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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Systematic Theology

TRANSCRIPT

“The Holy Trinity, *or* the Uniqueness of Christianity, part II”

[Message] Last time we were studying the doctrine of the Trinity or the uniqueness of Christianity. And we had begun by setting forth in our outline Roman I, the proof of the doctrine. And under that had discussed capital A, the Bible recognizes three as God. And then capital B, the Bible recognizes three as distinct persons. And then capital C, the Bible reveals three as one essence or we could put it one in essence. We discussed, by the way, under that heading Deuteronomy chapter 6 in verse 4, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.”

And then we under capital D discussed the Bible refers to the trinity explicitly in the Old Testament and the New Testament. And then concluded with a few suggestions by way of illustrations. But I have tried to warn you not to press the illustrations too far, for every one of them is a human illustration and consequently you cannot, in the human illustration, adequately give examples of the character of the Trinity. For God, of course, is infinite. And it is impossible for us to adequately represent God.

That is why, of course, an idol can never adequately represent God. That is why an idol, no matter what it may be, is always anathema to God. That is why if, for example, we say we don't really have idols, we just have statues and images that point us in our worship to God that that too is very distasteful to God -- it is sin -- because, you

see, every idol and every image has about it corruptibility. And because it has corruptibility, it is not only representative of God, but it is an insult to God. And so we cannot expect then in our human illustrations to adequately represent our infinite God.

Now, I would like to sum up the doctrine of the trinity positively by saying that what Christians believe and what the New Testament and Old Testament teach is that there is one God who eternally subsists in a plurality of persons, three, no less and no more, one God who eternally subsists in a plurality of persons. Three, no less and no more. We wanted to expand, we could say God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit.

Now, Roman II in our outline, The Problems of the Doctrine, The Problems of the Doctrine. Now, these may be expressed in two ways: Capital A, Problems with the Deity of Christ, Problems with the Deity of Christ. Now, of course, it’s nice for us, as Christians, to say we accept the doctrine of the trinity, and that is what the Bible teaches. But, of course, those who do not know anything about Christianity and have not bothered to read the Bible do find difficulty with the trinity. Some of their difficulty is logical. As I suggested last time, there was one person who said that all you need to know to know that Christianity is not true is first grade arithmetic because how can one be three and at the same time three be one? That ought to be sufficient to let everyone know that the Christian doctrine of the trinity is irrational and surely untrue.

But then there are those who do bother to read the Bible a little bit, and they profess to have discovered things in the Bible that refute some of the cardinal aspects of the doctrine of the Trinity. And one of the things that they think that certain texts refute is the deity of Jesus Christ.

Now, we have not attempted up to this point to set forth the deity of Christ and that would take us an hour. And when we get to the subject of Christology ultimately, if some of you are still with us, then we shall discuss this. But there are some problem texts that I think it would be interesting for us to at least consider briefly. And one of them is

John chapter 14 in verse 28, John chapter 14 in verse 28. Now, this text is thought by some to say very plainly that Jesus Christ is not God. And of course if it should say that Jesus Christ is not God, then we could not accept the doctrine of the trinity because one of the cardinal features of the doctrine of the trinity is that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are each God.

Now, John chapter 14 in verse 27 says, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.”

Now, how is it possible for Jesus to say, “My Father is greater than I” and for us at the same time to say that Jesus Christ is God? If he is God how can he say “My Father is greater than I”? If he is not God, then the text seems to make very good sense, “My Father is greater than I.” How would we answer something like this? Well, I think of course that we can say right at the beginning that the text says that Jesus said my father is greater than I. He does not say my God is greater than I. And the fact that he says my Father is greater than I indicates that he is speaking out of his office as the son. And, of course, it was the duty of the son to come from heaven and to do the will of the father while he was here upon the earth to carry out his will. And so it is possible that our Lord is speaking out of this relationship that he bore as son to father. In other words, out of his relationship of temporary subordination since he is the son carrying out the will of the father upon the earth.

Furthermore, as many of the ancient theologians said, he is equal to his father as touching his Godhead, but he is less than the father as touching his manhood. And so if he is speaking of himself then as the man who has come to do the will of God, his father, as the perfect man, then speaking out of his human nature it would be perfectly proper for him to say, my father is greater than I. Not greater in essence but in the sense that he

is the one who leads me, directs me, is over me, I am subordinate to him, I do his will in the matters that are before me, the matter of doing God’s will for the procurement of man’s salvation.

I have often tried to illustrate this by human illustrations and of course all human illustrations are inadequate. But in this city there is a firm which is well known to us who are Christians. It is the [name redacted] Company about the stockholders in that company. And, of course, I have no understanding of the inner workings of the [name redacted] Company. I do not know anything who owns interests in the business and how much. But let’s just suppose that each of these brothers were completely brothers in every way, and let’s just suppose for the sake of an illustration that the three each owned thirty-three and a third percent of that business.

Let’s also assume that one of them as is I think the case or at least was [name redacted] is the president of that company and is responsible for the direction of it. And let’s suppose that a second [name redacted], I think that probably Mr. [name redacted] is president now, and probably [name redacted] is the chairman of the board. But let’s presume the old way in which the company was operated and that [name redacted] was the general manager of the company responsible for its operations in the plant. And then let’s suppose that the third brother, [name redacted], is in charge of sales.

And then let’s suppose that Mr. [name redacted] is walking down the street and he meets a customer. And this customer is one who has bought their machinery and knows a great deal about machinery. And let’s presume that Mr. [name redacted] knows very little about machinery, but it’s the duty of Mr. [name redacted] to handle all of the design of the machinery. And he meets this customer on the street, and they engage in conversation. And finally the customer says to him you know, Mr. [name redacted], I’ve got a new idea about a machine, and I’m wondering if you could make it for me. And then he launches into a very technical discussion of a piece of machinery, which is way over Mr. [name redacted]’s head. Well, that’s not his duty in the company. I would

imagine that it would be perfectly all right for him to say, I’m sorry. I cannot help you. When it comes to machinery, [name redacted] knows far more than I do. He’s greater than I am in the realm of machinery.

And it seems to me that that is precisely the sense in which our Lord says, My father is greater than I. He does not intend to say that the father is greater than he is in essence, but he means in office. He is subordinate to the father. And when it comes to carrying out the will of God upon the earth, it is the father’s will that is preeminent. He simply does what the father says and what he sees the father doing as he puts it in the Gospel of John. So I think that this text does not in any way to say that Jesus Christ is not God.

Particularly in the light of the fact that it is in John’s gospel that we have at the beginning of this gospel -- and, John, after all wrote this verse. He knew of its existence. But yet he began his gospel by saying in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God and the word became flesh, so he saw no contradiction. He saw that Jesus Christ was God, but he could say as son my father is greater than I in the redemptive sphere, in the temporal situation in which he was as son of God at this time.

Now, there is another text which is often also been used as a text to support a claim that Jesus Christ was not God. It’s the text that has to do with the rich young ruler. One of the passages is Matthew chapter 19. And beginning with the 16th verse, Matthew chapter 19, “And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.”

Now, isn’t this strange for Jesus? Good Master, the rich young ruler says. Jesus said to him why callest thou me good? There is one good that is God. He seems to

refute the epithet of good saying it belongs only to God. Why should we not say that this is Jesus Christ’s denial of his deity?

Now, many of our contemporary theologians say this. They are Unitarian. They are looking around for texts which in the Bible might support their viewpoint, and this is one. How should we answer this? Well, always in the study of the Bible the answers are to be found in the Bible. Now, will you notice what the man said when he came to Jesus? He ran to him and he said, good teacher. He did not say, good God. He did not say, O good Jehovah or Lord, good teacher. He obviously did not believe that Jesus Christ was God. He called him teacher.

Now, the mistake that he made was not in the use of the word “good.” The mistake he made was in the use of the word “master” with good. And our Lord wants to be sure to bring him to the point. Of course, he is interested in the question, and that’s why he doesn’t labor the point. He doesn’t say now I want to teach a little theology like Dr. Johnson is going to be teaching a couple of thousand years from now. So he’s not interested in that angle, but he does say why are you calling me good? You’ve taken an adjective that belongs only to God, and you’ve put it with a name which is human, teacher. There’s no good but one, that is God.

Now, if that man had responded, O but Lord thou art divine, Jesus would have said looking around on the crowd. I have not found so great faith no not in all of Israel. But you see as long as he took an adjective that belonged to God only and put it with a man, he was, in a sense, being an idolater.

Now, I’ve often used this illustration -- and some of you have heard it. You’ll pardon me if I tell it again. But I used to love to play golf. I spent many years out on the golf course when I was young, particularly playing in golf tournaments around the south and in the east, and I always wanted to play Cherry Hills in Denver. It was the site of the United States Open and some other important tournaments, and I always wanted to play Cherry Hills. So let’s just reconstruct a situation, and let’s just suppose that I’m a person

who knows a little bit about God, but I’m rather provincial. I’m a southerner, and, consequently, I don’t really know what is going on in the world. That’s what they think about southerners, you know. We don’t really know what’s going on in the world. So I don’t really know what’s going on in the world, but at the same time I now have a job with NASA or with some other important governmental agency in which I’m engaged in highly secret research, but I’ve never seen the president’s face.

And so I have all of this information in my mind and time comes for a vacation, and I go to Cherry Hills to play golf. And I walk out to the first tee and a man comes walking down, kind of an elderly fellow, and I notice that with him there are some men who are dressed in ordinary suits, but I didn’t pay too much attention to it. And I go over to the first tee ready to play, and he’s there, too. And he’s by himself and I’m by myself and so I say, You want to join me? And he says, Fine. So we begin to play and gets up, tees up his ball and knocks one about one hundred and fifty yards up in the air, off a little over in the trees. And I get up and swing and I hit one about two hundred and seventy-five yards, right straight down the fairway. [Laughter]

And as we walk down the fairway I say to him “what do you do?” He probably thinks it’s a joke. And well I have a little job in Washington. And he says, “what do you do?” I said, well I work for the government too. I work down there in NASA. And to tell you the truth, sir, I’m doing some very important work, not very many people know the kind of work that I am engaged in. And if you won’t tell anybody up there in Washington, I’ll tell you precisely what I am doing. [Laughter] And then I proceed to tell this secret information to the man who has the perfect right to know it. But you see so long as I do not know the person to whom I divulge this information, it’s just as if I told it to a Russian. And so I am guilty of treachery because I didn’t know his identity when I said that.

And so the man who comes to Jesus and says, Good teacher, is guilty of treachery. For he has taken an adjective that belongs to God and has applied it to one whom he

does not know is God. You see the text that men often appeal to, to disprove the doctrines of the word of God only after we study them, bring out some of the beauties of the truth of the word of God. So I do not have any problems with the doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ. And let’s dispense with that and let’s go on to capital B, Problems with the Nature of the Trinity.

Now this, of course, is more of the trinity, but remember that we not only have problems with the deity of Christ or the deity of the spirit in the trinity but we also have problems which concern the relationship of the persons of the trinity. Now, when a man believes that Jesus Christ is not God -- if, for example, he believes with the Arians -- that’s A-R-I-A-N-S, from Arias, a leader in the early church -- the Arians believed there was time when Jesus Christ was not. There was a time when he was not. Their ideas of Jesus Christ were that he was almost God but not quite. He was like God, possessed in essence like him but did not possess the same essence as God, like God but not quite God. There was a time when he was not. Now such are Unitarians of course if they believe that the father is God, but the spirit is not God and the son is not God. Now, that is one problem of course with the relationship of the trinity.

But the one I want to say just a word about now is what we call sabellianism, S-A-B-E-L-L-I-A-N-I-S-M, S-A-B-E-L-L-I-A-N-I-S-M, S-A-B-E-L-L-I-A-N-I-S-M. This is a recording, [laughter] sabellianism, sabellianism. Now, this term is derived from Sabellius, he was a heretic who was condemned by the council at Rome in the year 253 AD. Sabellius believed what a lot of people believe today, though they don’t really realize it. He believed that there were three persons in the Trinity all right, but these three persons were really only three modes of existence, three modes in which one God appears. They weren’t really persons in the true trinitarian sense but just modes of the one God’s existence. There were not really three persons, but God existed in the form of the son, in the form of the spirit, in the form of the father, and at one time and one form, at another time in another form. They believed in the deity of the persons of the Trinity, but they

did not accept the true personality of the persons of the Trinity and, consequently, sabellianism. Now, that was condemned by the early church and is a heresy, for it does not, you see, give us the true picture of one God who subsists in three persons.

Now, roman III, The Point of the Doctrine, The Point of the Doctrine. There is a rational basis for the Trinity, although we would not seek to prove the truth of the Trinity on this basis.

Capital A, The trinity is essential to any proper theism, the trinity is essential to any proper theism, T-H-E-I-S-M. Now, theism, of course, is belief in the existence of God. Trinitarianism is the belief in the Trinity. Atheism is a belief in the nonexistence of God. Theism is the belief in the existence of God. All Christians are theists, but not every theist is a Christian. A Mohammedan is a Theist, a Jew is a theist, but they are not Trinitarians, nor are they, of course, Christians. But part of Christian doctrine is theism.

Now, I think that it is logical in theism for us to have a Trinity, and for this reason. Let’s assume that God is love. Many people are willing to grant that assumption. By the way, we do not really know that God is love apart from Christianity, but it’s one of those doctrines that has been taken over by those who are not Christians.

In fact, if you will study the doctrines of God of the heathen cults, you will find that their Gods were quite different from the Gods of the Bible. They were Gods who hated. They were gods who were cheaters. They were Gods who were liars. They had gods who had sexual lust. They had Gods who had intercourse with men, all types of things. The idea of a holy God was something that was almost unique with Judaism and Christianity. But let’s assume that God is love. Most are willing to grant that.

Now, if God is really love, then that implies relationship. You cannot really exercise love if you do not have an object. And so if God is love, then you must have some kind of relationship. But if he is God then, of course, that implies a perfection in his relationship. A perfect love, for example. Therefore he can only realize the perfection of his love within himself, within the realm of the divine. He must have someone whom

he can love perfectly, express completely his love, so he must have an object. But, of course, someone might say, if you are going to really love perfectly, you must love without hope of return. Because if you love in the hope of return then, of course, that’s a selfish love.

To have a completely unselfish love, you must have a relationship that has an object, but that object does not and is not impelled to return your love. What I am getting at is this: if God is perfect, he can only realize himself as love through relationships within his own being. Since he is eternal, his relationships must antedate the creation. He must have loved from eternity because he’s an eternal being. And if he must have an object who does not have to return that love, then there must be at least three persons involved in this love triangle. For, you see, if he loves the son and the son is the only other person, you might say he loves the son because the son returns his love. But if there is also a spirit, the three, then we may have the perfect expression of love of which there is no required return. And thus even logically we come to something like a Trinity because we must have love perfected. That may only be done within the divine.

We must have love that is eternal that rules out all of human participation in this love. And since we must have at least enough persons for there to be response without impelling or compulsion, then we must have at least three, so that the father theoretically may love the son who in turn may love the spirit who in turn may love the Father. And thus each loves out of his own desire to express himself perfectly in love with no requirement or compulsion that that love be returned to that other person. So the idea of a trinity is a very logical thing, really.

Secondly, capital B, The Doctrine of the Trinity is Essential to any Proper Revelation. Turn over to John chapter 1, verse 18, John 1, verse 18, “No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” Now notice what this text says. No man has seen God at any time.

Now, I would take it that that means that no one has ever seen in his essence the divine being. The Old Testament says God was seen by Moses, and so we must understand from the context that he saw a representation of God. He saw something like a theophany. Gideon said that he had seen God. Samson’s father said that he had seen God. We have seen God. They saw representations of God. They saw what they call theophanies, appearances of God before the incarnation. Abraham saw God, but yet John says no man hath seen God at any time. He means by that no man has ever seen God in his essence. The Old Testament says that God said no man shall see me and live. We cannot look upon the essence of God. We’ve talked about this before. And, of course, I know that you remember it.

Now, he says no man hath seen God, the only begotten son who is in the bosom of the father. He has led him forth into full revelation. It is the son who has made known to us the father. Now, this is important that it be the son who has made known the father. No one else can really make known God. Let’s just say for example that you are talking to the Prophet Isaiah. Take a good look at me. I’d like to tell you a few things about God. And if I were the Prophet Isaiah I should probably speak with a great deal of authority and with a great deal of personal experience because I have had a great deal of personal experience of God. And by reason of my knowledge of the ways of God as expressed in the Scriptures, you might become convinced that what I had to say had a great deal to do with God.

In fact, you may leave after hearing one of my prophecies and say, you know I’ve never heard a prophet like Isaiah. He really brings me into the presence of God as no other man I know. But you could never really be sure. You see you can never be sure about God until God himself reveals himself to us. That’s why the prophets were always inadequate. They could never really give us a complete and certain revelation of God. Only God can do that. We’d always have a little question in our mind, I wonder if Isaiah

was really authenticated by God. In the final analysis, we have to have it from God himself and so finally God himself came.

Now, of course, if there were just one person in the trinity and the one God were to get off his throne leave his throne and come down here among men, what would happen to his universe, if he should become man, should subordinate himself in a real way as Jesus did? Well, that’s precisely what he did. He subordinated himself really. And he was dependent upon the father for everything. But if we have God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, then we may have a proper revelation from God that comes from God himself, and at the same time this universe may remain within the control of a God who sits upon the throne as the author and initiator of all the divine activity.

Capital C, The Trinity is Essential to any Proper Redemption, any Proper Redemption. In 2 Corinthians chapter 5 in verse 19, the Apostle Paul states, “To wit, (While you are finding it, I’ll read a couple of verses beginning with the 17th.) “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit that is that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”

Only God can reconcile us to God. Satisfaction cannot be made unless there is someone able to pay for man’s sin. No one ought to pay the price but man. But only God can pay the price. So we are in a dilemma. We ought to pay the price of our sins, but we cannot pay it. God can pay the price, but he’s not a man. And so the answer is simple, one person of the trinity took to himself human nature, became a man. Although possessed of divine nature became a man, came to this earth, was born as an infant, lived his life, reached its climax when he died upon Calvary’s cross as the Godman, the man who is able or who ought to pay our representative, ought to pay for us, the God who

can pay and in this person of Jesus Christ, the saving work was accomplished. God meted out upon him the judgment, the penalty, the punishment for sin that was due us. He bore it to the full.

He, because he is that infinite son of God, may bear infinite judgment for infinite sin. And our sin was of that kind, and so he bore it to its full. His sacrifice is meritorious by reason of who he is, the Son of God, an infinitely valuable sacrifice. And so in a sense God is with Christ. And when he is with Christ, he is with men again. And we, by faith as we believe this provision that is made for us, we, in effect, are with Christ and thus are with God. And in Jesus Christ, the one mediator between God and men, peace has finally been made. Reconciliation has been accomplished. Men ought to, they were not able to. God could, but didn’t have to.

But now we have a Godman who could and who wanted to, and thus we have salvation. Now, that is impossible if we do not have someone to come from heaven, and thus we need a trinity. So the point of the doctrine of the trinity is not just idle doctrine, it isn’t for us simply to know merely that there is a God who subsists in three persons. This is necessary for our salvation. It’s necessary for the revelation of the truth about God to us. And, of course, it is also necessary for any proper understanding of the character of God himself.

Now, that finishes us with the trinity for the moment. So we are going to make a beginning on the decrees since we have a good bit to go over, and we will take it up next Monday night, too. But let’s make a beginning tonight on the decrees.

The Decrees of God or the Foreordination of God, the Foreordination of God and the Freedom of Man. And I think that we ought to read a few passages of Scripture. So let’s turn back to the Old Testament to Isaiah chapter 14. The passage we had last Monday night in Isaiah, and let’s read verses 24 and 27, Isaiah chapter 14, verse 24 and 27. Isaiah chapter 14 in verse 24,

“The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand.” (Will you notice that? These are important words because they express the character of God. “Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand.” Verse 27,) “For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall annul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?”

Now, we are faced with another one of our subjects which is one of the difficult ones of theology, the subject of the foreordination of God and the freedom of man. At least it’s a difficult subject for those of us who are simple-minded, as some of us in the room are simple-minded. On the other hand, we must not, as some have suggested that we do, just forget the whole matter of divine decrees because we cannot really if we think at all. It is a much greater difficulty for us to forget the matter of the divine decrees than to study them and not come to some final solution of them. For if there is no such thing as a divine decree, do you know what kind of universe we have? Well, can you imagine yourself on a 707 Boeing plane flying at forty thousand feet altitude through thick clouds on a dark night without a pilot, without any understanding whatsoever what’s in front of you or behind you? Can you imagine that? That’s what it is to live without a divine decree. That’s what it really is like. You would not have the slightest indication of what might happen the next time you drew a breath. And so while we cannot understand everything about the divine decree, what a hopeless situation we would be in if we did not have a divine decree.

Now, let me state, first of all, what the decree is. This is roman I in our outline. The Statement of the Doctrine of God’s Decree. The Statement of the Doctrine of the God’s Decree. I am just going to give you a couple of simple definitions. The statement of the doctrine of God’s decree and, capital A, for the Presbyterians, the Westminster Shorter Catechism. This is the definition. Would you like to take it down? I’ll give it to

you slowly enough so you can take it down. This is the statement on the decrees. The decrees of God are his eternal purpose according to the counsel of his will. The decrees of God are his eternal purpose according to the counsel of his will; whereby for his own glory he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass. The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will; whereby for his own glory he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

Now, before I give you another definition, just notice these things about it. If you’ve got a pencil lead do this, just underline, underline eternal purpose. The decrees of God are his eternal purpose. Notice that, eternal purpose. And then notice, according to the counsel of his will. In other words, the decrees of God flow out of the counsel of God’s will. And remember the kind of God we have, his attributes? They are good. They are righteous. They are just. They are beneficent. They are his decrees which are in accordance with the counsel of his will. They express the perfection of his being. We can trust them. Whereby for his own glory, everything is designed to glorify God in his decree. So underline “for his own glory.” He hath foreordained. That means to mark out a long time back, before him really -- Foreordained, whatsoever comes to pass.

Now, next week I’m going to see who much is involved in this, but I think you already know. But, you see, God’s decrees actually touch even the hairs of our head. That’s what the Bible says. Not one of them falls out that God doesn’t know about. And then the decrees of God touch the little sparrows. All of those little tiny things. God knows everyone of them. He’s the kind of person who says don’t bother me with those little things. Whatsoever comes to pass.

Now, not all of you are Presbyterians, so I want to give you a good Baptist definition. This is the definition of A. H. Strong, and you’ll see that they are very, very similar. Mr. Strong leaves out something that the Westminster Confession of the Faith has but perhaps has something that the Westminster Confession does not have. This is what he says, “By the decrees of God, we mean that eternal plan, by the decrees of God we

mean that eternal plan by which God has rendered certain all the events of the universe, past, present, and future. By the decrees of God we mean that eternal plan by which God has rendered certain all the events of the universe past, present, and future.”

Now, you’ll notice that this definition is not quite as complete. It’s a good one, but it’s not quite as complete. He omits the ideas of the harmony of this decree with the counsel of his will. He omits the idea that it is for the glory of God, although he believes both of these things. Now, this is the statement of God’s decree.

Next time we are going to look at the nature of the decrees. And then we are going to deal, too, with some other problems. Is foreordination inconsistent with free agency? Is foreordination a doctrine that destroys all motive to exertion? If everything is going to be within the will of God, then why bother? Is foreordination a sin inconsistent with holiness? Is it possible for a holy God to foreordain sin? Is not foreordination just fatalism? We’ll discuss these things next Monday night.

Let’s close with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the greatness of our God. And we thank Thee that Thou hast an eternal purpose which Thou hast purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. And we thank Thee, Lord, that Thou art sovereign because we know that when we turn to Thee, we turn to one who is the ultimate cause of everything in this universe, and therefore we can trust Thee. And we thank Thee that we are not on a jet plane in the midst of darkness and the unknown without a pilot. But we thank Thee that our destiny rests in the hands of a loving and omnipotent and sovereign God who has made every provision for us through Jesus Christ. Accept our thanks and increase our devotion.

For Jesus’ sake. Amen.

