



Scriptures and Doctrine :: my theory on predestination

my theory on predestination - posted by VampireBite, on: 2003/8/21 21:52

Hey,

my theory is simple. look at a time line.
(Past)(Present)(Future)

so God, seeing time like this, writes something down, and logically, it is then written before the beginning. it is free will and predestined. 100% of each. same way Jesus is 100% God and Man.

:o simple huh? :-o

Re: my theory on predestination - posted by Zaphycat (), on: 2003/8/22 0:54

Whilst God is sovereign, and knows the beginning from the end, I do also believe that we fully have the free choice of what we do.

It's a hard thing to truly think about, after all, how could we have free choice and God total sovereignty? I don't know. But God has given us choice, that when he judges he may be just in his judgement and we can blame no one but ourselves.

As long as my lungs have breath in them our future is up the air. Only when we pass into eternity will our futures be sealed.

-JW

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/8/22 2:58

Perhaps this really belongs in Lounge/on the lighter side/ but as this thread is already up and running here is a question.

"Was I predestined to be an Arminian?" ;-) ;-)

Re: - posted by Nasher (), on: 2003/9/3 6:56

At this hour of my understanding, here is my theory of predestination:

1. God knows all things
2. I do not know all things
3. The bible contains all things necessary for life and godliness

Ron - only calvanists are predestined ;-) ;-) ;-)

Re: my theory on predestination - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2003/9/3 12:02

Without a doubt, one cannot separate predestination from God's eternal point of view of time (viewing and experiencing all moments of time at once). Could God in all His sovereignty force our hand in every instance of our life? Yes. However, just because God can do something is not the same as God doing something.

Also, if one presumes God forces our hand in everything, then one cannot dare talk about us having a loving, intimate relationship with God. Since the Scriptures and experience testify to being able to have a loving, intimate relationship with God, we must then conclude that we are not God's puppets. Puppets are incapable of love.

Re: my theory on predestination - posted by jeremyhulsey (), on: 2003/9/4 0:04

Quote:
-----so God, seeing time like this, writes something down, and logically, it is then written before the beginning. it is free will and predestined. 100% of each. same way Jesus is 100% God and Man

Wayne Grudem uses an example kind of like this of "freewill calvinists." He uses the example of an author writing a book. In the book a man murders someone. Now while the author wrote down the story, theoretically, the murderer still chose to do what he did. This theory falls apart though. Though the man did the deed, it was the pen of the author who orchestrated it. If played out to its logical conclusion, there is no "free choice" here.

The question of predestination and freewill is a supreme mystery to me. I don't believe as Grudem believes that God created evil, and even causes men to sin while being blameless and not responsible for man's sin. (a position held to by hyper-calvinists)

I think God's sovereignty lays in His foreknowledge. As in your example of a timeline, God has already seen all of history take place. And this foreknowledge is to me the greatest proof that God has allowed us a limited free choice. While He is not willing that any should perish, He has allowed us to choose this day whom we will serve.

In Christ,
Jeremy Hulsey

Re: - posted by discipleonthemove (), on: 2003/9/4 11:46

Is this a difficult question, or what?
PERHAPS.....God calls me and gives me faith because He knows how I will respond if He does so. I still could not respond or believe unless He chose me, so could not be saved, but He makes His grace available to me as necessary. The Bible is true, and clearly teaches from BOTH angles, so there is a mystery here that embraces both Calvinism and Arminianism. We are talking about the MANIFOLD wisdom of God - it takes the whole body of Christ and MORE (i.e. God Himself!) to know the entirety of His wisdom. He chose in His wisdom to not spell it out for us, so we would be wise not to try to spell it out too much to each other. It is nevertheless a wonderful mystery, which if treated right, can increase our love for and awe of the Creator.

Re: my theory on predestination - posted by Chosen7Stone (), on: 2003/9/4 14:42

I don't see how VampireBite's theory supported free will at all, or was even in-depth enough to support predestination. I think I overanalyze too much often times though. :-P
I believe strongly in predestination, but with some tweaks. For example, we're chosen by God to go to heaven. I read Ephesians 1 and it couldn't be clearer to me. But we're given choices in other matters...
For example (and I know it's trivial, bear with me), I have a turkey sandwich and a ham sandwich sitting before me. God lets me pick my lunch, but He already knew what I was going to choose.
If we have free will in receiving Christ, then it implies risk-taking on God's behalf. The risk is in that He lays everything out before us, and we either choose Him or don't. Where there's risk, there's chance, and where there's chance, there's uncertainty. Does God have uncertainty? By no means; to say so would be to say He's not omniscient, and we KNOW He is.
So long story short, I think we have limited free will in some aspects (we choose to disobey Him at times, but He already knew we were going to), but in the matter of who'll be next to me in Heaven...God chose them before time began.

Re: - posted by jeremyhulsey (), on: 2003/9/4 15:19

Ephesians 1, being interpreted in the light of the all scripture, I don't believe is speaking of specific individuals. Instead, Paul is glorying in the fact that God has chosen a people from the foundation of the world who would serve Him. This can be accurately interpreted to be saying that all who would repent (make a willing choice based on hearing the gospel and responding to the call of the Father's invitation) at the preaching of Christ by His servants are the ones who have been predestined.

How did He choose us? I believe it's by the Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world. He saw the rebellion, but He also had a way for us to repent. Those of the Arminianist position--which I am--interpret Ephesians 1 to be speaking

ng corporately.

Quote: "If we have free will in receiving Christ, then it implies risk-taking on God's behalf. The risk is in that He lays every thing out before us, and we either choose Him or don't. Where there's risk, there's chance, and where there's chance, there's uncertainty. Does God have uncertainty? By no means; to say so would be to say He's not omniscient, and we KNOW He is."

Reply: Certainly there is a chance. But what if no one chose to follow Christ? Would He have failed in His mission? Most definitely not. Did He come for us or for His own sake? Jesus said that He was here to fulfill the will of His Father. He accomplished that to the uttermost ends. And if no one ever followed Him, then the cross would be our judgement instead of salvation as it will be for all who have and who will reject Christ.

I believe that God took a chance in the very beginning by giving man and apparently angels a moral choice. True expression of love *always* involves a risk. Only by creating us with a moral choice could we freely love God or we could rebel and therefore bring evil into the world.

You can't view God as taking a chance like we would. From our vantage point, taking a chance always involves the unknown, but not so with God, taking a chance is tempered with Him knowing the future in advance.

I cannot in good conscience think that God has arbitrarily chosen who will go to heaven and who will go to hell. I believe that He has chosen what kind of person will go to heaven and what kind will go to hell.

But as I said in an earlier post; this is a mystery.

In Christ,
Jeremy Hulsey

Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2003/9/4 15:54

I found the following article on predestination, written by Greg Koukl, to be thought provoking, I hope you will enjoy it also;

(1) <http://www.str.org/free/commentaries/theology/badargum.htm>

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by jeremyhulsey (), on: 2003/9/4 17:50

InTheLight,

You are correct, that was thought provoking. However, he did not correctly represent the position of a true 5 point Calvinist who would, in fact, claim that God is the author of evil. Wayne Grudem's "Systematic Theology" (a reformed theological book) teaches this very plainly. (This would be what I'm referring to when I say hyper-calvinism)

I did see the point in his view about how God would choose some to salvation all though one could even argue about how that would fall apart.

He probably hit it on the head the most when he gave the example of the thief. We have free choices that are tempered by the all knowing foreknowledge of God.

The only conclusions that I can come to are that clearly we are a morally responsible creation with a free will and, equally, God is sovereign and in control of His creation.

Studying this subject just makes me think about how far above us are the ways of God.

In Christ,

Jeremy Hulsey

Re: The Simplicity of it all - posted by VampireBite, on: 2003/9/4 20:26

Why don't you click here and see
(http://66.139.79.202/sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id368&post_id2067&order0&viewmodethread&pid0&forum36#2067) The answer I have.

Re: John Wesley encouraged tolerance of both views - posted by jeremyhulsey (), on: 2003/9/4 21:03

Here are the last two points from a defense of Arminianism by John Wesley:

11. Away, then, with all ambiguity! Away with all expressions which only puzzle the cause! Let honest men speak out, and not play with hard words which they do not understand. And how can any man know what Arminius held, who has never read one page of his writings? Let no man bawl against Arminians, till he knows what the term means; and then he will know that Arminians and Calvinists are just upon a level. And Arminians have as much right to be angry at Calvinists, as Calvinists have to be angry at Arminians. John Calvin was a pious, learned, sensible man; and so was James Harnes (Arminius). Many Calvinists are pious, learned, sensible men; and so are many Arminians. Only the former hold absolute predestination; the latter, conditional.

12. One word more: Is it not the duty of every Arminian Preacher, First, never, in public or in private, to use the word Calvinist as a term of reproach; seeing it is neither better nor worse than calling names? -- a practice no more consistent with good sense or good manners, than it is with Christianity. Secondly. To do all that in him lies to prevent his hearers from doing it, by showing them the sin and folly of it? And is it not equally the duty of every Calvinist Preacher, First, never in public or in private, in preaching or in conversation, to use the word Arminian as a term of reproach? Secondly. To do all that in him lies to prevent his hearers from doing it, by showing them the sin and folly thereof; and that the more earnestly and diligently, if they have been accustomed so to do? perhaps encouraged therein by his own example!

In Christ,
Jeremy Hulsey

Re: My Theory on Predestination - posted by TaKa (), on: 2003/9/5 13:02

The main objection many have to predestination I think is - If God really did choose certain people to be saved and certain people to not be saved, how is that fair?

I don't think God could be called unjust if He chooses certain people to be objects of His mercy and grace and not others. After all, we are all sinners and all deserving of hell.

For God to pardon certain people in Christ is not something He is obliged to do, nor is it something that sinners deserve. God is sovereign and can choose, out of all fallen mankind, who He wants to save.

His ways are higher than our ways, and the Bible says that His choosing doesn't have anything to do with us, but it's according to His own purpose - and that purpose is for Him to know and not necessarily for us to know and understand, whether we agree with that or not. God can do as He pleases and doesn't need our approval.

Some people might think that's harsh, but that's just the way it is. If we all got what we really deserved and what was really fair and just, we'd all be in hell already. So God is not being unfair when He makes a decision to save anyone, but He's being merciful that He would save anyone of us at all.

There are just some things about God that we have to accept even though we might not totally understand them. If we really love God, we will trust that whatever decisions He makes are good and right even if He chooses not to explain to us why He makes those decisions.

I believe that God desires for none to perish, but sadly because of the hardness of their own hearts, some will never accept the glorious gospel we believe.

Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely. (Revelation 22)

Whosoever means any person who chooses to may come and drink of the living water offered by Christ.

I believe that God attempts to influence everyone to choose what's right, but some have hardened their hearts, and so God has to give them over to a reprobate mind.

John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him. And I will raise him up in the last day.

John 12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

Notice that Jesus says no one can come to him unless the Father draws him, but then he's saying that he desires to draw ALL men unto himself.

2Pe 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.

Peter points out that we should give diligence to make our election sure, which shows that although there is nothing we could ever do to influence God to love us any more than He already does, we still have a personal responsibility to play an active part in our spiritual development.

Rom 9:18-19 Everything depends on what God decides to do, and he can either have pity on people or make them stubborn.

Someone may ask, "How can God blame us for not obeying the gospel, if he makes us behave in the way he wants us to?"

If it was not our fault that we disobeyed the gospel, then why should we be punished for this?

Rom 9:20 But, my friend, I ask, "Who do you think you are to question God? Does the clay have the right to ask the potter why he shaped it the way he did?"

I agree that salvation is all of God and has nothing to do with our own merits. Salvation is not of works and it also demonstrates God's mercy.

God didn't have to save any of us, but He did! And that's the wonder of it. Why would He be inclined to save any one of us at all? There's no good reason why any of us should be saved.

God's ways are higher than our ways, and there are just some things about God we will never fully understand no matter how long we live.

Re: - posted by Nasher (), on: 2003/9/8 10:05

Predestination says that God has chosen certain people for salvation (we do not know why or whom). The people that receive this election receive grace, the people that do not receive this election receive justice.

The big problem I have with this is because of a scripture that clearly goes against this:

1 Timothy 2:3-4

3For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

God cannot desire all men to be saved and yet willfully save only some.

Re: - posted by discipleonthemove (), on: 2003/9/8 17:44

Quote:
-----Everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord will be saved.

Ro. 10 v.13

Quote:
-----But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

2 Thess. 2 v.13

I just picked out two Scripture verses at random, that could be used to support each of the sides of the "argument" over Predestination and free choice. There are plenty more which can be piled up on both sides...no shortage of ammunition to keep the battle raging.

My understanding is (and, in principle, I'm sure most would agree) that one should not ignore verses in the Bible just because they don't support one's viewpoint. I would go further, and say that we have no right to maintain a dogmatic viewpoint over any issue where there is such obvious support for the other side of the argument, and that we impoverish ourselves by doing so. There is no benefit to be had in holding fast to one opinion if it closes me off to an appreciation of the awesome wisdom of God.

No honest Calvinist could deny the existence of Scriptures that support the Arminian argument, and vice-versa.

I cannot see a problem with reconciling the two sides.

God chooses. That is Bible Truth.

People respond and are saved. That is also Bible Truth.

I have been involved in street outreach over the years, and have seen people soundly saved as a direct result. The reason I went out on the street was to bring the gospel, as best I could, to those who don't believe. Those who respond to the message do so out of their own free choice, but could not do so without the enabling of the Holy Spirit to convict them of sin, righteousness and judgment, and of the Person of Jesus.

I do believe God chooses people, because the Bible says so, but that doesn't stop me wanting to deliver the gospel to those who need it.

Quote:
-----how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

Ro. 10 v.14

I am glad I don't feel the need to fully understand this issue, but I do know I cannot hold to one side without accepting the other.

Re: - posted by 3John13, on: 2003/9/14 17:43

Sorry if I post some things that have already been said. I tried to go through the old posts and can see you've been talking about this for a while.

I've been reading and writing and listening and talking about this subject for a while too.

Pardon the bold and underlines. I am most certainly not yelling. I am just pointing with my cyber finger to key passages. Maybe I can be of some use....

I see in the Bible that everyone is headed for hell.

Romans 3

10 as it is written, "there is none righteous, not even one;

11 there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God;

12 all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one."

The question is not "Why does God chose some but exclude the rest?"

It is "Why does God choose anybody?"

Ephesians 1

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love

5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

"...according to the kind intention of His will".

Out of the entire dregs of humanity, none of which were coming to Him or willfully "choosing Him", He chose some out of the heap to be, not only saved, but His family.

2 Thessalonians 2:13

But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

The next statement that's said is, "That's not fair."

"The main objection many have to predestination I think is - If God really did choose certain people to be saved and certain people to not be saved, how is that fair?."

I agree.

I don't want what's "fair".

Do you want what's "fair"?

Sorry but that's how Paul responds...

Romans 9

14 What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be!

15 For He says to Moses, "I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION."

16 So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.

17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH."

18 So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.

19 You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?"

20 On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it?

21 Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?

22 What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?

"I believe that God attempts to influence everyone to choose what's right, but some have hardened their hearts, and so God has to give them over to a reprobate mind.

John 6:44-45

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

I've usually seen people understand this as a "wooing". An enticement of their "God shaped hole". Jesus isn't really speaking of it being very subtle.

"Draw" helko {hel'-ko} Strongs #1670

1) to draw, drag off

2) metaph., to draw by inward power, lead, impel

The same word is found else where but not translated so softly...

James 2:6

But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you into court?

"Drag" in the NASB. Same word as John 6:44 translated "draw".

John 21:6

And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch." So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish.

"Haul" in the NASB. Same word, helko, as John 6:44 translated "draw".

The fish were not "wooed" into the net.

But what about...

John 12:32

"And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself."

He drags and hauls everybody to Him?

I don't think God means everybody every time when He says "all".

For instance...

John 6

37 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

39 "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.

He "draws" all that are given to Him.

And the ones the Father "gives" will come to Him.

But what about "Free Will"?

"God doesn't want robots. He wants somebody that willingly chooses Him."

I see choices in the Bible.

I even see God holding people accountable for making the wrong choices.

Acts 17

30 "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,

31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

But will they?

How can they?

I remind you of Romans 9.

Romans 9

18 So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.

19 You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?"

20 On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why

did you make me like this," will it?

We are accountable for our wrong choices.
And we all willingly choose wrong.

I don't see Mans will as being all that "free".

Romans 3

10 as it is written, "there is none righteous, not even one;
11 there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God;
12 all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one."

Man is a sinner.
He is corrupted by sin.
He is entirely corrupted. His soul, his body and his mind. (Total Depravity)
(By this I don't mean individuals are as bad as they could be but they are tainted throughout.)

A crack addict is free to make choices too.
If given a hundred dollars what will he willingly "choose"?

He needs help.

Man is not splashing at the top of the pool desperately reaching for a life preserver that Christ is holding out. He is floating at the bottom of the pool. Two lungs full of water and unconscious.
Christ needed to plunge in and get us. Not just offer us a rescue.

Wow. This is pretty robust forum.
Look at all it allowed me to say. (Other forums cut you down to so many words.)

Again, sorry if I went over what's already been said but I thought I might toss in some more "chapter and verse".

Re: - posted by dpike777, on: 2003/9/14 18:11

It is the election of His grace. What He uses for criteria in that election I know not.

But that is why He is God and not you or me.

Re: 3John13's reasoning. - posted by VampireBite, on: 2003/9/14 22:58

what about Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved? or the hundreds of other verse's that mention free will.

I still hold firm to my beliefs and will accept yours as yours. however, i do ask you try and be a little more open-minded to other theories for the sake of evangelism. (for instance why send us out into the world to preach to all living things, if they are saved anyway?)

well gotta go. continue to pray and meditate on His word.

Charity for both views - posted by jeremyhulsey (), on: 2003/9/15 1:14

The two men who could most represent the differing views on this subject are George Whitfield (predestination) and John Wesley (freewill). The two exchanged letters arguing for their view against the other for a while and it seemed like they would become enemies. But the love of Christ prevailed for these two brothers.

While they didn't work directly together, one would endorse the other's work and would recommend the other to people in the villages and towns throughout England.

They even had an agreement that the one who survived the other would preach the funeral of the one who died. George died first and John Wesley was true to his pledge. After the message a lady asked John if he would see George in Heaven to which he replied, "no." She began to fly into a rage when he finished with the statement, "I will not see him because

e I will not be able to get that close to the Lord's throne."

In Christ,
Jeremy Hulsey

Re: Charity for both views - posted by crsschk (), on: 2003/9/15 8:22

Re: Charity for both views

Great example and as it should be.

Quick comment on all this. Valid points abound here, throughout this thread. A thought occurred to me, if we were to fully understand this, as in

the trinity, would not that make us.....God?

I guess it is natural to try and grasp these things, but to myself it doesn't seem to rank very high in the scheme of what a fallible mind is capable of. A favorite prayer of mine is "Help me to understand what I need to understand", no more, no less.

We are predestined to a freewill of bowing to His majesty.
Philippians 2:9-11

Mike

Re: my theory on predestination - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/9/15 11:20

Sparks on Election

Whatever word you like to use, "Election, chosen, selection," just means: "To serve God in a purpose." It does not mean that you should be saved, and others are appointed to be lost. See the twist that has been given to this word, and how false it is?!

And we know right through their history that whenever Israel forgot, or lost sight of, and failed to fulfill their vocation to the nations, they were put under a state of suspension as to their very calling. They were in the nations for the nations, and when they made themselves an exclusive body, shut up to themselves, and despised the nations, and called the Gentiles dogs and had no dealings with them, and said we are the people, and we are the only people, God so heartily disapproved that He withdrew their vocation, and sent them into captivity.

And mark you, dear friends, the two thousand years of Israel's history since their rejection of the Son of God is because they failed to recognize their own calling, that through Jesus Christ they could be made a blessing to all the world. They put a hedge around themselves and said, "We are the beginning, the end of everything, God is only interested in us, the other nations are doomed." This was just the reverse of their calling, "In thy seed - and That Seed, says Paul in Galatians 3:16, is Christ - shall all nations of the earth be blessed." And, when, instead of being a blessing, they really became a curse amongst the nations. God said, "That is enough, you have cancelled out your own vocation, your own calling, your own election. You have cancelled it out."

So Israel for these two thousand years has been in the outer darkness with much weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. That is how it is, is it not?! Why? Because in the Son of God, their vocation for the whole world was secured, and they rejected their own vocation when they rejected Him. That is history. And that is the meaning of "election or selected," not to be saved as over against all others to be lost, but for a purpose, the blessing of all others, the salvation of all others who will be saved.

Now, we come to Ephesians 1:4, where "the Church was chosen in Him before the foundation of the world." Chosen. What for? To be a blessing! The vessel and instrument of God is to be a blessing to the whole world. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, speaks of the Church as the "Jerusalem which is above, the mother of us all" (4:26). John, in his vision, "sees the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven" (Rev. 21:2). Paul has seen it there, the new Jerusalem, our mother. John sees the coming down of the new Jerusalem from above, our mother, and he goes on to say: "The nations shall walk in the light thereof (Rev. 21:24). So there are nations that are extra to this selected nation. And of this selected nation, says Peter again, "Ye are a chosen nation" (1 Peter 2:9). This selected nation, which is

s the Church, has been selected to be a light to the nations in the ages to come. "The nations shall walk in the light the reof. This is, as I see it, the true doctrine of election.

From "The Unsearchable Riches of Christ".
T. Austin-Sparks

Re: All of you on Election Alone. - posted by VampireBite, on: 2003/9/15 11:43

I just thought of something recently and i want those who beleive we are elected only and have no freewill to answer it.

Question: If God already chose who will live in heaven and who will burn in hell, Why did God want us to go Preach?

--Calling to preach--> "(Mat 28:19-20) (19) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."?

please send me an answer, cause i really would like to find out how y'all see these things.

Love in Christ,

Re: - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/9/15 11:49

Sparks on Election

Whatever word you like to use, "Election, chosen, selection," just means: "To serve God in a purpose." It does not mean that you should be saved, and others are appointed to be lost. See the twist that has been given to this word, and how false it is?!

Now, we come to Ephesians 1:4, where "the Church was chosen in Him before the foundation of the world." Chosen. What for? To be a blessing! The vessel and instrument of God is to be a blessing to the whole world.

From "The Unsearchable Riches of Christ".
T. Austin-Sparks

Re: - posted by Chosen7Stone (), on: 2003/9/15 17:52

From a Calvinist perspective...

VampireBite, we're called to preach despite the fact that God's already chosen His children because (1) that's God's method-of-choice in calling His children and (2) it condemns those who will not be His children.

That's my uber-brief explanation. The main point is that it's for His glory. He's glorified in His righteousness, and in His mercy. That's the way He wants to do it, I'm not gonna challenge His ways. ;-)

Re: - posted by VampireBite, on: 2003/9/15 19:54

Quote:

Chosen7Stone wrote:

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well i can't see it condemning them, just pissing them off. and if thats the way it is God's mercy is not mercy at all.

also, you said that "that's God's method-of-choice in calling His children". does that mean he predsetined a number or a ctual ppl?

cause if i don't witness to John Doe and no one else does cause we have been chosen to go to heaven anyway, how d oes John Doe get saved?(assuming of course that John Doe is one of the 'elect')

just something to twist your spiritual thoughts around.

Re: - posted by Timandpeg, on: 2003/9/15 23:03

Tell me what you believe is the proper explanation of God's foreknowledge...

Re: - posted by Timandpeg, on: 2003/9/15 23:07

We are predestined to a freewill of bowing to His majesty.
Philippians 2:9-11

Does that make any sense? Where in the world did you get that?

Re: - posted by jeremyhulsey (), on: 2003/9/16 0:24

Vampire please watch your language.

In Christ,
Jeremy Hulsey

Re: Calvin was no fool - posted by nobody, on: 2003/9/16 8:33

If we choose and are not chosen then why did Christ say "I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH..." According to the Arminian he s hould have said "I'm hoping to build a church, just so long as all these free people will choose to cooperate with me."

Freewill is a great idea and it pleases man greatly. Unfortunately, Scripture doesn't give it much support.

How could Christ speak in parables and then explain that to some it was given to hear and others not? Then He also say s that it is only those to whom He chooses to reveal the Father that will see Him.

God is loving, but also He has many other attributes to balance that with. Holiness being a big one. How can Paul say in Romans that maybe God just decided to create some for destruction so that the ones who recieve His mercy would glori fy Him? He tells us not to question God's purposes because we don't yet see. Some day we will glorify God's holiness a s he throws our friends and families into Hell. Imagine that turn in our miserable thinking.

Calvin was following the beliefs of many before him (Luther, Augustine, etc.) when he interpreted Scripture in a way that says the following:

None understandeth, none seek after God

God saw fit to retain a remnant of mankind for His purposes - to worship his Son for eternity

Christ laid down His life for His sheep

Those whom He begins a good work in - He will complete that work

No one is able to pluck them from the Father's hands

Calvinism makes good sense really. Ever heard an Arminian pray for the lost? Why should he bother if the man is truly fr ee?

How could Jesus give us all free choice but not the disciples? He chose them, not vice versa. So we are all free but the t welve? I'm gonna play Arminian here and give their strongest argument-- "That's just not fair."

I think Calvinism doesn't get the respect it deserves these days. It is not a foolish system. It was the original Reformation

Theology. The Roman Catholics hated it because it was so logical and difficult to argue against. They preferred Arminianism because it was "watered down" Protestantism in their view.

I challenge you to really read some deep material on this issue. There are many good resources on the web and in print. Try MacArthur's articles on Election on the biblebb website.

Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2003/9/16 10:27

Quote:

-----Where in the world did you get that?

Good question! ;-)

Quote:

-----Does that make any sense?

Hmmmm....It was a play on words...

Philippians 2:9-11

"Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; 10 that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Notes from my study bible (MacArthur):

"The entire intelligent universe is called to worship Jesus Christ as Lord (cf. Ps 2). This mandate includes the angels in heaven (Rev. 4:2-9), the spirits of the redeemed (Rev. 4:10,11), obedient believers on earth (Romans. 10:9), the disobedient rebels on earth (2 Thess. 1:7-9), demons and lost humanity in hell (1 Pet. 3:18-22). The Gr. word for "confess" means to "acknowledge," "affirm", or "agree" which is what everyone will eventually do in response to Christ's lordship, willingly and blessedly or unwillingly and painfully."

In the judgement will **anybody** be able to question God as to His 'fairness'?

We don't deserve Jesus, not a one of us.

And yet He lives and calls all men to Himself to be saved. "For God so loved the world...."

So I guess my point is that it seems to be a strange thing that we want to try and figure out the mind of God on this.... "for it is God who works in you both to will and to do **for His good pleasure** (Philippians 2:13) I know that verse relates to working out our salvation, but the principle is the same; God will do as He pleases.

I think that if God was to reveal Himself right now in His manifold presence, in all His glory and splendour, this issue would be the furthest thing from our minds. Our 'freewill' is limited as is our understanding. It seems pretty plain in scripture that God has the final say on all matters, so why do we try and figure out the who's, what's, where's, when's and why's? If God was unjust (and He is not) and wiped us all out, what would we be able to do about it?

The silly statement I made was a rather weak attempt to point out the absurdity of this whole issue. I don't know which 'side' I fall into, I will let God decide if it is ever going to be any of my business or not. Right now my sense is "Mind your own business", probably what I should have done in the first place.

Let God be true and every man a liar.

P.S. All this is just personal opinion, and not a knock on anyone who holds to one form or another, please feel free to correct my thinking if I am in error. For a change of perspective in general:

https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=440&forum=40

Re: - posted by VampireBite, on: 2003/9/16 14:18

Quote:

nobody wrote:

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Calvinism makes good sense really. Ever heard an Arminian pray for the lost? Why should he bother if the man is truly free?

How could Jesus give us all free choice but not the disciples? He chose them, not vice versa. So we are all free but the twelve? I'm gonna play Arminian here and give their strongest argument-- "That's just not fair."

I think Calvinism doesn't get the respect it deserves these days. It is not a foolish system. It was the original Reformation Theology. The Roman Catholics hated it because it was so logical and difficult to argue against. They preferred Arminianism because it was "watered down" Protestantism in their view.

I challenge you to really read some deep material on this issue. There are many good resources on the web and in print. Try MacArthur's articles on Election on the biblebb website.

1. christ died for 'His sheep', all men are referenced as sheep. (thy all like sheep have gone astray)
2. 'Those who begins a good work' in references those already saved, the good work mentioned isn't salvation, it is the completion of God's will which we freely reached out and grabbed.
3. no one is able to pluck them from my Father's hand. again them being people who freely accepted Christ as their Savior
4. Ever heard an Arminian pray for the lost? Why should he bother if the man is truly free? why, cause praying for the man and witnessing will show him what he needs through the power of the Holy Spirit.
5. How could Jesus give us all free choice but not the disciples? He chose them, not vice versa. the disciples followed Christ freely, they weren't forced to worship Him, it was free will choosing to worship him for the man He really was.
6. I'm gonna play Arminian here and give their strongest argument-- "That's just not fair."
was a nice attempt at a low blow, one that succeeded.
7. I challenge you to really read some deep material on this issue. There are many good resources on the web and in print. Try MacArthur's articles on Election on the biblebb website. You want deep material, try reading God's word for yourself and not listening to what others tell you to believe.

sorry to anyone i might have offended in my wording of my last post. i was rather busy and wasn't thinking about how to

hers might veiw my words, if i offended you I apologize and ask forgiveness.

Love in Christ,

Will

Re: - posted by 3John13, on: 2003/9/16 15:32

Â"Question: If God already chose who will live in heaven and who will burn in hell, Why did God want us to go Preach?Â"

Here is the beautiful thing about trusting in Election.

Romans 10

13For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

15And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,
Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

God has Known His sheep since before the foundation of the world, (Rev 13:8).

NOTE: No. All people are not His sheep. Some are goats. (Matt 25:31-33) And these goats were under the impression that they had chosen Christ.

He has not only predestined their salvation (2 Thess 2:13), but has predestined the means in which they will come to this salvation.

That's you. That's me.

This is extremely liberating.

To me it is.

I've been a Christian for over 20 years and I remember very well being taught techniques to witnessing and how important it was to get a commitment to Christ now.

Â"I don't care what you want. I'm not leaving you alone until you make a decision for Jesus.Â"

Because, hey, they could die tonight and it would be your fault because you didn't push them hard enough. (Eze 3:18)

But, yâsee, God has it all planned. All we have to do is be obedient.

We need to be ready to give an answer and if the person we're talking to doesn't want to pray to receive Christ right now God has maybe a dozen more folks in line to say something again. Or maybe a dozen more opportunities in the future for you to get another chance.

Dr D. James Kennedy, (A Presbyterian pastor. Calvinist), has the great ministry Evangelism Explosion. They have said that most people who come to Christ hear the gospel maybe ten times before they make a decision.

Some maybe less.

Some maybe more.

(A guy named William Fay has a good program too called Â"Share Jesus Without FearÂ")

Don't you see how great this is?

We don't have to worry about it.

There is no fear that if we say something it will be useless. Or that we "blew it" if we get a negative response.

It's not up to us because it's not us saving anybody.

We just need to say something.

God does the working on peoples hearts. And in His sovereign grace He includes us in on the birthing of our own brother

s and sisters.

But only God knows His own. You and I have no idea whom He chooses, (John 15:16), and are not allowed to make the decision on our own.

So we preach to all.

Because Christ died for literally all. (1 John 2:2).

Re: - posted by jeremyhulsey (), on: 2003/9/16 18:32

Will,

No offense taken Bro.

In Christ,

Jeremy Hulsey

(A fellow Arminian who loves his Calvinist Brothers and Sisters)

Re: - posted by VampireBite, on: 2003/9/16 19:01

since you brought it up.

Romans 10

13For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

15And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,

Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

did i misunderstand the simple english word "whoever". or does it mean everyone? it seems that everyone, meaning all people, can believe freely and THATS why we must preach, so everyone hears about God. preaching shouldn't be for a few and only that few, the Bible says clearly here and other places all are free to accept His Grace.

Love in Christ,

Will

P.S. the actual original Greek word is "Pas" which means each, every, any, all, the whole, everyone, all things, everything from Thayers Greek Definitions

going to greek, life as a bible freak. ;-)

Re: - posted by 3John13, on: 2003/9/16 20:46

If I said "whomever walks through that door gets out of the building."

It does not automatically imply "everybody gets out of the building".

"whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

This isn't "Whoever..... will be saved"

This is actually a very select few.

It is those who have met the condition "...calls on the name of the Lord."

It is not "whosoever... shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

It is "whosoever believes shall not perish but have eternal life."

My whole point is not that anybody who applies and steps forward will be selectively rejected.

It all lies in who has the ability to believe in the first place.

Ephesians 2

8 For by grace you have been saved through _____, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,
9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

The faith to believe and even see in the first place is a gift granted by God.
Without it nobody is even going to care about calling on the name of the Lord.

Romans 3

10 As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one;
11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.
12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."

You ask if you misunderstood the simple English word "whoever"?
I ask you if I have misunderstood the simple English word "none".

Re: - posted by jeremyhulsey (), on: 2003/9/16 21:50

It appears that 3John13 and Vampire have come to the same impass that most Calvinists and Arminianists run into.

I would encourage these two brothers(3John, I'm guessing that you are a male, forgive me if I'm wrong) in the Lord to agree to disagree.

I would suggest perhaps that we just give our opinions on this subject without trying to convince all the others of our position.

In Christ,
Jeremy Hulsey

wishing for a spiritual 2x4 - posted by VampireBite, on: 2003/9/16 22:03

Quote:

3John13 wrote:

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It does not automatically imply "everybody gets out of the building".

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You ask if you misunderstood the simple English word "whoever"?
I ask you if I have misunderstood the simple English word "none".

-
1. your saying anyone who walks out the door will exit the building is an open invitation to exit the building. all are told to reactoin for their action.
 2. we are all given the faith required to trust in Christ by the Holy Spirit, not just some bunch of people who are prechosen, all of us. (mark 1:15
john 1:12)
 3. The faith to believe and even see in the first place is a gift granted by God.
Without it nobody is even going to care about calling on the name of the Lord. we have the faith to beleive through the prompting of the holy Spirit, we may choose to take or ignore that prompt but it is there for everyone who hears God's word.
 4. Read Romans 3:9, it gives the context of the scripture passage:
(Rom 3:9) What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;
 5. i think i have a good grasp on both the English and Greek terms used for "whoever" and as for none, well thats the time i have left.

Love in Christ,
Will

Re: wishing for a spiritual 2x4 - posted by crsschk (), on: 2003/9/16 22:15

Your topic heading is unnecessary, careful brother.

Re: CS Lewis once said... - posted by nobody, on: 2003/10/16 18:44

I know no one is listening to this anymore - I haven't looked at it for a month, but just to point something out here.

Refer to the part below where a "Christian who goes by VampireBite?????" told me not to bother reading other people's commentary on Scripture but simply read the Word myself.

I believe that reading the Word is important, but to paraphrase something C.S. Lewis once said- (and I only know this because I read him) How can you ignore the research and reasoning of the thousands of brilliant scholars of the past? It is very important to read these people's ideas to discover all the aspects of issues. Is that not the whole point of this website???

How many people have you met that have read their NIV cover-to-cover six times and still don't know much about what it actually says? I know many. There are difficult passages to interpret in almost every book that won't be resolved by John Doe who ignores the rest of the world and reads the verses to himself 50 times over. Iron sharpens iron - try sharpening a knife without rubbing it on anything.

Re: - posted by Chosen7Stone (), on: 2003/10/16 21:53

Adding to what our brother "nobody" said in the last post...

God gives believers spiritual gifts, at the discretion of the Holy Spirit. To some, He has gifted wisdom, knowledge, scholarship...whatever you want to label it. Spiritual gifts are for the purpose of the edification (building up & encouraging) of the body of Christ.

God has gifted such men as commentary writers with this said gift. If it is for my and your edification, a gift from God, why not take full advantage of it?

Yes, to read the Bible is essential, and you cannot read a commentary without depending first and foremost on God's holy Word. But the supplement is a gift from God that He can use to grow you.

Getting back to the topic at hand, predestination/election vs. free will...

If there were free will, we humans would be able to take credit upon ourselves and say, "I made the right choice. I did so

something good." If God chooses us, He gets all the credit, glory and praise that He deserves.

Re: my theory on predestination - posted by almondBranch (), on: 2003/10/26 18:47

As a new christian I was a pretty standard free will believer. After a few years God sat me down and really began to show me His sovereignty it was all I could see in the scriptures, I was absolutely overwhelmed by it. I pretty much rejected all I had previously learned about human responsibility. Well, as time went on some of my own responsibility before God began to be highlighted again.

People often ask me where I stand on the issue, I usually point them to romans 11, read it. Talking about God's dealings with Israel you see so much in there of God's sovereignty but also much of our own responsibility.

close to the end of that passage Paul says:

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

My question to those who would vehemently argue and polarise on these issues; have you searched out God's judgments and have you found out His ways?

Looking unto Him, Stuart.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/10/27 8:50

almondBranch

I think you hit the spot.

Great question. I shall use it sometime in the future, no doubt.

Many thanks

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2003/10/27 19:33

Stuart,

I agree with Philologos, great point, great post. And I think you are totally right on.

So this is not an attempt to vehemently argue or polarize, just an idea to roll around.

As a defense of free will in salvation, I think of this scenario. Let's say someone reaches out their hands to you with a free gift that you can freely take. Can you then boast if you take the gift? Is there any room for boasting or pride? Yes, it was your free choice to take it, but it's hardly something you can boast about (at least without seeming really foolish).

How ridiculous would it be to boastfully declare, "Well, I reached out my hand and grabbed it!"

That's kind of how I see both God's sovereignty and free will working, in a mysterious way, together. God draws the sinner, offers the gift, and then they make a choice.

Re: - posted by joshua, on: 2003/10/28 0:23

What do we do with passages such as John 6 when it comes to man's incapability apart from being drawn by the Father and a particular few who have been given to Christ by the Father? A simple look at the text screams of God's sovereignty and His particular redemption.

Re: - posted by nobody, on: 2003/10/28 9:53

I have posted a couple times on this thread on the side of Calvinism, but I do agree with these recent posts that this is a topic on which the Bible seems to be perfectly paradoxical. For every scripture a Calvinist can pull out there is a counter from the Arminian. This does not mean that we should ignore the issue as unresolvable(as many do)! Just because we can't fully bend our mind around a paradox doesn't mean we can't learn by banging our head against it a few times and trying to embrace both sides of it.

I just think that way too many people in the church are on the far end of this issue on the freewill side and have never seen the beauty of the Scripture's description of us being chosen, drawn, and guarded. I guess since I have been surrounded by freewill believers for so long I feel the need to press some of the strong Calvinist arguments (The people on this site seem to be better balanced than my local brothers and sisters).

My God is "one" and "three" simultaneously, He chose me but I seek Him, and I am saved by grace but yet I work for Him as a slave to righteousness. I can just sit for hours and ponder the depth of His Word. He is both the One who chose Calvin and the One who Arminius sought. Am I wrong?

Re: - posted by Everlast (), on: 2003/10/28 15:33

Excellent post! I have been reading through this thread and I like the way you have stated your thoughts. Especially....
Quote:

nobody wrote:

My God is "one" and "three" simultaneously, He chose me but I seek Him, and I am saved by grace but yet I work for Him as a slave to righteousness. I can just sit for hours and ponder the depth of His Word. He is both the One who chose Calvin and the One who Arminius sought. Am I wrong?

To me that says a lot about how we humans try to understand everything, without understanding anything. Our God is an infinite, omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent God. Can we understand all aspects of these terms...no, for we are simply humans. We just trust and believe and have faith that God is all these things. We could argue and grapple forever about any of these things and still never have a complete understanding. Some of these things are what I would like to call "God Questions"...questions that when I see Jesus face to face I can ask.:

Re: - posted by streetpreacher (), on: 2003/11/11 2:50

"At this hour of my understanding, here is my theory of predestination:

1. God knows all things
2. I do not know all things
3. The bible contains all things necessary for life and godliness"

And here is my theory of God's Exhaustive Foreknowledge:

1. God knows all things that He has exhaustively settled as such.
2. God knows all things that He has left as contingent as such.
3. Therefore, the future is both settled and contingent.

See Adam Clarke's Commentary for basically the same argument.

Re: - posted by streetpreacher (), on: 2003/11/11 2:57

"I think God's sovereignty lays in His foreknowledge. As in your example of a timeline, God has already seen all of history take place. And this foreknowledge is to me the greatest proof that God has allowed us a limited free choice. While He is not willing that any should perish, He has allowed us to choose this day whom we will serve."

While I agree with your basic assumption, we must recognize that if God's foreknowledge is not one of contingencies, rather than absolute, then our free choice is merely an illusion. For if God knows something as exhaustively "settled", who could choose otherwise? Rather it is the fact that God sees ALL of the decisions of free moral agents, INCLUDING the ones we DON'T choose that allows us this "limited freedom" that you have described.

Re: - posted by streetpreacher (), on: 2003/11/11 3:00

Hmmm... I wonder at what point in Wesley's life this was written? His brother Charles called Calvin the "first-born son of the devil." Ouch!

I also heard Ravenhill on one of the sermons here say he "wonders if Calvin will make it" into heaven on the day of judgment.

Re: - posted by VampireBite, on: 2003/11/19 22:39

To those who read this,

I am fascinated by your beliefs, really I am, and I could try and prove you wrong, but I recently had a changing experience, and well I still believe what I started on, I now realize ya'll are thinking God sees the Universe, I need to ask one question, Does he? or does he see a multiverse? It is a Star Trek thing, and I found it quite challenging, but I came to the conclusion that there is no conclusion until the day we are received unto glory and given our new bodies, then we will know how it went, or we won't care. Basically, Discuss what you want, I will continue to read, but don't count on knowing God's thoughts, you'll only end up looking foolish. I know from personal experience.