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***Defending the Protestant Reformed Faith  
By the Proclamation of the Doctrines of Grace***  
Thoughts from the Study of Rev David G. Farrow Pastor  
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## Foreknowledge:

If there is one thing in the Bible many believers find difficult to understand, it is the doctrine of foreknowledge. The word "foreknowledge" means to see before; to know beforehand; to see and know the future; to foreordain. God is God; therefore He sees the future. God knows exactly what will happen, every single event and its consequences, He knows exactly what could happen (but will not), every single possibility and its consequences.

Therefore God knows exactly what man will do, every single act and its consequences, every single possibility and its consequences. God is God. He is eternal and omniscient (knowing all). He knows the past, the present, and the future. And note: He knows it all eternally, forever. God knew every event of world history before the foundation of the world. He knew every event of a person's life before the foundation of the world.

Now in light of this, a question arises that is extremely important. If God knew all the terrible consequences of evil and death that would enter and overtake the world, if He knew the world would even kill His Son, why did He go ahead and create the world? Why did He not choose another way to do things? In the simplest terms possible, there are at least two reasons.

**1. God wanted a creature, a being with free will.** God created man because God willed to have the presence of a being who could freely choose to love and worship Him, to obey and fellowship with Him and to serve and reign with Him.

In His foreknowledge, God knew the immense cost to Himself of calling a people by His grace. However, He was willing to face the pain and the hurt to His heart, the abuse and shame to His person, and the rejection and rebellion against His will, all in order that those who have been called according to His free and sovereign grace might know His glorious mercy and perfect love, and that they might experience all the glory of Himself and of heaven.

**2. God did not choose another way to create and deal with man, because the way God created man was the best way:** perfect, in a perfect environment, and in perfect fellowship with God (cp. Genesis 2:16-17). Because the way God deals with man is the best way: in love, in the mercy and grace of His Son.

Love is the greatest force on earth. It is the very nature of God Himself (1 John 4:8). Love will change and transform, help and give, win and conquer when nothing else will. Love will cause a person to reach out and help another and even cause a person to sacrifice his life quicker than any other force on earth (John 3:16; John 15:13; Romans 5:8).

**Note one other point that is critical**, a point that stresses the glorious love and care of God: it is the determinate counsel of God.

The word "determinate" means pre-determined, appointed, decreed, ordained, planned, and purposed. It is a plan set within bounds, within a certain boundary. It is a purpose that is set, marked out, determined, and decreed to happen.

The word "counsel" means to advise, counsel, design, will; to give a piece of advice. It carries the force of being willed and determined. Since God knows exactly what would happen in every situation, He plans for the best thing to happen. God takes counsel, puts all things under advisement and chooses the best way.

We may not understand some things that happen nor why they happen the way they do. We may think something else or some other way would have been better.

**1. We cannot see into the future.** No man can ..... but we can know this: God knows, for He deals with the future as well as the present. God deals with eternity, with the whole view. Simply stated...

- ❖ God knows the future, everything that could happen as well as what is best and should happen.
- ❖ God takes counsel, purposes, determines, plans and chooses the best thing to happen.

**2. We who love God and are called according to His purpose know that all things work together for good.** How do we know? Well because we do love God and are called according to His purpose.

God knew that those of us who are believers would respond to His call to follow and to love the Lord Jesus Christ. As Paul states in Romans:

*"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Romans 8:29).*

Note why we are predestinated: Paul reveals the key to us: *"that he [God's Son] might be the firstborn among many brethren."* God has determined that the Lord Jesus Christ might have many brothers, many who will live and fellowship with Him who is the first Person, the pre-eminent Person throughout the universe.

This is the reason God chooses the very best events and the very best way for us. It is the reason He works all things out for good for believers. God knows all the possibilities; therefore, He is able to take counsel and determine, to plan the very best for us. Believe and trust this glorious truth.

## **Voices from the past:**

*"The will is not free ... the affections love as they do and the will chooses as it does because of the state of the heart, and ... the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked"*

*A.W. Pink*

*"The friends of free will are the enemies of free grace"*

*John Trapp*

(This article can also be viewed on my blog at  
[www.norfolkman.blogspot.com](http://www.norfolkman.blogspot.com).)