

Theology 7 – Sovereignty and Free Will

I. God is Sovereign and He is all-powerful. Jer. 32:7, Job 12:10 42:2, Eph. 3:20-21, Col. 3:16-17, Acts 17:15, 4:27-28

A. God is supreme in power; possessing supreme dominion; as a sovereign ruler of the universe.

II. God has given man free will, but we are all ultimately subject to God. James 4:14, Is. 46:10

Sovereignty

“God is in complete control and no one can stop him from accomplishing His purposes”

1. Election

- Ephesians 1:4-6- He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world.
 - a. It has nothing to do with human merit but was motivated by love.
 - b. The word “chose” refers to an independent decision by God. We were chosen by him and for Him.
 - c. God chose the Jews out of His love and grace. Deut. 7:7-8
- John 6:44- Jesus said No one can come to me unless the Father draws Him.
 - a. Draws is the idea of a desperately hungry man being drawn to food.
- Romans 3:9-10- There is none righteous no not one, there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God.
- II Thessalonians 2:13- “...God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.
- 2 Timothy 2:10 “I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they may obtain salvation which is in Christ Jesus.”
- Romans 8:28-31 “those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew he also predestined. (decide beforehand)
 - a. This truth provides comfort and security.
- God will accomplish His purposes.

Free Will

God has Chosen within His Sovereignty to give man free will, and holds him accountable for his actions.”

1. God’s love and offer of salvation. Is it for the world or simply for the elect?

- John 3:16 “God so loved the world...that whosoever(all, everyone) believes. Rom. 10:13
- John 11:26 “Whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die.”
- John 5:39-40- You search the scriptures for in them you think you have eternal life yet you, and they testify of me, yet you will not come to me so that you may have life.
 - a. They were making a decision to not come to Jesus the source of salvation.
- John 6:37 “All that the Father gives me shall come to me and he that comes to me I will certainly not cast out.”
- 2 Peter 2:1 “False teachers will be among you introducing destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them.”
 - a. If salvation was not truly available to these men who were not elect that how could they deny the one who bought them?
- 1 Timothy 2:3-4 “This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth”.
- 2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”
- 1 John 2:1-2

Calvinism

- 1. Total Depravity: Man is unable himself to respond to God. I. Thess. 4:1-5**
- 2. Unconditional Election – God elects according to His own good pleasure. 2 Timothy 1:9**
- Limited Atonement – Christ died for the elect only.
- Irresistible Grace – The elect are irresistibly drawn to Christ.
- Perseverance of the Saints – The elect can never perish; they will surely persevere.

The Dangers of hyper-Calvinism.

- You don't share the gospel because whoever is going to get saved will get saved. Why pray?
- You rule out Eternal security and determine who is elect and who is not based on being faithful to the end with no real security.
- If someone rejects the gospel once you ride them off because they didn't find grace irresistible and therefore are not elect.
- You deny God's love for everyone.

The Beauty of Election

- **We've always been a part of God's plan and purpose.**
- **God receives all the glory in salvation.**
- **We can appreciate it without fully grasping it.**

This is intended to be a self-study where you can look at the evidence yourself. The bold print points above is where Grace stands on the issues of Calvinism and Arminianism. As you will see we hold a balanced view which does not seek to dismiss any clear teaching in scripture even if we cannot fully grasp it.

There is much that we cannot fully understand God because He is infinite and we are finite beings. Humanly speaking we believe it is impossible to reconcile in our minds how divine control and free will (human responsibility) work together. One thing is clear from the above study... they both are clearly taught. We need to keep the truth in balance and walk in obedience trusting God with what we do not fully grasp.

Arminianism

- Man is a sinner, but able to do good and to respond to God on his own.
- God elects on the basis of foreseen faith.
- 3. Christ died for all men.**
- 4. Man can, because of stubbornness and rebellion, resist God's call to salvation. Acts 7:51, Matthew 23:37**
- The believer may, through persistent sin, fall from grace and be lost.

Balanced View

- 2. God elects according to His purpose and grace, but man must respond to God's call of salvation. John 1:10-12**
- 5. Once a person is genuinely saved they are eternally secure. An outward change follows an inward change because of the Holy Spirit's work. Genuine believers can also fall into a life of sin because the old nature battles our new nature. Rom. 7**

Dangers of Arminianism

- You discount God's complete Sovereignty because it's difficult to grasp.
- You hold to an incorrect view of eternal security.
- You depend upon your own ability to convince a sinner to receive Christ rather than recognizing that only God can change a heart.

The Importance of Unlimited atonement.

- **It emphasizes spreading the good news.**
- **It shows the heart of God for the lost, and His rejoicing in the found.**