

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 continue 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”

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.
- B. God’s Person

II. THE COMMANDS OF GOD

- A. God’s Sovereignty Displayed at Creation, Gen. 1-3
 - B. God’s Supervision Disobeyed at Creation,
- ❖ Man’s disobedience to the Creator is an exhibition of free will.

III. THE COMPASSION OF GOD

A. The Prerequisite for the Judgment Seat

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

The Book of Job, acclaimed to be the oldest book of the Bible, gives us an overview of a man's life from two perspectives – (1) from God's perspective and (2) from man's perspective.

- ❖ Job's life is interesting upon earth, but also, stirred interest in heaven.

We looked at God's sovereignty in regard to the life of Job.

I. THE INTEREST IN JOB FROM THE HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE

- A. The Spiritual Perspective
- B. The Satanic Perspective
- C. The Suffering Perspective
- D. The Security Perspective

Summary

- ❖ Job suffered the loss of everything:
 - His family.
 - His livelihood.
 - His health.
 - His wife's respect.

II. THE INTEREST IN JOB FROM THE EARTHLY PERSPECTIVE

A. The Perspective from the Friends

- ❖ Job's friends missed God's sovereign dealings with Job!

Job 16:2 I have heard many such things: **miserable comforters are ye all.**

Job 42:7 And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, **the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me *the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.***

- ❖ God, who is sovereign, has a plan for our lives, and sometimes, we are not exactly clear in our understanding on what that plan is =
WALK BY FAITH!

Rom. 8:28 And we know that **all things work together for good to them that love God**, to them who are the **called according to *his* purpose.**

B. The Perspective from Job

Job 19:25 **For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth:**

26 *And though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, **yet in my flesh shall I see God:**

Job 23:10 But he knoweth the way that I take: **when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.**

Job 28:28 And unto man he said, **Behold, the fear of the Lord, that *is* wisdom; and to depart from evil *is* understanding.**

Rom. 8:29 **For whom he did foreknow**, he also did predestinate *to be conformed to the image of his Son*, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Eph. 1:5 **Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself**, according to the good pleasure of his will, ...

11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, **being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:**

Tonight, we will consider this issue of Calvinistic definitions of their five-point, TULIP, position:

Total Depravity of Man
Unconditional Election
Limited Atonement
Irresistible Grace
Perseverance of the Saints

I. THE DEFINITION OF TERMS ACCORDING TO CALVINISTS

A. Total Depravity of Man (or total inability)

Total depravity is the *extensive* ruin of man's nature. Man is made up of two parts primarily: the material (body) and the immaterial (soul).

1. Fallen man cannot do or work any good:
2. Fallen man cannot comprehend or apprehend the good:
3. Man cannot have any desire towards the good:

B. Unconditional Election

Unconditional Election is defined in this manner through the catechisms and confessions: God did, by His most wise and holy counsel, of His own, freely and unchangeably **ordain some men to heaven and some men to hell** by the nature of His good pleasure.

C. Limited Atonement

Limited atonement is a theological term that has been used for centuries to define a very important aspect of the Gospel. It is a fundamental Christian **doctrine which states that Jesus Christ came and died for a limited number of people. He did not die, or redeem, every individual for all of time, but for some individuals, i.e. Christ is the Savior of only those He loves.**

Jesus Christ, much like the *lamb* of the Old Testament sacrifice, died for some people, and secured the salvation of those people through His death which took away their sin and imputed (or accounted) His own righteousness to them. This is something Christ accomplished on the cross; not something individuals initiate. **It is true, as the Scriptures state, that he died for “all men” and that God loves “the whole world”. In these cases “all men” cannot mean every individual inclusively for all time including Judas and Pharaoh. Nor does it necessarily follow that Christ died for the whole world because God loves the whole world inclusively.**

D. Irresistible Grace

Irresistible Grace = *A grace that cannot be resisted and always works in the manner in which God desires.*

Since grace is by definition *undeserved* by any person, *Irresistible Grace* teaches that **when the Spirit of God is sent to change a person’s heart, that person cannot resist the change.**

E. Perseverance of the Saints

Will the saints endure to the end? Can we know if we are going to endure?

Perseverance of the Saints does not mean “once saved always saved”.

Perseverance of the saints teaches that once God has renewed the heart of a sinner through the application of the redemption wrought by Christ upon the cross, he will continue to be saved and show forth the fruits of that salvation. The sinner perseveres because of Christ, but he continually shows himself as one who has been changed *by* Christ. God has saved the individual and will sanctify him until the end when he is ultimately glorified, and in heaven. It does not mean man has a license to sin. Those who think they have a license to sin are not changed and saved by grace. They are still in sin. Those who are saved by grace and changed, desire to show forth the fruits of that salvation. God motions the heart to good work, and continues that good work to the end.

Christians may fall into grievous sins through the temptations of Satan and of the world. <http://www.apuritansmind.com/westminster-standards/>

II. THE DEFINITION OF TERMS ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE

A. Mankind's Lost Condition vs. Total Depravity

Rom. 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and **so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:**

Rom. 3:10 As it is written, **There is none righteous, no, not one: ...**
23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Isa. 1:18 Come now, and **let us** reason together, saith the LORD: though **your sins** be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Isa. 53:6 **All we like sheep have gone astray;** we have turned **every one** to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity **of us all.**

Rom. 6:23 For **the wages of sin is death**; but **the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord**.

Rom. 10:13 For **whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved**.

Rom 3:22 Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ **unto all and upon all them that believe**: for there is no difference:

B. Unconditional Love vs. Unconditional Election

Jn. 3:16 For **God so loved the world**, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

1 Jn. 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that **he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins**.

1 Tim. 2:4 Who will have **all men to be saved**, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

C. Unlimited Propitiation vs. Limited Atonement

Rom. 3:25 **Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith** in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

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

D. Amazing Grace vs. Irresistible Grace

Prov. 29:1 **He, that being often reproveth hardeneth *his neck*,** shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

Deut. 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore **choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:**

Mt. 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, **how often would I have gathered thy children together**, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, **and ye would not!**

Prov. 1:24 Because **I have called, and ye refused**; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

25 But **ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:**

26 I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;

Rom. 4:16 **Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace**; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

Rom. 11:6 **And if by grace, then is it no more of works**: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

Eph. 2:5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (**by grace ye are saved**;) ...

8 For **by grace are ye saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

1 Cor. 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

2 Cor. 1:12 For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, **but by the grace of God**, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

Titus 3:7 That **being justified by his grace**, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Heb. 2:9 But **we see Jesus**, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that **he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.**

E. Preservation of the Saints

Jn. 10:28 And **I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish**, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

Heb. 7:25 Wherefore **he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him**, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Theologians are usually divided into two “camps” – Calvinistic or Arminianism (John Calvin or Jacob Arminius)

My personal position:

Dr. Charles Ryrie – “Don’t ever let yourself be known as a Calvinist or an Arminian—be known as a Biblicist.”

<https://www.firstdallas.org/icampus/blog/calvinist-arminian-or-biblicist/>

Conclusion

1 Jn. 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. ...

17 Herein is our love made perfect, **that we may have boldness in the day of judgment:** because as he is, so are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19 **We love him,** because he first loved us.