



“And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.” 1 John 4: 21

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**Sunday – March 12, 2017**

## Heart to Heart...

John Calvin taught a doctrine back in the 1500’s that many religions hold to today. His doctrine says that every individual has been “predestined” for salvation or condemnation. According to his teachings, God has already determined whether you will spend eternity in heaven or hell. In other words, man has no choice in the matter. God has decided it and that’s that. He called it “*irresistible grace!*” It was from this doctrine that the “once saved always saved” doctrine arose out of.

The word “predestined” is found in Scripture. Paul spoke of it in Ephesians 1. The word itself means “to mark off a boundary before.” What did Paul mean? God “predestined” everything **in Christ**. Before the foundation of the world, God “marked off a boundary” what those in Christ would be. God didn’t say some would be marked off to be saved and lost. When you are planning to build a house, you use blueprints and mark that house off on the land. That’s a “predestined” house. God worked everything out in Christ before the foundation of the world that anyone who came to Christ Jesus became part of His “predestined” or “predetermined” plan!

If God has already planned that someone would be lost or saved that completely goes against His Scripture. God speaks: “*Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*” (I Timothy 2:4) The apostle Peter penned the truth about God: “*The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*” (II Peter 3:9) That doesn’t sound like God “predetermined” who would be saved or lost does it? Salvation is available to **anyone** who comes to His gospel message as taught in Scripture. Think of it this way, why would Jesus send His apostles into the world preaching the truth of the gospel knowing that God has already determined who would be saved or lost? That’s a lot of wasted effort and time! If Calvin’s teaching is right about “*irresistible grace*” then it’s all set. No need to teach or preach because God already has purposed each person.

Why am I writing this? Because today people just blindly follow religion or religious groups without any idea what they believe or teach at their core. They hear religions speaking the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and God our Father using Scripture and believe they are teaching the truth. We need to be more like the Berean brethren: “*Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see where these things were so.*” (Acts 17:11) The words eagerness and examining should get our attention. It’s what is lacking today. We need to desire and seek His truth and to make sure about the things taught and believed upon are true. Religion is all around. The truth of God must be sought at all cost. If you were asked why you believe what you believe, could you show them from Scripture? Think about it!!!

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