



require Him to *cause, foreordain* or *predestine* them to occur.

Imagine a hiker reaching the summit of a peak overlooking a curvy and hilly, narrow mountain road far below. He can clearly discern that two, fast-moving automobiles blindly approaching each other from opposite directions will top a hill or round a curve and collide head-on. Yet, no one would accuse the hiker of being responsible for *causing, foreordaining* or *predestinating* the horrific crash. Foreknowledge does not equal predestination. Likewise, God is not responsible for causing what He sees will happen.

Finally, God created man in His own image (Genesis 1:26), which includes the freedom of choice or will. God, through His foreknowledge, “*foreknew*” those who would conform to His will, and He “*predestined*” that class of souls to be “*justified*” and “*glorified*” (Romans 8:28-30). **God predestined a plan of salvation for those who would opt, through the proper use of their freewill, to conform to His purposes.**

Men *make decisions* every day about whom they will marry, occupational pursuits, education, where they shall live, what clothes they will wear, what foods to eat and dozens of other

choices. With the same powers of freewill, mankind chooses to obey (Hebrews 5:9) or disobey (2 Thessalonians 1:8) the Gospel.

God is not a respecter of persons, arbitrarily predestinating certain individuals to be lost while predestinating certain other individuals to be saved (Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11). **Almighty God votes in favor of you and me spending an eternity in heaven with Him, as He does not desire anyone to be lost** (2 Peter 3:9).

Satan, on the other hand, votes against us spending forever in heaven with God (1 Peter 5:8). Each of us, then, by our obedience or disobedience casts the deciding vote as to where we will spend eternity. God will neither force anyone to be saved nor to be lost eternally.

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The Foreknowledge of God Explained

Louis Rushmore

If God *knows* that someone will do something, does God *make* him do it even if it is against his will? How can one reconcile *the foreknowledge of God* with the *freewill of mankind*?

First, the Bible firmly establishes that humans have freewill. Every “whomsoever” passage teaches that God has given mankind the ability to make choices for himself. There are 183 occasions of “whosoever” (KJV) or “whoever” (NKJV) appearing in our Bibles! Consider this widely known example in the New Testament: “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever** believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*” (John 3:16 NKJV; cf. Matthew 7:24; Acts 2:21; Revelation 22:17).

Other expressions also convey the Bible teaching about the freewill of man. “*Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*” (Matthew 11:28) is one such verse. People could hardly respond to the invitation of



the Lord if they lacked freewill or the ability of choice to do so. However, having the freedom of choice, we humans can accept the divine invitation or we can refuse it.

One can see “freewill” even in the Old Testament under Judaism as those worshippers could voluntarily give a “freewill offering” (Exodus 35:29; Leviticus 22:21, 23, 38; Numbers 29:39; Deuteronomy 12:6, 17; 2 Chronicles 31:14; Ezra 3:5; 7:16; 8:28). Every command in God’s Word presumes the ability of mankind to exercise his freewill to obey or disregard it. Divine Judgment corresponds to the ability of humans to make correct or incorrect responses to divine instruction, for which they will be rewarded or punished (Ecclesiastes 12:13,14; 2 Corinthians 5:10). Because of this, the apostle Paul ‘persuaded men,’ which would have been wasted effort if it were impossible for men to make the decision to obey God and prepare for Judgment (Amos 4:12).

Second, it is equally clear from the Bible that God knows everything or has foreknowledge. We find Him “*declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done...*” (Isaiah 46:10). Only God can accurately and consistently foretell what things will come to pass (Isaiah 42:9; 48:3).

Consequently, hundreds of prophecies (some made thousands of years before their fulfillment) throughout the Bible have all come true in every detail. In addition, God foreknew that mankind would sin, and therefore need a Savior (Titus 1:2-3; 1 Peter 1:18-20). Aware through His foreknowledge also that wicked men would crucify Jesus Christ, He used that circumstance to bring about the saving sacrifice of the Messiah for the sins of mankind (Acts 2:23). He also foreknows who will be saved (1 Peter 1:2).

Third, the **foreknowledge of God and predestination or foreordaining** by God are not the same thing. The biblical references to “predestination” pertain to God’s decision to save eternally, not *individuals*, but **the class of souls who obey Him** (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4,5,11). God’s plan of salvation “*was foreordained before the foundation of the world*” (1 Peter 1:20).

“Foreknowledge” is an accommodation for humans who are confined to time – past, present and future. However, God, Who is not subject to time but Who is eternal, views everything – past, present and future from the human viewpoint – as having already occurred. Therefore, God told Joshua that He had given to him Jericho, though the Israelites had not yet captured that city (Joshua

6:2). Earlier, God had told Abraham that He had made of him a great nation with many descendants and “*a father of many nations*” (Genesis 17:5), though Abraham had not observed that yet; but for God Who is not bound by time, it was a reality. For God, it is not a case of what *will* happen in the future, but because God is not bound by time, everything has already occurred. He merely reports in several biblical passages what from His vantage has already happened, though for mankind who is bound by time, many things remain yet in the future.

Therefore, God did not **foreordain** or **predestinate** Judas to betray Jesus Christ, but He did **foreknow** that Judas would do that (John 17:12; Acts 1:16). God, then, had recorded in prophecy about the betrayal of His Son, and it came to pass or was fulfilled. God did not **force** Judas to betray our Lord, but He simply saw what Judas would do and prophesied about it. All future events from man’s standpoint have already occurred from God’s viewpoint. **God does not interfere with free moral agency, but he simply sees beyond the vantage point of humans.**

All past, present, and future events have already occurred from God’s perspective, and so He **foreknows**, but **foreknowledge** does not