

# Insight for the Issues

Prov. 4:23

# NE → XT STEPS

Prov. 4:23 **Keep thy heart** with all diligence; for **out of it are the issues of life.**

*“The Sovereignty of God and the Free Will of Man”*



Tonight, we begin looking at a controversial issue that directly, or indirectly, affects many churches across America and around the world...

*“The Sovereignty of God and the Free Will of Man”*

## **Calvinism on the March Among Evangelicals**

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A report in *Christianity Today* for September 2006 was entitled “Young, Restless, Reformed: Calvinism Is Making a Comeback--And Shaking up the Church.” It documents the rapid spread of Calvinism in Evangelical circles, and I am seeing the same thing among Fundamentalists.



The report cites John Piper, R.C. Sproul, R. Albert Mohler, Louie Giglio, Joshua Harris, J.I. Packer, and the Puritans as among the chief influences responsible for the upsurge in Calvinism.

The trend toward the acceptance of Calvinism is evident at leading evangelical seminaries such as Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

**Under the direction of Al Mohler, Southern Seminary has become “a Reformed hotbed” and is turning out “a steady flow of young Reformed pastors.”**

[https://www.wayoflife.org/reports/calvinism\\_on\\_the\\_march.html](https://www.wayoflife.org/reports/calvinism_on_the_march.html)



The foundational principle to guide us in understanding this issue is to consider...

## I. THE CHARACTER OF GOD

A. God's Power – He is sovereign over His creation.

Psa. 115:3 But our God *is* in the heavens: **he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.**

Sovereignty (*noun*)

the quality or state of being sovereign, or of having supreme power or authority.

the status, dominion, power, or authority of a sovereign; royal rank or position; royalty.

**supreme and independent power or authority** in government as possessed or claimed by a state or community.

<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/sovereignty?s=ts>



**Sovereign** (*noun*)

a monarch; a king, queen, or other supreme ruler.

**a person who has supreme power or authority.**

(*adjective*)

belonging to or characteristic of a sovereign or sovereign authority;  
royal.

having supreme rank, power, or authority.

**supreme; preeminent; indisputable:**

**greatest in degree; utmost or extreme.**

<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/sovereign>

- ❖ God, as Creator and Lord over His creation, has all power of sovereignty over His work.

Jer. 32:17 Ah Lord GOD! behold, **thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power** and stretched out arm, *and* **there is nothing too hard for thee:**



Psa. 147:5 Great *is* our Lord, and **of great power**: his understanding *is* infinite.

Mt. 19:26 But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; **but with God all things are possible.**

Luke 1:37 For **with God nothing shall be impossible.**

## B. God's Person

❖ God is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent. (See Psa. 139)

Rev. 19:6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: **for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.**



❖ God is just.

Deut. 32:4 *He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: **a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.***

Isa. 45:21 Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the LORD? and ***there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.***

Acts 22:14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest **know his will**, and **see that Just One**, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth.

Rev. 15:3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous *are* thy works, **Lord God Almighty; just and true *are* thy ways**, thou King of saints.



- God is just, and in Him is no evil – His character will not “predestine” one to do anything that is evil.

Jas. 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for **God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:**

- ❖ Predetermined actions, with no free will, predicates the Creator’s responsibility for evil.
  - God, who is just, will not condemn nor judge those who are innocent of choices.

Deut. 27:25 **Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person.** And all the people shall say, Amen.



➤ God hates actions for which He cannot be condemned of instigating:

Prov. 6:16 These six *things* doth **the LORD hate**: yea, seven are **an abomination unto him**:

17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and **hands that shed innocent blood**,

18 **An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations**, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

19 A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

❖ God is holy.

Psa. 99:9 Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for **the LORD our God is holy**.

1 Pet. 1:16 Because it is written, **Be ye holy; for I am holy**.



➤ God, who is just and holy, cannot predestine anyone to commit anything contrary to His character.

❖ God is love.

1 Jn. 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for **God is love.**

➤ God's love perfectly counterbalances His justice and holiness through the propitiation of His Son.

1 Jn. 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, **but also for the sins of the whole world.**



## II. THE COMMANDS OF GOD

Isa. 46:9 Remember the former things of old: for **I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,**

10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not yet done, saying, **My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:**

### A. God's Sovereignty Displayed at Creation, Gen. 1-3

Gen. 2:15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

16 And **the LORD God commanded the man**, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.



## B. God's Supervision Disobeyed at Creation,

Gen. 3:4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, **she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.**

❖ Man's disobedience to the Creator is an exhibition of free will.

## III. THE COMPASSION OF GOD

### A. The Prerequisite for the Judgment Seat

Mt. 12:36 But I say unto you, That **every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.**



Rom. 14:12 So then **every one of us shall give account of himself to God.**

1 Cor. 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 **Every man's work** shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

❖ “Every man’s work” is depicted as man’s work, his choices and accomplishments manifested and ascribed to individuals (not to God.)

14 **If any man's work** abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 **If any man's work** shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.



2 Tim. 2:11 *It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with *him*, we shall also live with *him*:*

12 *If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*: if we deny *him*, he also will deny us:*

13 *If we believe not, *yet* he abideth faithful: **he cannot deny himself.***

- ❖ If man is predestined, then the Judgment Seat would be a denial of what God has done.

## B. The Propensity for the Judgment Seat

Gal. 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for **whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.**

- ❖ If everything is “predestined” and there is no free will of man, there is no need of a judgment seat.



Gal. 5:1 **Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free**, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Jn. 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and **the truth shall make you free.**

...

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, **ye shall be free indeed.**

Rom. 6:17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 **Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.**

❖ Freedom in Christ = freedom to serve Him AS A CHOICE.



## Summary

God is in control of EVERYTHING.

- ❖ In the midst of His omnipotence, He allows mankind to exercise free will.
- ❖ In the midst of His omniscience, He knows the choices mankind will make.
- ❖ In the midst of His omnipresence, He establishes the boundaries of man's limitations.
- ❖ God's foreknowledge of man's decisions does not abrogate His sovereignty.



In this illustration, God's will is to go from Miami, FL to Seattle, WA.



The free will of man takes a southern route within the will of God – man's choice.



The free will of man takes a midwestern route within the will of God – man's choice.





The free will of man takes a northern route within the will of God – man's choice.





The free will of man takes a different northern route within the will of God – man's choice.







God's sovereignty, His will to go from Miami, FL to Seattle, WA, allows man's free will to make a choice as to which route to travel.



If God's "perfect will" in traveling from Miami, FL is to go through Denver, CO, and then to Seattle, WA, then the other routes include too much wasted time of carelessness and a lack of commitment to submit to God's "perfect will."





## Conclusion

Heb. 11:24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, **refused** to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 **Choosing** rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, **than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;**

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.