



The Elective Decrees of Supra- & Infralapsarianism; When a Man & Woman from Each View Marry Problems Emerge; Nestorius v. Cyril; Hypostatic Union Defined

6. Those in Reformed theology that are hyper-Calvinists subscribe to the **supralapsarian order of the elective decrees:**
 - 1- The decree to elect some to be saved and to reprobate all others.
 - 2- The decree to create men, both elect and non-elect.
 - 3- The decree to permit the fall.
 - 4- The decree to provide salvation for the elect.
 - 5- The decree to apply salvation to the elect.
7. Those who reject this branch of Reformed theology may be classified as “moderate Calvinists” although the term “Biblicist” is better. These subscribe to the **infralapsarian order of the elective decrees:**
 - 1- The decree to create mankind.
PRINCIPLE: You cannot elect what does not exist. For God to elect anyone, they must first of all be created.
 - 2- The decree to permit the Fall.
PRINCIPLE: Condemnation must precede salvation. If man is in need of salvation then he is obviously in a fallen condition.
 - 3- The decree to provide salvation for all mankind.
PRINCIPLE: The doctrine of unlimited atonement, the principle that Christ died as a substitute for the sins of all mankind, not just a predetermined few.
 - 4- The decree to elect those who believe in Christ and to leave in just condemnation all who do not believe.
PRINCIPLE: God provides all men free will to accept or reject His grace offer of salvation through faith alone in Christ alone.
 - 5- The decree to apply salvation to those who believe in Christ.
PRINCIPLE: Each individual must first choose God's plan of salvation, after which, God decrees to save that person's soul and impute eternal life to his human spirit.
8. Protestant youth today are discovering that there are real and serious differences that exist among their associates' respective churches.
9. This is especially true when these differences challenge basic beliefs regarding one's salvation and assurance. This is seen in the growing popularity of “lordship salvation” which is a slippery slope toward “limited atonement.”
10. But the most pronounced controversy occurs when Protestant young people become attracted to each other and then through dating discover that one is infralapsarian while the other is supralapsarian.
11. This creates a problem that becomes intensified when they continue the relationship to the stage of compatibility. Emotions influence both to ignore the controversy and continue with the relationship.
12. If they deny the problem long enough they will often arrive at the stage of rapport and become locked-in to a future together and plan matrimony.



13. This is dangerous because the issue that divides them has been suppressed yet it must be dealt with at some point. And after the wedding, and especially after children are born, is not the time to bring this monster out of hiding.
14. Here are the two theologies that must eventually do battle:
Young adults who are infralapsarian have been taught:
- that salvation is given by grace to *anyone* who responds to the Gospel through faith alone,
 - that one's assurance of salvation is found in the *promises* given to the sinner who believes in Christ, and
 - that "good works" are not only commanded of the believer but *only the believer can produce them* and then only through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the Word of God resident in his soul.
15. Young adults who are supralapsarian have been taught:
- that salvation is predestined for the *elect only* and is appropriated by means of the "gift of grace" which empowers the elect to believe in Christ,
 - that one's assurance of salvation is found in lifelong *perseverance* in the production of "fruits" or "good works," and
 - that the *absence* of such perseverance indicates such a person is not among the elect and is therefore reprobate predestined to the lake of fire.
16. It is obvious that these two theologies are at loggerheads. Therefore, when a young man or woman who is infralapsarian considers matrimony with a young man or woman who is supralapsarian, then the following must be kept in mind:
- The young man is the spiritual leader of the household and the young woman is going to have difficulty pursuing her beliefs in this environment.
 - Without spiritual harmony the stability of the marriage is compromised.
 - The controversy will reach critical point when their children are old enough to be evangelized and, subsequently, taught the Bible.
 - This issue can be avoided in one of two ways: (1) the infralapsarian willingly accepts supralapsarian theology, or (2) the supralapsarian willingly accepts infralapsarian theology.
 - Such a decision should be made before marriage since once married the issue will force one spouse to convert under pressure or for both to compromise their beliefs in an effort to achieve harmony.
 - And, logically, the supralapsarian cannot know with confidence that his spouse is saved and thus is in potential violation of 2 Corinthians 6:14-16.
17. This is the kind of conundrum today's young Protestant believers face because of the theology created by Theodore Bèza, adopted as Calvinism, and enshrined in the Westminster Confession of Faith.
18. Thus we find in this controversy an illustration of a person who distorts what another says or writes to his own advantage and, by doing so, creates a system that becomes so entrenched that a clear presentation of truth is compromised.
19. This serves as an illustration of the situation that occurred in the early fifth century that resulted in the Council of Chalcedon in 451.



20. This controversy arose when Nestorius, a professor at the traditional School of Antioch which taught the literal-grammatical-historical interpretation of biblical manuscripts, preached against the doctrine of the hypostatic union taught by the progressive School of Alexandria which stressed the allegorical approach to the manuscripts.
21. Professors at Alexandria were teaching that Mary was the *theotokos*, the Mother of God, and Nestorius understood this to imply that the two natures of Christ were mixed, that is, that His deity took on certain aspects of His humanity and visa versa.
22. Cyril of Alexandria countered by attacking Nestorius for teaching heresy which resulted in Nestorius being deposed at the Council of Ephesus in 431.
23. Nestorius sought to distinguish the two natures of Christ but maintain the principle of one Person and was of the opinion that Alexandria placed too much stress on the deity of Christ at the expense of His humanity.
24. Cyril's counterattack was successful at Ephesus (431) and the ramifications that came out of the Council of Chalcedon (451) led to the demise of literal hermeneutics taught at the School of Antioch and the ascendancy of allegorical hermeneutics taught at the School of Alexandria.
25. This unfortunate circumstance indicates that the outcome was manipulated not only by human viewpoint but also by demon influence. We don't find much confirmation from present-day accounts of the events surrounding this issue. But back before political correctness was in flower there were objective, straightforward presentations one of which is none other than *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*—13th edition—copyright 1911.
26. We will not take the time to review this article since it is quite involved. But the crux of the subject addressed is that Nestorius defended himself in a book entitled *The Bazaar of Heraclides of Damascus*, a volume not discovered until around the year 1895 by Dr. H. Goussen.
27. A representative selection of extracts from *The Bazaar* has been given to English readers through J. F. Bethune-Baker's *Nestorius and His Teaching: A Fresh Examination of the Evidence*. This work makes it clear from Nestorius's own testimony that he never rejected the deity of Christ but rather sought to clarify its hypostatic union with His true humanity.
28. The next paragraph of our study took up the subject of "What Nestorius Really Wrote" in which we quoted liberally from the book by Bethune-Baker.
29. Excerpts from the 1911 edition of *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* and from *Nestorius and His Teaching* may be reviewed in *Clanking Chains* 324-328.
30. Because it was the central doctrine involved in the Nestorian controversy, we took time to define the term "hypostatic union."

Doctrine of the Hypostatic Union: A Summary

1. A precise definition of this doctrine is critical to establishing the correct identity of the Lord Jesus Christ as our God, Savior, and King.
2. To achieve accuracy it must be understood as according to Paul in Colossians 2:9 that "in Jesus Christ all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form."
3. We established from Scripture that all the divine attributes ascribed to God the Father and the Holy Spirit are also assigned to Christ.



4. And also, all the attributes ascribed to true humanity are also assigned to Christ, the sinful nature excepted.
5. These confirmations of biblical testimony support the following definition of the doctrine of the hypostatic union:

The Hypostatic Union: In the Person of Christ are two natures, inseparably united, without mixture or loss of separate identity, without loss or transfer of properties or attributes, the union being personal and eternal.

Beginning with the incarnation of Jesus Christ, a human nature was inseparably united forever with the divine nature of Jesus Christ. Yet the two natures remain distinct, whole, unchanged, without mixture or confusion, so that Jesus Christ is true humanity and undiminished deity in one Person forever.