

Doctrinal Statement

Work of God

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God's perfect will and work began at creation (Rev. 4:11). Creation is distinct from God, yet it is ever dependent upon Him (Isa. 42:5; Acts 17:24). At one point God created the universe from nothing (Heb. 11:3), but the biblical story begins with God giving order, function, and purpose to His creation, creating humans to act as His vice-regents and continue the order and spread of shalom in the world (Gen. 1-2). From the beginning, God's glory radiated as humans lived in an unblemished union with the Father in order to carry out His perfect decree: the shalom of His presence living and interacting in a relationship with all of humanity (Gen 2:15-17; Isa. 42:5-9). While God has supreme rank, power, strength, and efficacy, He limited Himself on how His plan would be actualized by choosing to partner with humans (Matt. 28:18-20; Gen. 3:1-13). As moral agents in complete control of our own decisions, we chose life on our own terms and wisdom and were separated from a perfect relationship with the Father, consequently bringing hell on earth instead of His order and presence of shalom (Heb. 4:5-6).

But God's perfect plans do not fail (Ps. 33:11). Before the foundation of the world, God chose Jesus to be the Messiah, humanities way back to a restored right relationship with Him, and the way in which His shalom would ultimately permeate the world (Eph. 1:4-6; 1 Pet. 1:18-22; Col 1:15-23). He predestined that all who, under their own free will and desire, put their faith in the completed work of Jesus will experience a restored relationship with the Father and continue His order directing shalom as restored image bearers (Eph 1:4-14; 2:1-9). Because of His love, God desires that all mankind be restored to a relationship with Him (John 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:3-6; 2 Pet. 3:9), but He allows humans to freely choose to accept or reject His rule. Those who do not choose to believe in Jesus as the Messiah will be eternally cast out from God's presence (James 1:13). God continues to reign and move the universe to a new heaven and new earth

through His providence carried out in His restored image bearers (Rev. 21-22), indwelt with His guiding Spirit (1 Cor. 2), and through His undeniable intervening hand (Ps. 66:7; Acts 9).