

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: A Question for Calvinists****A Question for Calvinists - posted by SteveNoel (), on: 2006/10/9 20:30**

Yesterday at church a man who is Reformed in his theology was talking about his salvation. He said that for many years he was in the church, but was living a double life. He mentioned being a womanizer for those years and that he was in a dultery. He went on to say that when he was in his 30's when he was truly converted. Then he brought up this question: "Why didn't God save me earlier? Why did he let me treat my wife this way for so long?" His understanding was that he could not be saved for all those years because salvation is solely the work of God.

My question:

Is this true Calvinism?

If so, does this not appear to put the responsibility for his sins all those years on God?

Steve

Re: A Question for Calvinists - posted by lovegrace, on: 2006/10/9 22:07

Quote:

SteveNoel wrote:

If so, does this not appear to put the responsibility for his sins all those years on God?

That's not Calvinism. That statement that is quoted above isn't Calvinism.

I personally am a 4.5 Calvinist. I believe in most of their beliefs except one. (I'll keep that to myself)

Think of it this way. When you go watch a movie. Did the director make any major mistakes in the film? (Don't think with critical judgement and think logically) So, logically speaking the answer would be NO. (Critically speaking would be 'humans are fallible', but in this case the Director is GOD)

God DESIGNED EVERYONE, from Hilter to Stalin, to Jesus to Adam, to Billy Graham to You and me. God designed EVERYONE and put us in our PERFECT time to exist.(Ever wonder why you weren't born during Jesus' time?)

My first question (which I will answer) would be, Who created you? Yourself, your parents, or God. Parents and God right? No. The answer is ONLY God. Why? Because He is at the ROOT of it. Without God, NONE would be here. Not anyone.

God was absolute perfect before He created anything in Gen. 1. But He chose (Why, I don't know) to make a beautiful story. Mankind falls and Christ saves it (at least part of it).

It was God's will for Adam to fall. You say no (at least an Arminian would). Well, Does man have more power than God? No. Then why would you dare say that man does? Because saying it was not God's will for 'Adam to fall' says that. Then if it wasn't God's will Adam WOULD NOT have fallen.

Honestly. If God is in ABSOLUTE control. Then, why would you say that 'God messed up'(Saying Adam's sin wasn't in God's will) cause, umm, if I'm not mistaken He is perfect and not like us.

WE are the clay. He is the potter. Can the clay move? Nope. Can the clay form itself? Nope. Can the clay do things its way? Nope.

We're not robots. We are humans, absolutely controlled by God. And His authority is hard to see sometimes, but it still doesn't miss His sovereignty.

I personally, am VERY VERY zealous for the gospel and Christ. Why? If "God is in control". Well, honestly, I was DESIGNED THAT WAY and 2, Loving God, others, Christians and the Great Commission among others were COMMANDED BY GOD.

Are we accountable for our sin? Yes. You can't point the finger back at God. Never. Never. Never. If you say you can, then you'll probably be in hell. (Cause you have no reverence for the True and Living God)

Predestined doesn't mean 'foreknowledge' it means DESIGNED according to HIS ultimate purpose. (At least it does to me)

Now. After I've spoken this. I say this. That God being in ABSOLUTE control should be a burden lifter. Why? Cause when the Son sets free is free indeed. Because when you lose ur house and car and job, who is in control? Me! Ha! No, God, Sir! And He works things out.

Think what you must, but debating, and trying to figure out this **C vs. A** thing is meaningless. Christ didn't call ANYONE to debate doctrine like this topic has been over the past few decades. How do I know? Because EVERYONE of those that debate this are sinning above their own knowledge? How? (You might ask) They forgotten the 1st 3 commandments of Christ. Love God, others AND Christians (yes, that is a commandment, written more than the first 2, in the NT)

So, my voice is spoken. Only because I'm tired of the Immaturity and the spirit of these discussions. On SI and in real life. They are UTTERLY MEANINGLESS.

You say 'we gain knowledge'. No my brother/sister, you gain hatred, you gain wounds, you gain sorrows and you LOSE a brother/sister in Christ.

And just to throw another 'curve ball' at ya. What was the first sin of mankind? It was eating the fruit of the of good and evil.

The what?

K - N - O - W - L - E - D - G - E

Hmm, I can hear it now... the brothers saying 'My people perish because of lack of knowledge'.

Hmm, Good point right? Uhh...No! It's not "knowledge" in general that caused Israel to be destroyed. it was the KNOWLEDGE OF GOD. The 1st commandment. Throughout that book, it says 'You have forgotten God, you've forsaken Him, etc' It's one of the dominating themes of that book.

Brothers/sisters, please, I urge you and everyone, to GROW past this. GROW GROW GROW.

I love you and I'm weeping for your Grow, which Lord willing will happen.

Re: A Question for Calvinists - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/10/9 23:42

Quote:
-----Then he brought up this question: "Why didn't God save me earlier? Why did he let me treat my wife this way for so long?" His understanding was that he could not be saved for all those years because salvation is solely the work of God.

"Why did I treat my wife this way for so long?"

That is the real and only question that matters.

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/10/10 1:58

Because of choice and ignorance of what God says a wife is. Because we choose to. Because Satan knows what a wife is supposed to be and he is apposed to anything the shows the Love of God. Because we are of our father the devil.

Husbands love your wives. Impossible. Wives submit to and honor your husbands. Impossible. I know no husband that loves his wife the way Jesus loved the body of Christ the Church and gave himself for her. I know no wife that honors and submits to her husband as she is supposed to, to Christ.

There is only one hope for husband and wife, that is, in Christ are they able to even have any capacity to love or submit as Christ does.

If, that is IF, a husband and wife have Christ in them and they have learned to love God by the Christ that is in them, then they have a chance. If a husband see's Christ in himself and knows that he was crucified with Christ on the Cross and is dead to sin and knows he was resurrected with Christ and is now living by the faith of the Son of God that is in him, he may have the ability to see this same Christ in his wife and love her by Him and through Him and with Him. The same goes for the wife.

It is not God that makes us not love, it's our own choice to not love. God tempts no man or makes no man sin, that is what man is. Christ is the only chance any person has to be able to be what God proved His Son to be, that is His beloved Son in whom He is well pleased.

Learn the Christ that is in you and you may be able to see the Christ that is in your wife or husband or children and able to love them the way Christ love's you.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: the main question - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/10/11 11:28

Quote:

-----"(#1) Why didn't God save me earlier? (#2) Why did he let me treat my wife this way for so long?"

Thats like saying, "why didn't God save me the first time I sinned? He'd a saved me from alot of trouble."

1. First off, that man should be absolutely thankful for even being saved in the first place... let alone after all that he's done. God doesn't owe us anything. That man didn't deserve to be saved just like the rest of us.

2. In his permissive will he allowed it to take place for his glory. That that man may be brought to repentance for the sickness of his heart.

You shouldn't blame God for the evil in your own heart. Calvinists are to take full responsibility for thier own wickedness, giving God the glory due to Him in gratitude.

Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2006/10/11 12:00

mmm why did god let that happend? that is a question i often used to ask myself, and still do sometimes...but i now reframe it why is this nesesity god? what must i see/do/understand, and why you in your wicked carnal state treated your wife badly, well why was becuse you were evil! and besides from gods mercy and grace you would still be, and if the holy spirit didnt restrain you you probaly would have treated her even worse.... God knows what is best, this is just my little mind thinking, god prabaly have a much greater plan for you, but when me for example , me and my wife have foughted and ive treated her very bad in the past, but now not so, but now i can be a living testimony from that evil to christ share goodness and grace and what he has done in my life,

Re: A Question for Calvinists - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2006/10/11 13:05

Hi SteveNoel,

you asked

Quote:

-----If so, does this not appear to put the responsibility for his sins all those years on God

I can see where it can appear that way for sure! It is definitely a question I have grappled with myself.

Maybe there is another way we could ask this question though. For instance, what if we asked: does God owe us **anything good**? Or even further, couldn't we ask: doesn't God **only owe us** to repay us for our sins?

These are pretty heavy questions to ask ourselves but what really does God owe to us?

Well, didn't Adam have the opportunity to **choose** eternal life?

And didn't the chosen peoples Israel have the opportunity to **merit** eternal life? Even that righteous man Moses transgressed against God!

Were not these worthy representatives of us both before and after our fall?

Well, maybe someone would object to having such representatives and I can understand the urge to do so, but I would ask them, must they not then also object to having a representative such as Christ, for sins and for justification?

Too, I think I see in scripture where the Lord Jesus answers this sort of objection in the Pharisees where He says

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets....

...Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

Is the same not true of us as well, if we sin and yet say

Quote:

-----If I would have been in Adam's place I surely would have chosen to live

Well, these are just some thoughts as I have grappled with these things also. I hope they are helpful.

Love in Christ,

Chris

Re: - posted by JaySaved, on: 2006/10/16 10:18

One of the major misconceptions about Calvinists is that we are all fatalists. This is just not the case.

My will is my will and it is free from any and all external influences. No one outside of myself forces me to do anything...including God. My will however is a slave to my desires and understanding. When I was regenerated through the work of God, he changed my desires and my understanding. I gained new desires to seek, serve and love God. Also, my understanding of who God is changed as well.

Scriptures and Doctrine :: A Question for Calvinists

So, as a Christian, my will is still free from any and all external influences. No one outside of myself forces me to do anything...including God. My will however now sees God for who he is truly.

Praise be to God, great things he has done, so loved he the world that he gave us his son, who yielded his life in atonement for sin and opened the lifegate that all may go in. Praise the Lord!

Re: Sorry - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/10/17 11:39

I'm sorry but the traditional view of Calvinism doesn't support the concept of "freewill". Sadly some people may add too much or take too much off of the five points of calvanism. Holding to them doesn't make you a fatalist. Taking them to an extreme against the bible's teachings makes you a hyper-calvanist. Point is God is sovereign whether we acknowledge that or not.

Quote:
-----No one outside of myself forces me to do anything...including God.

Is there anything too hard for God?

Quote:
-----My will however now sees God for who he is truly.

The reason why our will has changed is because God has changed it. There aren't any hidden cracks in the universe where God doesn't exist or is not sovereign over.

This was a question for calvinists not arminians.

Re: - posted by JaySaved, on: 2006/10/17 14:59

Quote:
-----I'm sorry but the traditional view of Calvinism doesn't support the concept of "freewill".

GraceAlone, I respectfully disagree with this statement and offer the following website as my proof.
http://www.reformed.org/documents/wcf_with_proofs/

Quote:
-----Sadly some people may add too much or take too much off of the five points of calvanism. Holding to them doesn't make you a fatalist. Taking them to an extreme against the bible's teachings makes you a hyper-calvanist. Point is God is sovereign whether we acknowledge that or not.

I agree completely.

GraceAlone, you believe that God changes our Will.
My understanding is that our Will is free from external influences, but is a slave to our desires and understanding. Jeremiah 17:9 speaks of the unregenerate person, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" The answer is...God. Ezekiel 36:25-27 speaks of God giving us 'a heart of flesh and removing our heart of stone'.

We both agree that God is sovereign, but my understanding of traditional Calvinism is that man has always had a 'Free Will'. This Free Will was tainted in the Fall of Adam and is not able to reach out to God because it is in bondage to our desires. When God regenerates us, our desires change and our understanding of who God is changes. Therefore our Free Will now is able to respond to him.

Quote:
-----This was a question for calvinists not arminians.

Scriptures and Doctrine :: A Question for Calvinists

I am not sure if this was directed toward myself, but if it is then I must say that I strongly believe in the Doctrine of Grace.

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2006/10/17 17:34

interesting brethren...

it seems to me that God is sovereign in all, our free will is not outside His will as a result all things work together for His glory. to me this is open and shut, my will is subject to God's will and while it may seem that free will and predestination are mutually exclusive on this side, the truth is they are not. they both serve God in Him glorifying Himself. there is no contradiction in God's mind on this matter so there should be none in our either.

consider this, the word tells us that Christ is the Way the Truth and the Life and nobody get's to the Father except by Him. the word also tells us in the gospel of John chapt 6 (i think) vs 65 that no man comes to Christ except the Father draws Him...it seems to me everything rests on the will of the Father more so than our own will...then we look at Romans 9 and it talks of how God picked Jacob over Esau BEFORE the 2 were born and hand opportunity to do anything. some may say "well God knew Esau would sell his birthright for some bean stew" no, the truth is Esau sold His birthright because God rejected him in the first place. God doesn't react to what we do, we more according to how He has decided things to be. Romans 9 tells us that we were called from before the setting of the foundation of the earth...again some may argue that "God knew we would pick Him" but we picked Him because He chose us from before the setting of the foundations of the earth, furthermore NOBODY can come to Christ (and proceed to the Father) unless the Father calls Him...seems to me God has this on lock. then also we know that the Spirit of God is at work in those of us who are His, His Spirit, not our own while the spirit of the enemy works in the sons of disobedience. none of us had a choice in being born slaves to sin and none of us would have known any better unless God quickened us to it. again some may say "well people may use this as an excuse to sit on their butts saying well God will take care of it all" you can sit on your butt if you want to , i'm gonna try and see what God would have me do and do that.

i guess we are free to do whatever God has decided we ought to do...at least that's how i see it...

Re: - posted by lovegrace, on: 2006/10/17 18:37

Quote:

IRONMAN wrote:

to me this is open and shut, my will is subject to God's will and while it may seem that free will and predestination are mutually exclusive on this side, the truth is they are not. they both serve God in Him glorifying Himself. there is no contradiction in God's mind on this matter so there should be none in our either.

That sounds beautiful. My question to dwell on this point would be, "Are the actors in a movie subject to the Director?" Answer = Completely. Because if the actor messes up the movie, they are 'cut' out of the play. (Slain in the Spirit, real term, not the pentacostal tradition, i.e. dead)

Quote:
-----God doesn't react to what we do, we more according to how He has decided things to be.

True.

Quote:
-----none of us had a choice in being born slaves to sin and none of us would have known any better unless God quickened us to it.

True.

Quote:

-----again some may say "well people may use this as an excuse to sit on their butts saying well God will take care of it all" you can sit on your butt if you want to, i'm gonna try and see what God would have me do and do that.

Yes, let's give God all our heart in all we do.

Re: A Question for Calvinists, on: 2006/10/18 7:04

OK you guys, (brothers :-D), how do you understand the exasperation of Jesus over Jerusalem - 'but ye **would not**' - and Peter's statement (supported by his own bitter experience of having denied Christ) that 'God is not willing that any should perish' (2 Peter 3:9).

Look at these too:

Matthew 12:7 But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

Matthew 23:37

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 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!

Luke 13:34

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen her brood under wings, and ye would not!

2 Cor 12:20

For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

Do we not, here, see God being bound by **man's** will?

(Just for the record, I think it is perverse and hard to support the idea that God makes people turn Him away. I know there is scripture to support Him hardening Pharaoh and controlling many things, but in general 'the people' know the word of God when they hear it, and respond to Him, and those who reject the word of God, He gives up to a reprobate mind.... but again, just for the record, it is possible to return even from there..... because God is gracious..... but, it **depends totally** on a man or woman changing their will..... changing their mind..... agreeing to yield to Him however painful it may feel at the time..... by their **own** choice(s).)

Re: - posted by JaySaved, on: 2006/10/18 9:06

Dorcas,

The Biblical response is that they 'would not because they can't.'

One thing that amazes me is that Jesus spoke in parables. Why wasn't he clearer in his teaching?

The answer is found in Matthew 13:

10The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

11He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. 12Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. 13This is why I speak to them in parables:

"Though seeing, they do not see;

though hearing, they do not hear or understand. 14In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

"You will be ever hearing but never understanding;

you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

Scriptures and Doctrine :: A Question for Calvinists

15 For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears,
and they have closed their eyes.
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts

and turn, and I would heal them.' 16 But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. 17 For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

The question is, Why were these people's hearts calloused?

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2006/10/18 9:13

sis Dorcas

Quote:
-----Do we not, here, see God being bound by man's will?

this is true and you've brought up an important point. at the end of the day, God is still sovereign and how He has it all under control is beyond me, He just does. we can't escape the fact that if you read Romans 9 and some other of Paul's letters he speaks of how the saints were chosen from before the setting of the foundations of the earth...

Quote:
----- (Just for the record, I think it is perverse and hard to support the idea that God makes people turn Him away.

in Romans 9 Paul says

18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. 19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? 22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, 24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

this is the bottom line, if God has in fact chosen ahead of time whom He will draw to Himself and whom HE will reject, what can you or i do about it? if God hardened the heart of pharaoh, what's to keep Him from doing that to anyone else? and then is Esau was hated of God before he did anything, who could stop God from doing so with anyone else?

Quote:
-----but in general 'the people' know the word of God when they hear it, and respond to Him, and those who reject the word of God, He gives up to a reprobate mind

if one rejects God it is because God hasn't drawn him/her to Himself. JOhn 6 65 tells us:

And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

then in vs 66 we see that most of those around Him left as a result of them not being drawn by the Father

6:66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

being given over to reprobate mind is a judgement however, unless God Himself moves to draw you from it, nothing will happen. the issue here is that there is nothing man can do apart from God. the word tells us that without Christ we are a nd can do nothing but we can do all things through Him.

like i said to me it's open and shut, God is sovereign in all, He's called me to be a vessel of mercy, i'm not concerned with the mechanics of it, just concerned about what i need to do. i think maybe though our perception of what free will is in relation to God's will is warped hence the either/or. it's both, the 2 work hand in hand for one purpose, glorifying the Maker of all things. and brothers and sisters this IS the bottom line, Paul says so in Ephesians that the purpose of the Church is to show God's manifold wisdom to the powers of the air.

oh no, on: 2006/10/18 9:17

another form of "ist" and "ism".

forgive my ignorance, what is a "Calvinist"?

weary, bartle

Re: A Question for Calvinists, on: 2006/10/18 9:18

Quote:
----- He's called me to be a vessel of mercy, i'm not concerned with the mechanics of it, just concerned about what i need to do. i think maybe though our perception of what free will is in relation to God's will is warped hence the either/or.

IRONMAN,

Isn't there a case for saying that God gives man a free will which is as sovereign within its remit, as God's is within His, and 'choose you this day whom you will serve' is a genuine question from God to man..... because God knows that unless a person's mind is convinced, the battle is lost? And He wants no puppets in His family..... only sons.

Re: oh no - posted by JaySaved, on: 2006/10/18 10:52

The short version is that it is by God's grace that all men are saved through faith--and this faith is not of ourselves but is itself a gift from God. Salvation is not by works so that no man may boast that he has saved himself.

The long version can be found here:
<http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/dabney/5points.htm>

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/10/18 10:57

Quote:
-----what is a "Calvinist"?

It's the guy left of you.
Diane

Re: Consequences - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/10/18 11:24

Most people reject the doctrine of God's sovereignty because they are appalled at the idea that God is sovereign. Still, just think about the consequences of this rationalization. What if God was all-powerful and you called Him "perverse" for being all-powerful? This is a touchy subject that I believe is very crucial to viewing God.

Romans 9:22

"What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,"

Gods sovereignty in control. The idea that we deserve grace is the heart of the issue... We don't deserve grace by any means. If God, by his good decree kept me from ever coming to faith I would have deserved it. Still, God choose me

before the foundations of the earth and decreed that He would reveal Himself to little old undeserving me.

Well... Why would God command something that we couldn't possibly do without His grace? Here's the answer: You are capable with His grace! Lazarus couldn't arise from the dead without God's help!

By the way if God wanted everybody in heaven He is all-powerful and could've done that. If sinners could choose then why would God let them choose death if He doesn't want them to go to hell?

God chose in His secret decree for His glory to be shown in salvation and damnation: both done in accordance with justice and righteousness.

This should move us to preaching the clear and true gospel for the elect to hear and come. If it was up to me to change everybody's heart then all would be going to hell. Only God can save by grace. This should keep us from trying to manipulate the gospel to bring forth professions. I want to bring forth true converts.

Listen to John MacArthur's series on the doctrine of election (http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/Grace_to_You/archives.asp?bcd10/3/2006) Here! Or read John's sermons on election on (<http://biblebb.com/mac-a-g.htm>) this page.

John 15:16

"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you."

Acts 13:48

"Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed."

www.cornerstoneorlando.org

www.gty.org

Re: A Question to Calvinists, on: 2006/10/18 16:08

Quote:

-----If sinners could choose then why would God let them choose death if He doesn't want them to go to hell?

But that's just it..... sinners *can* choose. Some choose life, and some choose death, and God accepts the outworking of the choices they have made.

By the way, I was not suggesting God is perverse. I was suggesting man is perverse for suggesting God does not force everyone to be saved.

Also by the way, I do realise He seeks out the lost and compels them to come in..... but, these are people who are willing to be compelled. I am sure there are those whose minds and hearts are set against Him. Now, I 'see' what it says in Romans, but Jesus invited people to exercise their wills *repeatedly*, and the concept of 'prepared for wrath', doesn't necessarily mean *God* prepared them.....

If you look earlier on to Romans 2, Paul ascribes the impenitent as treasuring up God's wrath to themselves (for His future outpouring) by their refusal to acknowledge His goodness in leading them towards repentance.....

Can you see what I mean? These are the vessels 'prepared' for 'wrath'.

Alternatively, there are the children of disobedience who don't turn to God in Ephesians, on whom the wrath of God will fall. And I know Eph 1 says we were chosen in the Beloved from the foundation of the world. I see this as a comment on the interface between time and eternity, rather than a comment on the inevitability of (the) *salvation* of certain people.

Having said all that, in the Old Testament, there is a saint who asks for his name not to be blotted out of the book of life.. .. which may suggest that everyone's name starts out there (because of God's heart to save everyone) and people from

each generation systematically deselect themselves from eternal life, through not receiving His grace to believe in Christ

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/10/18 16:46

I think you missed my point so let me recap...

Most people reject the doctrine of God's sovereignty because they are appalled at the idea that God is sovereign. Still, just think about the consequences of this rationalization. What if God was all-powerful and you called Him unfair for being all-powerful? This is a touchy subject that I believe is very crucial to viewing God. God's sovereignty in control. The idea that we deserve grace is the heart of the issue... We don't deserve grace by any means. If God, by his good decree kept me from ever coming to faith I would have deserved it. Still, God choose me before the foundations of the earth and decreed that He would reveal Himself to little old undeserving me. Well... Why would God command something that we couldn't possibly do without His grace? Here's the answer: You are capable with His grace! Lazarus couldn't arise from the dead without God's help! By the way if God wanted everybody in heaven He is all-powerful and could've done that. God chose in His secret decree for His glory to be shown in salvation and damnation: both done in accordance with justice and righteousness. This should move us to preaching the clear and true gospel for the elect to hear and come. If it was up to me to change everybody's heart then all would be going to hell. Only God can save by grace. This should keep us from trying to manipulate the gospel to bring forth professions. I want to bring forth true converts which can only be made by the power of God.

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Quote:
-----Also by the way, I do realise He seeks out the lost and compels them to come in..... but, these are people who are willing to be compelled.

The bible says that none seek after God and that nobody chooses Him but He chooses them. When the bible says you get a new heart it implies a new will given by God. God must sovereignly give you a new will for you to come to Him.

Quote:
-----Having said all that, in the Old Testament, there is a saint who asks for his name not to be blotted out of the book of life.... which may suggest that everyone's name starts out there (because of God's heart to save everyone) and people from each generation systematically deselect themselves from eternal life, through not receiving His grace to believe in Christ.

Where does it say that God intends to save everyone but is forced not to by their will? I think the problem here is thinking that God is subject to man's will... God is not subject to us we are subject to him...

Revelation 13:8

"All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Those who are not written in the book of life have never been there. Those who have their names written in the book of life have always been there before time began.

The word "chosen" shows up 23 times in the new testament and the word "elect" 24 times...(NKJV) Do you really think that God is subject to his own creation?

It might help to hear John MacArthur on the subject...

(http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/Grace_to_You/archives.asp?bcd10/3/2006) Here

Re: A Question to Calvinists, on: 2006/10/18 17:25

Quote:

----- I think the problem here is thinking that God is subject to man's will... God is not subject to us we are subject to him...

OK. Personally, I think the question I'm about to ask you is a mean one, but, how else do you explain the Cross?

We are only subject to Him in a reciprocal relationship of unconditional love. There is no other explanation of 'We love Him because He first loved us'.

The definition of love is that He laid down His life for us. That was an act of His sovereign will, sure, but, for why? Because He MADE HIMSELF SUBJECT to the penalty for our sin..... the sin Adam CHOSE to sin. God did not stand at his elbow forcing his hand towards the forbidden fruit. This is where I (speaking for myself) see the whole Calvinism - Arminianism discussion as close to sophistry.

Scripture supports both the sovereignty of God after all, if His death was not sufficient and if He had not risen from the dead there is NO salvation..... and, man's part in creating a situation in which He ever needed to die at all.

It may not be obvious that I really *do* believe in the sovereignty of God and that we are subject to Him, but I see that sovereignty as overarching the choices we make - whether for life through the obedience of faith, or for death which will ultimately be outworked through His just wrath for disobedience.

Re: - posted by bluinis, on: 2006/10/18 18:15

GraceAlone:

You are correct we don't deserve this grace (unmerited favor) but we have this grace (unmerited favor) by what God all-powerful son did on the cross.

I hear your message on Grace and it still sounds to me like you have to work for it, and you don't have to. Once you have accepted his precious son in your heart as Lord and savior working out your own salvation you are saved, now if you choose to turn away from this salvation and grace (unmerited favor) then you do need assistance.

Lazarus couldn't arise from the dead with out God's help --Lazarus remained dead several days as a testimony of God all-powerful.

Dorcas:

Having said all that, in the Old Testament, there is a saint who asks for his name not to be blotted out of the book of life.. .. which may suggest that everyone's name starts out there (because of God's heart to save everyone) and people from each generation systematically deselect themselves from eternal life, through not receiving His grace to believe in Christ

I have been holding this inside for too long. I hear what you are saying but I also believe that there is more, its not just believing in Christ and that your name is written in the book of life or that it started there...its about allowing him to change your life.

Too often we walk in fear of losing our salvation and grace that we don't allow God to utilize his chisel and in essence we miss out on who we can or could be in his hands.

Dorcas:

by their refusal to acknowledge His goodness in leading them towards repentance.....

you also used the word time and eternity and this came to mind. If God all-powerful knew and he did that we would need a savior which would be his son, why did he wait as long as he did (time) so that we could have (eternity)?

GraceAlone,

In reference to your quote on your name being written the Lambs Book of Life, you must believe that once you made the

t great confession that indeed your name is written in the Lambs Book of Life, or else your confession is not valid.

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2006/10/18 20:19

hey sis Dorcas

Quote:
-----Isn't there a case for saying that God gives man a free will which is as sovereign within its remit, as God's is within His, and 'choose you this day whom you will serve' is a genuine question from God to man..... because God knows that unless a person's mind is convinced, the battle is lost? And He wants no puppets in His family..... only sons.

there is a valid case to me made as you have said in the above. like i said, i'm not so much worried about the mechanics, i feel our will is subject to God's and our perception of what free will is, is indeed warped since it is largely shaped (at least i think anyway) by the world before God draws us to Himself. anyhow our will and God's will irrespective of our views work together for the glory of God which is the bottom line. it seems contradictory in our minds but there is no such contradiction in God's.

whether you view it one way and i see it another sis, it seems plain to me we're vessels of mercy so it's all good and on the other side i'm sure all will be made plain for us both to His glory.

love you much sis

So I guess I'm a Calvinist?, on: 2006/10/18 23:49

JaySaved wrote:

Quote:
-----The short version is that it is by God's grace that all men are saved through faith--and this faith is not of ourselves but is itself a gift from God. Salvation is not by works so that no man may boast that he has saved himself.

well then, I guess now I'm a Calvinist, but can I still be a follower of Jesus, too?

Re: A Question to Calvinists, on: 2006/10/19 6:49

IRONMAN said

Quote:
-----i feel our will is subject to God's and our perception of what free will is

Hi Bro :-)

In a way, I agree, and there is a strange thing which happens as one seeks God, in that He calls upon us to choose His will.... It is at this point we discover the warp to which you refer - that we would tend towards our own will, often.

However, I have come to the place where I am no longer happy choosing my own way through life. I don't think the decisions I made in the past which had a very hard outcome through which to live, were necessarily 'my will' and not His, but , through the process of coming to terms with the decisions I thought I'd made with His blessing - nay, *guidance* - I learned a huge amount about myself, and in the end, He had the opportunity to change me far more than if I'd found myself in a circumstance which gave Him *less* opportunity to change me.

Now, I think having a free will is something to do with making it my business to know what He wants me to do / be, and doing and being it. I do not think a Christian's will is 'free' in the way it was before one was seeking to be obedient to the Father... I hope that makes sense. But, it is still 'free' because I *choose* to please Him because I know that will bring me peace in my relationship with Him. It is my way of showing that I love Him..... that I understand He took my needs seriously when He sent Jesus, and now I am literally eternally grateful.

Quote:
-----and God's will irrespective of our views work together for the glory of God which is the bottom line.

Amen. We have to trust this, when nothing looks like it on the outside.

Quote:
-----so it's all good

Indeed. :-D

Re: - posted by mamaluk, on: 2006/10/19 10:11

Hi Ironman and Dorcas,

Forgive me of interrupting here a bit, should anyone be interested over this freewill issue, aside from Scriptures, do consider to read "Bondage of the Will" by Luther. A tiny book, but a super super read. :)

thanks

Re: So I guess I'm a Calvinist? - posted by JaySaved, on: 2006/10/19 12:11

Quote:

JaySaved wrote:
Quote:

The short version is that it is by God's grace that all men are saved through faith--and this faith is not of ourselves but is itself a gift from God. Salvation is not by works so that no man may boast that he has saved himself.

bartle wrote:
well then, I guess now I'm a Calvinist, but can I still be a follower of Jesus, too?

Sarcasm noted. ;)

My point is that sometimes when a person asks "Are you a Calvinist?" You have to say, 'What do you mean by Calvinist?' Because sometimes they have a completely off base definition in their head. I am a Calvinist, but I am a Calvinist because I am a follower of Christ who sees God working in the hearts of people to bring them to him.

A Calvinist takes Ephesians 2:8-9 literally in that the 'grace' comes from God and the 'faith' comes from God "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:".

We have discussed previously Phil 3:9. Remember when some bashed the new translations for changing the 'of to in'?

New International Version

Phil 3:9, "and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ--the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith."

The King James Version (Authorized)

Phil 3:9, "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:"

So, is our faith that is not from ourselves as Eph 3 says the 'faith of Christ' or our 'faith in Christ'?

P.S. I am not saying that we don't exhibit faith. I am saying that our faith comes through the faith of Christ.

Re: - posted by JaySaved, on: 2006/10/19 12:20

Dorcas wrote:

Quote:
-----Also by the way, I do realise He seeks out the lost and compels them to come in..... but, these are people who are willing to be compelled.

If God reveals himself equally to all men/women, then how does anyone reject Christ?

How can two people who are lost hear the same gospel message at the same time and one responds in faith and the other doesn't?

You said that those who respond are the ones who are willing to be compelled. What makes them 'willing' in the first place?

You and I are saved. We see the glorious sacrifice of what Jesus has done. We see the hand of God in this world and we have a desire to honor and glorify his name.

How can people see God on the throne, see Jesus' sacrifice and not worship him? It is mind-boggling! Why can't they see what I see?

Are they too dumb to see?
Are they not smart enough to know?

Re: Jay, on: 2006/10/19 13:53

you asked:

Quote:
-----If God reveals himself equally to all men/women, then how does anyone reject Christ?

to which I, for one say, "I don't know".

I never have fear of saying "I don't know", when the Wind of the Spirit starts to blow.

Its kind of like when Jesus was talking with Nicodemus in John 3 and tells him, ..."you must be born again. The wind blows wherever it pleases, you hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where its going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit".

so.....where's the Wind blowing?

bartle

Re: - posted by DesiJr, on: 2006/10/19 16:13

My brothers,

It is truly sad to see mankind align themselves so feverishly to mankind for the sake of being "RIGHT" and proving others "WRONG".

When will we discard all of our "ISMS" and replace our passion for man's intellect and nail it to the Cross?

Being a Calvinist or arguing against Calvinism is a waste of time. This is what the enemy revels in. And in particular my brother LOVEGRACE you adamantly rebuke those who subscribe to ISMS yet defend your Calvinist doctrine.

Lovegrace, you say this:

"...debating, and trying to figure out this C vs. A thing is meaningless. Christ didn't call ANYONE to debate doctrine like this..."

"So, my voice is spoken. Only because I'm tired of the Immaturity and the spirit of these discussions. On SI and in real life. They are UTTERLY MEANINGLESS."

Yet earlier in your letter you wrote:

"That's not Calvinism. That statement that is quoted above isn't Calvinism. I personally am a 4.5 Calvinist. I believe in most of their beliefs..."

When will the men of God rise up and discard the filthy garments of human intellect and truly offer themselves as a living sacrifice to be used by the complete and total sovereign God.

At the right time Christ died while we were enemies of the King of the Universe, so that we could have peace with Him and spend eternity with the One who could not spend eternity without us.... and let that be enough for us to serve Him. Not because what WE think or because what WE figured out.

Read the Word, Pray, Witness, diligently seek Him, and His Righteousness (not man's clever doctrines) and God is just a faithful to reveal himself to us.

LET GOD BE ENOUGH....WE SHOULD BE OF ONE MIND AND OF ONE ACCORD.

God Forgive us for our immaturity, help us to grow spiritually, to grow more like your Son, who is the Glory of You the Father. Thank you for looking past our ignorance, help us in our shortcomings, we do repent, and want to erase walls and barriers that we have allowed men to build. You are the builder and creator. Forgive us God, and thank you for your mercy.

God Bless,
Desi, Jr.

Re: A Question to Calvinists, on: 2006/10/19 16:26

JaySaved asked

Quote:
-----How can people see God on the throne, see Jesus' sacrifice and not worship him? It is mind-boggling! Why can't they see what I see?

I can testify that revelation is required, before either person can believe. We don't know if a person 'hearing' the gospel, gets the same revelation as the person beside him hearing the same gospel. Two unique individuals may need to be challenged in very different ways by God.

For years (until the last 15 months or so), I thought I was the only person who didn't 'see' what others could see. I thought I was always the last to 'know' and 'understand'..... But now, I realise I was just in **GROSS** darkness.

I'm still working on how to *reinterpret* my past, but one thing is very clear to me..... that the connectedness I enjoy in my mind, is all God's doing. He has shined light on my 5000 piece jigsaw, sometimes shining it on only a part of a piece. It's been a loooooong job, but He has patiently connected up the information I started with, to new information, and I think I'm beginning to 'get' it at last. I'm not joking. This is completely serious.....

I find it very hard to believe that people should be considered born rejects from God. That simply is not the nature of the God I've come to know.... that he would condemn babies, and give them such a raw deal in life that they'd hate Him from their earliest awareness of Him. But then, I've never hated God. It's always been clear to me that He was not responsible for the actions of 'people', including people claiming to know Him..... and so I've never held Him responsible for their mistakes.

Further, when it was pointed out to me that He had taken responsibility for their sins and mine, it seemed even less logical to turn away from Him..... So I think that when people keep choosing not to know God, they know what they are doing, even if they are really hazy about the meaning of the reality of how they are sowing to their eternal future.

I believe God takes them at their word, just as He takes the Christian at his word and answers his prayers, changes him from glory to glory and challenges him with new steps to walk in.

Am I making any sense?

Re: - posted by JaySaved, on: 2006/10/19 17:44

Dorcas said:

Quote:

-----I find it very hard to believe that people should be considered born rejects from God.

I understand completely. I do not like to think of this because it makes me sad.

Quote:

-----That simply is not the nature of the God I've come to know.... that he would condemn babies, and give them such a raw deal in life that they'd hate Him from their earliest awareness of Him.

I have to stress that nowhere in the Bible does it say that God condemns babies in their state infant state. I find no biblical justification for that.

Also, concerning the hatred towards God, God doesn't have to give them a 'raw deal' for them to hate him. I offer these scriptures concerning the 'sinful nature/mind':

Romans 7:25

Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Romans 8:5

Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.

Romans 8:6

The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;

Romans 8:7

the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

So, we see that the unbeliever is in a state of hostility to God from the beginning and is a slave to sin. Therefore it is easy to see how an unbeliever can hate God.

Quote:

-----But then, I've never hated God. It's always been clear to me that He was not responsible for the actions of 'people', including people claiming to know Him..... and so I've never held Him responsible for their mistakes.

I will use Judas as an example of this.

Jesus knew all along that Judas would betray him (John 6:69-71, "We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God. Then Jesus replied, "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!" (He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.)" because it was prophesied in scripture. See Acts 1:1-17, "In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) and said, "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Ju

das, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus— he was one of our number and shared in this ministry." (See also Psalm 109)

So we see that Judas was responsible for his actions, but his actions were prophesied and had to come about. God spoke of what Judas would do long before Judas was born...is that fair? Is it biblical?

"rejects from God"?, on: 2006/10/19 18:53

Psalm 51! The heart of the penitent, quote it somebody!!!

"I was conceived in sin".....

Judas?....the one "doomed to destruction"....yet the cry, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do".

you're gonna be very surprised who you see in Heaven.

sorry for the brevity, and I have to go and make a dead king come back to life.....is it David?

yes, David!

a Gaelic David.....work work, its off to work we go.....Bless God for a job.

bartle

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2006/10/19 18:55

sis Dorcas

Quote:
-----I find it very hard to believe that people should be considered born rejects from God. That simply is not the nature of the God I've come to know.... that he would condemn babies, and give them such a raw deal in life that they'd hate Him from their earliest awareness of Him. But then, I've never hated God. It's always been clear to me that He was not responsible for the actions of 'people', including people claiming to know Him..... and so I've never held Him responsible for their mistakes.

you know Esau comes to mind because God hated him before he was born and could do anything. i would also ask then how come babies die? it seems to me no one is exempt from death which speaks to the saturation of man with sin and the sin nature. i mean when adam sinned all creation was affected and terribly so even unto babies dying without having committed any sin...

you said you've never hated God but i think we all have at some point because we were all once His enemies hence our conduct prior to salvation. i suppose not looking at how we acted before salvation as a reflection of a hatred of God is a consequence of how the nature of sin has touched every facet of creation...God is not responsible for our actions, we are hence His judgements. however if it were not for His own grace and mercy, there could be no salvation. bless God He did this before the settings of the foundations of the earth...

Re: - posted by lovegrace, on: 2006/10/19 18:57

Quote:

DesiJr wrote:
And in particular my brother LOVEGRACE you adamantly rebuke those who subscribe to ISMS yet defend your Calvinist doctrine.

Umm. I truly don't understand Calvinism nor Arminism. But, I've been apart of those debates and the fruit has been evident each and EVERY time (I've witnessed about 20+).

God is sovereign. Whether your father kills himself or you lose your job and all your savings and are on the street the next day or even if your daughter gets raped. GOD IS STILL ABSOLUTELY SOVEREIGN. That's the only point I was really try

ing to make.

I'm a Christian and I should've defined myself that way. Not as a '4.5 Calvinist'.

I probly shouldn't have thrown out '4.5 Calvinist' cause really, I don't fully comprehend it, nor do I care to. The time that has been wasted (and I do mean wasted) in these debates, thousands upon thousands could actually start living for God if we used our time MORE productly or in a better way.

So, let's press on to more edifying things. Like, when was the last time you actually shared the gospel with someone or served someone or interceded for your community.

This world should've been changed by now by all the KNOWLEDGE we have. But why isn't, cause there is NO feet to our faith. Let's act on what we know, instead of trying to aquire a better and more true doctrine. Let's move on what Christ said, LOVE GOD, OTHERS and FELLOW CHRISTIANS.

Everything else is secondary.

Re: - posted by DesiJr, on: 2006/10/19 19:26

LoveGrace,

God Bless you and the path that God has called you to walk. Continue firm in the faith and Christ will surely be glorified through our lives.

God Bless,
Desi, Jr.

Re: "rejects from God"? - posted by rometown, on: 2006/10/19 19:39

Psalms 51:5. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

I think that the mother being in sin has nothing to do with this especially when you factor in Ezekiel 18:4-32. We need to be accountable for our own actions and not blame God, mother, father, priest, brother, John Calvin, or anyone and I mean ANYONE. For our walk is with God and he does charish and value it. The question is do we?

Re: hating without cause - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2006/10/19 20:13

Hi Jaysaved, hope you are well.

I thought of Exodus 20:5 and Romans 1:18,25 in line with your last post also.

Peace be with you.

Re: LoveGrace - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/10/20 10:48

Quote:
-----God is soverign. Weither you father kills himself or you lose your job and all your savings and are on the street the next day or even if your daughter gets raped. GOD IS STILL ABSOLUTELY SOVERIGN. That's the only point I was really trying to make.

Amen. It's that simple.

Quote:
-----Umm. I truly don't understand Calvinsim nor Arminism.

I never did either untill I came here to talk on this forum online! I didn't even know the difference. I just read my bible and believed what it said. But as I started talking on here I found that people had strange objections to SIMPLE things. That's how this all got started.

Here's a website comparing the five points of calvinism and arminianism. (<http://www.the-highway.com/compare.html>) WEBSITE CLICK HERE. Its good to know where you stand because if you don't you'll be swooped into lots of tangles! John MacArthur has a good audio series to download free on the subject (http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/Grace_to_You/archives.asp?bcd10/3/2006) here.

But most important in your Christian walk is HOLINESS. What does God want you to do? Live a holy life, preach the gospel, and seek His face... among 15,000+ other things. Just read the bible without any bias in truth. What does it say... what does it mean... how does it apply to me?

rometown, on: 2006/10/20 13:30

Quote:

-----The question is do we?

yes and amen.

to me Psalm 51 is the heart of the penitent, and the height of the 7 penitential Psalms...that's all I was saying.

bartle

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2006/10/21 12:28

bro Jaysaved

Quote:

-----My will is my will and it is free from any and all external influences. No one outside of myself forces me to do anything...including God.

what about Jonah?

1 Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah 1 the son of Amittai, saying, 2 Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

there was no option for Jonah here, he was told to go to nineveh. he went the opposite way but:

4 But the LORD sent out 2 a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. 5 Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.

and then

5 So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased 5 from her raging. 16 Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered 6 a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows. 17 Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

during which:

1 Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, 2 And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.

and then:

10 And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

JONah then

1 And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, 2 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. 3 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD.

i'm not sure about you but that seems like an outside influence to me. Jonah was told to go, not asked. he decided he would go the opposite way but God had him put in the belly of a fish and vomited on the shores close to nineveh and he did comply. i don't think jonah would have decided to go to nineveh on his own accord, in fact i know he wouldn't have because God intervened so dramatically. our will is unfluenced alright...at least that's how i see it.

Re: free will and divine sovereignty - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/10/21 13:15

Quote:
----- i'm not sure about you but that seems like an outside influence to me. Jonah was told to go, not asked. he decided he would go the opposite way but God had him put in the belly of a fish and vomited on the shores close to nineveh and he did comply. i don't think jonah would have decided to go to nineveh on his own accord, in fact i know he wouldn't have because God intervened so dramatically. our will is unfluenced alright...at least that's how i see it.

Here is a perfect illustration to differentiate between God's role and man's role in the work of divine redemption.

God could have easily spared the fish episode by literally carrying Jonah to Nineveh, implanting him with a tape recording, and then pressing 'play'. But, no, God sovereignly worked in Jonah's life so that he went on his own accord, though not with the best of motives. Yes, God told him to go, and yes, God ordained circumstances to AFFECT Jonah's choice, but no, God did not literally make Jonah do it.

I feel that we do a great evil by implying that we are passive objects of God. So we just sit around and wait for something to happen to us, when really we are called to take responsibility for making choices.

Next time someone says to you. "So-and-so made me do such-and-such!", you can ask "Really? How?" Likely he wasn't handcuffed and dragged. Likely he believes in a false "doctrine" about his will. He has (unconsciously) given someone else power over his will, and then blames that "power" for controlling him. Really he himself made the choice. Pointing this out may very well be liberating for him.

No one enters the kingdom kicking and screaming. Nowhere in the Bible does God turn away anyone who wants in (until the final day, when the opportunity to choose is past).

Diane

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/10/21 13:29

Quote:
-----My will is my will and it is free from any and all external influences. No one outside of myself forces me to do anything...including God.

I respect the striving for philosophic consistency in holding men responsible for their freewill and attributing to them absolute free will. Yet I think Ironman touched on the obvious problem that pops up when we intellectually decide to affirm absolute free will in man. (Ever notice the irony that we weaken many ideas when we stick the word "absolute" on them?)

Only God almighty, dependent on no cause, can absolutely say My will is my will and it is free from any and all external influences. No one outside of myself forces me to do anything....

The rest of us are born into influence so murky and thick we can barely see beyond our own sphere of existence. Now I

believe man has a will of his own, but it is contextual at best. This is simply how nature works. Both a fish and a bird can come and go seemingly indifferent to gravity...but it's gravity that ultimately holds together their respective environments and enables them to move about. We call human will "free" but I think this ultimately is a misnomer. It is individual but its limits are constraining...we could call man's will 'limited' or restrained.

Somewhere in the spiritual layers of existence, man's lesser will touches God's greater will...where and how these two wills interact I can not say. God may not always 'force' man to do anything...although I think it's hasty to say he does not. Even the heart of a king is steered by God, the bible says.

Yet, God holds man responsible for his works. We are not robots...not even malfunctioning robots. Broken robots need repair, not repentance like spiritual human beings.

This is why I think Arminians and Calvinists...if we can polarize each other so neatly...really need each other. The two inform each other...and also confuse each other just enough to keep us from thinking God is also a robot that we can reverse engineer with theological schematics. The gospel message was given by God to be rationally understood and expressed by mere men...but this does not mean that all of God's mysteries can be pinned down with human rational.

MC

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/10/21 13:39

Revelation 19:6

"And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, 'Alleluia! For the Lord God OMNIPOTENT reigns!' emphasis added

Re: A Question to Calvinists, on: 2006/10/21 14:32

bro IRONMAN said

Quote:
-----you said you've never hated God but I think we all have at some point because we were all once His enemies hence our conduct prior to salvation

I agree God would be entitled to put this complexion on some of my actions, but, I have met many people who DO hate God, and can find no way to adjust their stance towards Him. In this sense, I genuinely have never hated God from inside my own head.

If I had, I would say so, and also (bro :-)) I think I'm the only person who would have a right to make that claim for myself... if you don't mind. :-)

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2006/10/21 20:39

sis Dorcas

Quote:
-----I agree God would be entitled to put this complexion on some of my actions, but, I have met many people who DO hate God, and can find no way to adjust their stance towards Him. In this sense, I genuinely have never hated God from inside my own head.

I suppose that is how I view it because I feel because we were His enemies and we conducted ourselves in a rebellious manner to Him it showed rebellion to Him which I feel is hate. I don't think that our actions of rebellion against God are any less offensive to Him than those of the people you mentioned above since both can be redeemed. I think to view it that way brings to light a gravity of sin which we may not otherwise think of. Think about it, when we sin we have been influenced by the enemy who does hate God and so the things he places before us which we then do can be nothing else but hateful toward God...or maybe that's something we ought to perhaps consider seriously?

Quote:
-----If I had, I would say so, and also (bro) I think I'm the only person who would have a right to make that claim for myself... if you don't mind.

i'm sorry sis D, i should have said i think we have hated God to some degree or other. it was not meant as an accusation but my own opinion and i put it forth as a thing for consideration.

Re: - posted by mamalluk, on: 2006/10/21 21:05

Quote:
-----i don't think that our actions of rebellion against God are any less offensive to Him than those of the people you mentioned above since both can be redeemed. i think to view it that way brings to light a gravity of sin which we may not otherwise think of. think about it, when we sin we have been influenced by the enemy who does hate God and so the things he places before us which we then do can be nothing

very true, Ironman, in fact, for we Blood-bought people, when we sin, we probably are more offensive to God than the worldlings.. too many Christians I met seem to have a sort of sin categorization in their mind, you know, the minor sins vs. major sins, the children's sins vs. adult's sins..that sort of thing

No longer ... - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/10/22 12:27

Oh, why not ...

Quote:
-----One of the major misconceptions about Calvinists is that we are all fatalists. This is just not the case.

You are not a Calvinist brother, you *are* a brother, a saint, a child of God, a fellow heir, a "Christian" (To use the word attributed by others upon us), a disciple, a friend (John 15:15). Probably a few more descriptions but these other titles of constructs, have much more in line with ...

1Co 3:4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?
1Co 3:5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man ?

... and the surrounding context than we might want to let on to. You might agree with him on some matters and points but there are no Calvinists nor Armenians for that matter in scripture. That is ridiculously overstated on purpose and that purpose is to but pray we could deconstruct so many of these divisive cliques from the Body. This segregating into camps is unnecessary as it is grievous. It unwittingly forces one into a boxed in mindset of 'agreement' to a set of constructs at the onset with little to no margin for error or other considerations.

That is not not to say there isn't anything of worth to consider from them, from the points described, the focus being looked at, the perspective, but in and of themselves cannot be all inclusive or what generally is left lingering is the sense of being *exclusive*, set apart from everyone else ...

Quote:
-----My will is my will and it is free from any and all external influences. No one outside of myself forces me to do anything...including God.

Stop yourself from dying.
Breathe on your own.

Reverse your birth.
Forgo sleep for a year.
... and food, water.

You are not as free as you might think brother.

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2006/10/22 14:39

sis Maggie

Quote:
-----very true, Ironman, in fact, for we Blood-bought people, when we sin, we probably are more offensive to God than the worldlings.. to
o many Christians I met seem to have a sort of sin catogorization in their mind, you know, the minor sins vs. major sins, the children's sins vs. adult's si
ns..that sort of thing

you know through you God has brought to remembrance something He has been drilling into me for some time. the worl
d is supposed to be offensive to God since they are at odds with Him, but we who are blood-bought ought not be so. We
are admonished in Hebrews chapters 2 and 10 not to treat the Blood of Christ with contempt and Paul (correct me if i'm
wrong) tells us not to crucify Christ anew. if we are under the blood, how much higher is the standard we are judged by?
we are judged by the Ultimate standard. it seems to me we ought to know better than to offend God so.

it seems to me in the eyes of God there is no such thing as greater or lesser sins in that they are all forgivable save for
blaspheming Holy SPirit. the consequences may be different though. i think there is a danger in considering one sin to b
e less than another because if we are guilty of things which we see as lesser sins, we become complacent and treat with
unfair harshness those who are guilty of sins we consider greater.

something to consider perhaps?

Re: A Question to Calvinists, on: 2006/10/22 15:18

IRONMAN said;

Quote:
----- think there is a danger in considering one sin to be less than another because if we are guilty of things which we see as lesser sins,
we become complacent and treat with unfair harshness those who are guilty of sins we consider greater.

Bro,

I'd been thinking about this subject, and I'm not sure you're right.....

Now don't get me wrong; I know 'sin is sin' has been taught in the Protestant church for a long time, but, what I'm interes
ted in is the way Jesus seems to promise not only different rewards, but, He uses words which imply a hierarchy of puni
shment or, of sin. I haven't looked into this completely, but it's on my mind to do a fuller study, soon.

Here are a few verses to think about.

Matthew 23:14

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: t
herefore ye shall receive **the greater damnation.**

John 19:11

Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that deli
vered me unto thee hath **the greater sin.**

James 3:1

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive **the greater condemnation.**

Why the comparatives? What think ye?

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2006/10/22 15:39

sis diane

Quote:
-----God could have easily spared the fish episode by literally carrying Jonah to Ninevah, implanting him with a tape recording, and then pressing 'play'. But, no, God sovereignly worked in Jonah's life so that he went on his own accord, though not with the best of motives. Yes, God told him to go, and yes, God ordained circumstances to AFFECT Jonah's choice, but no, God did not literally make Jonah do it.

this is true and yet God let Jonah go in the opposite direction of his own accord but God did steer Jonah back to Nineveh... that is compulsion to me. it was made plain to Jonah that there was no other way to go but God's so Jonah did right.

Quote:
-----I feel that we do a great evil by implying that we are passive objects of God. So we just sit around and wait for something to happen to us, when really we are called to take responsibility for making choices.

we do indeed do great evil by being complacent, but we also do evil on the flip side by doing much out of ourselves as opposed to being led by the Spirit of God in the decision-making process.

Quote:
-----No one enters the kingdom kicking and screaming. Nowhere in the Bible does God turn away anyone who wants in (until the final day, when the opportunity to choose is past)

true, we enter into the Kingdom with thanksgiving and praise. God doesn't turn anyone away who seeks Him, but even that grace is dependant on Him...

God bless

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2006/10/22 16:02

sis Dorcas

Quote:
-----I'd been thinking about this subject, and I'm not sure you're right....
Now don't get me wrong; I know 'sin is sin' has been taught in the Protestant church for a long time, but, what I'm interested in is the way Jesus seems to promise not only different rewards, but, He uses words which imply a hierarchy of punishment or, of sin. I haven't looked into this completely, but it's on my mind to do a fuller study, soon.

i qualified what i said about sin being the same in God's eyes in the context that it is all forgivable save for blaspheming Holy Spirit. i am well aware that there will be different consequences/punishments for sin as it is evidenced by the punishments for various crimes in the Mosaic law and our C.J. system. i am aware also that there will be different rewards and such for us in heaven based on what we have done through Christ.

as far as God is concerned breaking one part of the law is as good as breaking it all. one can't be partially condemned nor saved. my concern was that if we view lying for example as something less than say adultery we may come to a place where we lie all the time and yet contend that we are better than an adulterer and this can foster complacency which can lead to becoming unrepentant. one can't say "i'm not condemned because i'm not a fornicator" yet he is liar. the word says the wages of sin is death, there are no sins which are excluded from this and this is the thing i'm feeling compelled to

share.

a striking example which i often like to use has to do with the issue of homosexuality. in general there is always a big stink raised over this issue and rightly so because it is abominable in God's sight. yet for some reason (or maybe it is just me being blind, if so y'all forgive me and God forgive me) the same outrage is not heard as it pertains to adultery in the church, our children fornicating, pornography rampant among Christian men (i am guilty of all 3 and God forgave and redeemed me from them all) the latter 3 compared to homosexuality have probably done more damage to Christian homes because far more people are guilty of them. i am not saying homosexuality should be ignored, Heaven forbid! i'm saying though we ought not take lightly sins we aren't guilty of lest we become calloused and rendered unable to speak out against them as we should and inviting God's wrath on ourselves.

i hope that cleared things up for you sis

love you much and i bless God for you

Re: Hear ye them! - posted by Dougmore, on: 2006/10/22 16:05

What did the early church brethren say?

Clement, "Neither praise nor condemnation, neither rewards nor punishments, are right if the soul does not have the power of choice and avoidance, if evil is involuntary. Clement Miscellanies bk. 1, chap. 17

Methodius, "Those who decide that man does not have free will, but say that he is governed by the unavoidable necessities of fate, are guilty of impiety toward God Himself, making Him out to be the cause and author of human evils." Methodius The Banquet of the Ten Virgins discourse 8, chap. 16

What Luther based his beliefs on fate/predestination...

"But why should these things be so difficult for we Christians to understand, so that it should be considered irreligious, curious, and vain to discuss and know them, when heathen poets, and common people themselves, have in their mouths in the most frequent use? How often does Virgil alone make mention of Fate? "All these things stand fixed by unchangeable law." Again, "Fixed is the day of every man." Again, "If the Fates summon you." And again, "If you will break the binding chain of Fate." Luther, Bondage, pp. 43,44.

I personally prefer to stand on the Word and not take counsel of Pagan poets! Ha! Sorry, to funny!:lol:

The big one, Can a saved person become lost?*

Tertullian wrote, "Some people act as though God were under an obligation to bestow even on the unworthy His intended gift. They turn His liberality into slavery... For do not many afterwards fall out of grace? Is not this gift taken away from many?" Tertullian on Repentance chap. 6

Cyprian, "It is written, 'He who endures to the end, the same shall be saved' (Matt. 10:22) So whatever precedes the end is only a step by which we ascend the summit of salvation. It is not the final point wherein have already gained the full result of the ascent." Cyprian Unity of the Church sec. 21

Hope they can help, bro Doug

* Edited, incorrect sentence structure.

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2006/10/22 16:21

bro Mike

so much truth here in what you wrote

Quote:
-----I respect the striving for philosophic consistency in holding men responsible for their freewill and attributing to them absolute free will. Yet I think Ironman touched on the obvious problem that pops up when we intellectually decide to affirm absolute free will in man. (Ever notice the irony that we weaken many ideas when we stick the word "absolute" on them?)

i'd never thought of the irony in the weakening of a position/philosophy by calling it absolute but indeed it is true. there is but 1 absolute, God Himself.

Quote:
-----The rest of us are born into influence so murky and thick we can barely see beyond our own sphere of existence. Now I believe man has a will of his own, but it is contextual at best. This is simply how nature works. Both a fish and a bird can come and go seemingly indifferent to gravity...but it's gravity that ultimately holds together their respective environments and enables them to move about. We call human will "free" but I think it is ultimately a misnomer. It is individual but its limits are constricting...we could call man's will 'limited' or restrained.

and this is the thing which keeps coming back to me, our free will is somehow wrapped up and subject to God's own somehow and so it is not absolute. we are born into sin without choice, then the word says we are chosen from before the setting of the foundations of the earth...then again we are told to work out our salvation with fear and trembling...brethren it seems to me our will (irrespective of whatever degree of freedom absolute or otherwise you assign to it) is still not independent of God's own will.

Quote:
-----Somewhere in the spiritual layers of existence, man's lesser will touches God's greater will...where and how these two wills interact I can not say. God may not always 'force' man to do anything...although I think it's hasty to say he does not. Even the heart of a king is steered by God, the bible says.

amen bro.

Quote:
-----Yet, God holds man responsible for his works. We are not robots...not even malfunctioning robots. Broken robots need repair, not repentance like spiritual human beings.

even though God has it all in His hand, we are held responsible for our sins. how does that work?!?! Paul said in Romans 9 'but nay who are you oh man to talk back to God?' to me this says that God as Maker of all can do as He pleases and we as the clay shall not ask Him "why did you make me so?"

Quote:
-----This is why I think Arminians and Calvinists...if we can polarize each other so neatly...really need each other. The two inform each other...and also confuse each other just enough to keep us from thinking God is also a robot that we can reverse engineer with theological schematics. The gospel message was given by God to be rationally understood and expressed by mere men...but this does not mean that all of God's mysteries can be pinned down with human rational.

AMEN bro! this is it right here. neither the calvanist nor araminian (sp) has the corner on the truth and this is why we all need eachother. indeed the mysteries of GOD have been given to us to express, the mechanics of this particular one are obviously beyond what we can comprehend. i can't remember who said it, but a theologian said (and it wasn't me but his testimony did bear witness with my spirit) something to the effect of mans's free will and God's sovereign will seem to be

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2 parallel lines, or mutually exclusive. yet somehow they are 1 and work together for 1 cause, which is God's glory and the 2 meet on the other side before the throne of GOD. this mystery dear friends will only make sense on the other side. while here though if we are vessels of mercy, we are do act accordingly.

if i could be like mike...balog/compton - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2006/10/22 16:34

bro Mike Balog

Quote:
-----You are not a Calvinist brother, you are a brother, a saint, a child of God, a fellow heir, a "Christian" (To use the word attributed by others upon us), a disciple, a friend (John 15:15). Probably a few more descriptions but these other titles of constructs, have much more in line with

indeed bro indeed. i've been accused of being calvanist. i didn't know...well i still don't know entirely what that means, i do know there is something in it about points, 5 of them. :-P seriously though such titles are like what in those days was being called a follower of Paul and so on as you showed through scripture.

the word tells us we are responsible for our sin and yet also we are called from before the setting of the foundations of the earth. the 2 seem to contradict in our minds but there is no such contradiction in God's mind. evidently both are true as both are in scripture.

Quote:
-----and the surrounding context than we might want to let on to. You might agree with him on some matters and points but there are no Calvinists nor Armenians for that matter in scripture. That is ridiculously overstated on purpose and that purpose is to but pray we could deconstruct so many of these divisive cliques from the Body. This segregating into camps is unnecessary as it is grievous. It unwittingly forces one into a boxed in mindset of 'agreement' to a set of constructs at the onset with little to no margin for error or other considerations.

the last part of what you said here is like what the other bro Mike (Compton that is) said earlier about how both camps need each other because the truth is not one or the other view but rather it is a combination of both and we see this in scripture.

God bless y'all

Re: No longer ... - posted by JaySaved, on: 2006/10/23 12:12

Quote:
-----Jaysaved said:

My will is my will and it is free from any and all external influences. No one outside of myself forces me to do anything...including God.

crssk said:
Stop yourself from dying.
Breathe on your own.
Reverse your birth.
Forgo sleep for a year.
... and food, water.

You are not as free as you might think brother.

I cannot stop myself from dying.
I cannot breathe on my own
I cannot reverse my birth
I cannot forgo sleep, food or water for a year.

You make your point that I cannot do everything. However, I never contended that I can do everything. I have simply stated that my Will is free and that God has created my Will to be free. Think about this, You and I do what we desire to do. Yes, we might do something that we do not want to do, but ultimately even what we do not want to do is something we desire to do more than the alternative.

For example, Let's say that I am robbed at gunpoint. The robber tells me to give him my my wallet or he will shoot me. I give him my wallet. I could make the point that it was not my Free Will choice to give up my wallet. However, my only other alternative was to be shot. I made a decision that losing my wallet was more desirable than have a bullet enter my body.

My point is that I am not forced to do anything against my will. When God saved me, it was because I desired his salvation. Why did I desire his salvation? Because God changed my desires and understanding of who he was. God did not rob me of my Will. God did not make me do anything that I did not want to do.

This is the major misunderstanding of Salvation and why so many people misrepresent Calvinism.

Also, brother I understand that you do not like the labels that Christians place on one another. I agree with you. I am a Christian. However, you also must understand the context I used it. The title of this thread is 'A question for Calvinists'. As someone who knows the context of what that means...I answered the post with as much wisdom as the Spirit can give me.

Re: lots of specks but a very big log - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/10/23 13:13

Quote:

-----a hierarchy of punishment or, of sin

I guess the best way to find out would be to examine the sins addressed by John the Baptist, Jesus, Paul, the prophets, and others in the Bible.

Here's another idea: Make a list of all the sins addressed in the Bible ordering them according to the number of times they were mentioned. That should give us a good clue of what God is most concerned about.

What about the sin of living according to the flesh and not the Spirit, living by one's own strength or reasoning, or sins of unbelief.

Whatever is not of faith is sin. That pretty much can be anything - even preaching a great sermon when God never told you to.

Yes, Ironside, I agree with your point: When we have a log in our own eye, we are not very good at seeing the specks in others' eyes.

Maybe, in God's eyes, the worst sins are our own - whatever that would be.

Diane

Re: willing or unwilling - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/10/23 13:25

Ironman said:

Quote:

-----God did steer Jonah back to nineveh...that is compulsion to me.

And yet, Jonah was not led by a ring in his nose. He exercised his will.

Philip, on the other hand was literally carried by the Spirit to the Ethiopian. But that's not how Jonah got to Nineveh. "Jonah obeyed.." Jonah 3:3 In the fish he learned that you don't mess with God. He repented. And so when called again,

he walked in the right direction.

Ultimately which of the two - Philip or Jonah, was most surrendered to God? I'd say Philip. Jonah had a hard time accepting God's mercy for Nineveh, but as seen in the worm account, he assumed it for himself.

Perhaps it would be worth distinguishing between a will that acts willingly and a will that acts reluctantly. Either case, one is responsible for his choice, but the latter does not please God.

It would also be worth knowing what exactly what we ARE held responsible for. Certainly there are many things we cannot control - like the FACT that we are born apart from God, in sin.

Diane

Re: - posted by JaySaved, on: 2006/10/23 13:36

I humbly submit the following article for reference concerning the Will of men.

(http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/freewill_chantry.html) Man's Will - Free yet bound

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2006/10/23 16:34

sister Diane

Quote:

-----And yet, Jonah was not led by a ring in his nose. He exercised his will.

exactly, Jonah got a taste of the alternative to doing God's will and decided to do right, although he ultimately pouted because of God's mercy on Nineveh.

Quote:

-----Philip, on the other hand was literally carried by the Spirit to the Ethiopian. But that's not how Jonah got to Nineveh. "Jonah obeyed.." Jonah 3:3 In the fish he learned that you don't mess with God. He repented. And so when called again, he walked in the right direction.

down here in Texas there are a lot of bumper stickers which say don't mess with Texas...and like you said Jonah learned not to mess with God...

Quote:

-----Perhaps it would be worth distinguishing between a will that acts willingly and a will that acts reluctantly. Either case, one is responsible for his choice, but the latter does not please God.

indeed sister this is very true.

for the "Calvinists", on: 2006/10/23 19:16

with a dollar or two in their pockets:

<http://cgi.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewItem&category=29223&item=330041157155>

Re: for the "Calvinists" - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/10/26 12:12

R.C. Sproul has some videos out right now on this subject. Check them out. (<http://www.ligonier.org/>) [Click here](#)

www.cornerstoneorlando.org
www.myspace.com/kristycwhite

Re: A Question for Calvinists - posted by Julian3, on: 2006/10/26 13:31

To SteveNoel who said

Quote:

-----If so, does this not appear to put the responsibility for his sins all those years on God?

Yes, and that's what happened. Jesus Christ took responsibility for all sins.

Isaiah 40

1 Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

2 Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins.

'her warfare IS accomplishED... her iniquity IS pardonED...'

Isn't this *God's* doing?

Isn't this a keen part of the gospel?