

Introduction

- We agree on the essentials, but have freedom to disagree on particulars.
- God is in control of all things and man is responsible for our actions is a paradox.
- I want you to grow in love for God and His Word, not agree with me.

Free Will

- We need to define terms (predestination, free will) when having these discussions.
- Most common definition of free will is the ability to make choices without any prior prejudice, inclination, or disposition.
- There is no such thing as a neutral uninfluenced free will.
- A better definition is that we are free to follow our desires.
- We always choose what we most want to do.
- Being self-determined is different than determinism or being forced.

Predestination

- The eternal destiny of every person was decided before the foundation of the world.
- Every orthodox Christian does and must believe this.
- The question is "On what basis is God decide who would be saved?"

Biblical Evidence

- "He chose us in him before the foundation of the world" - Eph 1:4
- "Having been predestined according to the purpose of him" - Eph 1:11
- "Those whom he foreknew he also predestined" Rom 8:29
- "Those whom he predestined he also called and those whom he called he also justified and those whom he justified he also glorified" - Rom 8:30

Depravity

- Both Arminian and Calvinists largely agree on the effect of depravity (sin).
- The question is how does sin affect our free will?
- Total depravity does not mean people are as sinful as possible.
- It means sin has affected every single part of the person.
- Fallen man does not have the natural desire to choose Christ.
- Only the unorthodox believe free will is unaffected by sin.

Original Sin

- Because of Adam's sin we are all born with a sin nature.
- We are enslaved to sin (John 8:34) and cannot escape nor do we want to escape.
- We cannot do anything truly righteous and good (Is. 64:6).
- Sin totally permeates our intellect, will, heart, and soul.
- We cannot and do not want to seek God.

Biblical Evidence

- "Every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" - Gen 6:5
- "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" Jer 17:9
- "No one can come to me unless it has been granted to him by my Father" John 6:65
- "There is none who seeks after God" Rom 3:11
- "The mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed it cannot" - Rom 8:7
- "The wicked flee when no one pursues" Prov 28:1
- "But God, who is rich in mercy" Eph 2:1-5

Prevenient Grace

- We will discuss this more in the coming weeks.
- This would be a primary difference between Arminian and Calvinist thought.
- This believes, in God's grace, He makes it possible that all people now have the ability to choose Jesus.
- Man's sinful nature hinders our ability to choose Christ.
- Prevenient grace is a grace that comes to sinners and restores their ability to choose to seek God, but does not guarantee they will do so.
- Objection 1: If this is true, on what basis do some respond and some do not?
- Objection 2: Where in Scripture is this prevenient grace taught?

Takeaways

- God does not owe anyone salvation, or it would not be grace.
- We must believe we have been predestined by God, but we can disagree on how He makes this choice.
- We must believe we have lost the ability to choose God, but we can disagree on how God has restored it to us.