

Ignatius

by John Gill

The sermon explores the life and teachings of Ignatius, emphasizing his views on predestination and the distinction between the elect and the wicked.

Scripture: Ephesians 1:4

Topics: "Martyrdom", "Predestination"

Description

John Gill discusses the life and teachings of Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch, emphasizing his writings that reflect on predestination and the eternal purpose of God. Ignatius highlights the distinction between those chosen by God and those destined for destruction, illustrating the grace that leads the elect to their appointed place in the kingdom. His epistles convey deep theological insights, including the nature of Christ's Deity and the perseverance of the saints, while also recounting the martyrdom of Polycarp, showcasing the stark contrast between the faithful and the unfaithful.

Transcript

The

CAUSE OF GOD AND TRUTH.

Part 4

Chapter 1--Of Predestination

Section 2--Ignatius. A.D. 110.

Ignatius was made bishop of Antioch, A.D. 71, according to Alsted,[1] and suffered martyrdom according to some,[2] in the eleventh year of Trajan, and according to others,[3] in the nineteenth year of that Emperor, A.D. 116. There are several epistles written by him still extant; among which is an Epistle to the Ephesians, and is thus inscribed:[4] "Ignatius, who is also Theophorus, To the blessed in the greatness of God the Father and fullness; th prowrismenth pro aiwnwn to the predestinated before ages, that is, before the world began; always to be a glory, abiding, immoveable, united and chosen in the true passion by the will of God the Father, and Jesus Christ our God; to the church, worthily blessed, which is in Ephesus of Asia, much joy in Christ Jesus, and in the unblemished grace." In which, besides the doctrines of Christ's Deity, and the saints perseverance, may be observed that of eternal predestination to grace and glory. In his epistle to the Magnesians,[5] he speaks of two sorts of persons, signified by "two pieces of money; the

one belongs to God, and the other to the world; which have each their own characters upon them, and every one shall go eiv ton idion topon, to his own place;" which Barnabas, the companion of the apostle Paul, calls, in his epistle,[6] wrismenon topon, "the anointed place;" for as wicked men, such as Judas, go to their own place, which is no other than hell-fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; so good men go to their own place, appointed by God for them, which is the kingdom, prepared for them from the foundation of the world, an which Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, and disciple of the apostle John, calls[7] ton ofeilomenon autoiv topon, "the place that is due unto them, not by works, but of grace." And here it may be proper to insert a passage out of an epistle[8] which the church of Smyrna, of which Polycarp was bishop, and to whom Ignatius wrote, one of his epistles, declaring, that when "the executioner sheathed his sword in Polycarp, such a quantity of blood came out as quenched the fire; and the whole multitude wondered that there was such a difference metaxu twn te apistwn kai twn eklektwn, between the infidels and the elect."

ENDNOTES:

[1] Thesaur. Chronol. Chron. 43, p. 450.

[2] Heiron. Catalog. Script. Eccl. s. 26.

[3] Vide Fabricii Bibl. Graec. 50:5, c. 1, p. 39.

[4] Ignat. Epist. p. 16.

[5] Ibid. p. 32.

[6] Part 2. s. 1, p. 248.

[7] Epist. ad Philippians apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:3, c. 36, p. 108.

[8] Apud. ib. 50:4, c. 15, p. 134.

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