanctification)

Future = We await salvation to appear (Christ to come back.) (Rom. 5:9-10; 13:11; Heb. 9:28)
(Glorification)

2-Q: Saved from what? (Why do I need to be saved?) **A:** Sin, Death, Ignorance, Satan & his evil schemes, Guilt, Corruption...

3-Q: Saved for what? (What does salvation do for me?) **A:** Relationship restored w/ God & w/ each other; Worship of God; Service of God (obedience).

4-Q: Save by what? (How/When am I saved?) **A:** By Grace through Faith (Eph. 2:8-9) & Repentance.

Salvation timeline goes something like this:

⇒ God’s grace, faith & repentance

1st { Justification
Regeneration
Reconciliation (see Rom. 5:11; 2 Cor 5:18-21) } All...kind of simultaneous [PAST]

2nd Sanctification [PRESENT]

3rd Glorification [FUTURE]

Forgiveness – To remove the guilt resulting from wrongdoing. It is important to note that the focus of the meaning is upon the guilt of the wrongdoer itself. The event of wrongdoing is not undone, but the guilt resulting from such an event is pardoned. Therefore, “to forgive sins” is literally “to forgive guilt.” Though terms for forgiveness are often literally “to wipe out,” “to blot out,” or “to do away with,” it is obviously not possible to blot out or to wipe out an event, but it is possible to remove or obliterate the guilt. (lou-nida)

➤ The guilt of wrongdoing has been wiped out and pardoned.

Regeneration – New birth, new beginning. Born again...we are new persons.

In greater detail it means having one’s inner character transformed such that one is now a “new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17) whose mind & heart are fixed firmly on the things of God. (see salvation)

Reconciliation – To make things right. To restore unity. To bring back together. (see salvation)

Redemption – a rescuing. To release or set free, with the implied analogy to the process of freeing a slave. “of Christ” = deliverance from the guilt of sins (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14).

➤ Set free and released from the bondage of sin

Repentance – More than “being sorry” or feeling bad, it is a complete change in ones way of life, thought, attitude, behavior. You were going one way, this is a 180 & going the other way.

Justification – By faith in Christ as Savior, God declares that “sinner” righteous or justified because of and through what Christ did on the cross. God can declare us righteous because He sees us not in our sin BUT us perfect through the blood of Christ. [This is the “who we were.” PAST reality] In Christ, we are now a new creation, what “was” is no longer! (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2). We are saints! (see salvation)

- See 1 Cor. 6:11; Rom. 6:7 (di-kia-o-o (justified) ==> 37x’s in the NT)

Sanctification – The most common understanding of sanctification is: the working out of our salvation. Once we have been justified and regenerated, it is a yielding to the Holy Spirit and His will in our lives. As we do this, the Holy Spirit makes us more and more like Christ. [This is the “who we are now.” PRESENT reality] (see salvation)

- See 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11; Rom. 15:16; 1 Thes. 5:23 (ha-gi-a-zo = v) ==> 28x’s in the NT
- See Rom 6:19; 6:22; 1 Thes. 4:3;4;7; 1 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 1:2 (ha-go-as-mos = n) ==>10x’s in the NT
- We see this “working out of our salvation” all over the place: Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 4:1; Phil. 1:27; 3:12-14; 4:8-9; Col. 1:10; 1 Thes. 2:12; 2 Thes. 1:5; Jms. 2:14-26; 4:7 ...

Glorification – One day we will be completely like Christ. This will not happen till we are with Christ at the end. [This is the “who we will someday be.” FUTURE reality] (see salvation)

- 2 Cor. 5:1-10; Col. 3:4; 2 Tim. 4:8; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rom. 8:30; 2 Thes. 1:9-10; 4:15-17; Phil. 3:20-21

Justification & Sanctification in harmony with each other:

In justification, God at the beginning of our Christian life declares us acquitted (but unfortunately our life, our lifestyle, our poor thinking, our sin tendencies are not completely evaporated!) Therefore, in sanctification, God accomplishes His will in us as the Christian life proceeds. Sanctification never replaces justification, it follows it and it is ***a lifetime of yielding*** ourselves to the will & desires of our perfect God!

- The more we do so, the more we experience the full blessings of God (Eph. 1:3) and live as “full” a life we can here on earth (Jn. 10:10)