



<b>Divine Sovereignty</b>	<b>Human Responsibility</b>
God unrestrictedly controls and directs all things in the universe and whatsoever that comes to pass throughout history according to His eternal decree, will and nature.	People are rational beings who freely make choices, motivated by their desires and in accordance to their basic nature for which they are culpable or responsible.

### The Challenge of Libertarian Free Will

Libertarianism believes that a person’s will is so free that nothing decisively influences them to make a choice one way or another between several options. Ultimately, the reason for that choice lies solely in the person’s will itself.

**Libertarian free will is often simplified as the ability of \_\_\_\_\_.**

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## THE PROBLEMS WITH LIBERTARIANISM

### 1. If people truly had libertarian free will, we would seem to be irrational and chaotic beings.

This is because every choice we make is dependent on some or several prior factors and influences, both internal and external, which together provide \_\_\_\_\_ reason or cause for your choice.

“If our choices have the possibility of being cut off from our circumstances, desires, motives, beliefs, and so forth, then in what sense can we say that choices come from ourselves at all?”<sup>1</sup>

### 2. The argument that “ought implies can” and that inability absolves guilt proves to be \_\_\_\_\_.

- The inability to pay a debt you owe doesn’t absolve you of the debt.
- We sin willfully according to our nature, and therefore it is entirely just for God to condemn sin.

**MAIN PROBLEM: Scripture tells us clearly that since the Fall, humanity’s will is not \_\_\_\_\_ but rather in \_\_\_\_\_ to sin.**

Man is not the measure of ultimate truth; God and His Word are.

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<sup>1</sup> Scott Christensen, *What About Free Will?*, p. 32

## BIBLICAL COMPATIBILISM

**Compatibilism simply means that these two truths (of Divine sovereignty and human responsibility) are not in disagreement or at odds with each other, but rather are \_\_\_\_\_.**

### A. What It Is NOT

#### I. Compatibilism is NOT \_\_\_\_\_ or 'hard determinism'

- Fatalism/determinism is about impersonal cold fate or the product of purely material processes.
- Biblical compatibilism affirms the necessity and importance of choices and the reality of their consequences within the framework of the loving, wise and sovereign plan of a Personal God.

#### II. Compatibilism is NOT God \_\_\_\_\_ someone against their will

- God does not force anyone to sin, but rather we are lured by our own sinful desires (Jam. 1:13-15).
- When God brings someone to Himself, He is not dragging them kicking and screaming against their will. Scripture teaches that God gives us a new nature that desires the things of God. This is the new birth, and the reason why we come to Him.

**We always act in accordance with our \_\_\_\_\_.**

#### III. Compatibilism is NOT a case of Either/Or

- God's word teaches both concepts.

### B. What It IS

#### I. A Display of Divine \_\_\_\_\_ and Glory

- The greater the task to be undertaken, the more important it is that we should plan out the details meticulously to ensure its accomplishment. How much more so for God's ultimate goal – the glory of His Name!?

#### II. God decrees BOTH the \_\_\_\_\_ AND the \_\_\_\_\_

See for example, Leviticus 20:7-8, 1 Corinthians 15:10, Colossians 1:29 & Ephesians 3:20. It means:

- **We don't get to \_\_\_\_\_ God** for our laziness, stupidity or inactivity because we neglected His prescribed means of spiritual growth.
- **We don't get to \_\_\_\_\_** in any of our accomplishments because we know it is God working in and through us, and apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5).

#### III. Concurrence: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency

Concurrence simply means that the decisions and actions of created beings and the plans and decrees of God happen concurrently - or at the same time together. Wayne Grudem says, "God cooperates with created things in every action, directing their distinctive properties to cause them to act as they do."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 317

## The Analogy of Scripture’s Inspiration

Scripture is at the same time, both:

- Really the product of its \_\_\_\_\_ authors (2 Pet. 1:20-21).
- Really the product of its \_\_\_\_\_ Author (1 Tim. 3:16-17).

## ROMANS 8-10 | The Sovereignty of God in Salvation



### The \_\_\_\_\_ of Redemption (Romans 8:28-30)

- God is the subject of all the verbs – He is the *active* agent.
- The ones who are foreknown, are also predestined, and called, and justified, and glorified. There is *no break* in this chain.
- It is the *reason why nothing can separate us* from the love of Christ (see Romans 8:31-39)

### Romans 9:10-13 - God’s Sovereign Choice

- Salvation is not genetically inherited (9:6-8).
- Emphasis on God’s purpose (see also Isa. 46:10; 44:26-28; Psa. 33:11; Prov. 19:21)

#### OBJECTION: That’s not fair! (9:14-16)

- Paul answers the question by quoting from Exodus 33:19 that God says that He will have mercy and compassion on whoever He chooses. **This is because mercy cannot be \_\_\_\_\_.**
- Mercy is given at the discretion of the One who has the right to deal out justice—the Judge of all.

**ANSWER:** “So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.” (9:16)

#### THE EXAMPLE OF PHARAOH (9:17-18)

- The purpose of God’s free choice to show mercy on whom He pleases is \_\_\_\_\_.



#### A Dangerous Response (9:19-20)

Paul anticipates the reactions of his readers when he interjects: “You will say to me then, ‘Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?’” (Romans 9:19)

#### The Appropriate Response (9:21)

Paul’s rebuke here is that it is inappropriate for the thing made to question its Maker’s motives and purposes for creating it as such. This statement should floor us.

**The doctrine of God’s sovereignty is one which squarely confronts us with the \_\_\_\_\_ between Creator and created. He alone is God and we are not.**

**CONCLUSION:** In light of Romans 9:19-21, our appropriate response is to hold our hands over our mouths and marvel that God extends grace at all, since all deserve His wrath.

### God's Purpose in Election (9:22-24)

- The purpose of God's election is to show God's \_\_\_\_\_: either displayed in His wrath against those on whom just condemnation falls, or His power on those who He saves.

### Asymmetry in Salvation and Reprobation (9:22-24)

- I. The vessels of wrath were prepared for destruction – it is a \_\_\_\_\_ *construction*.
- II. God has to \_\_\_\_\_ do something to save people.

**God stands asymmetrically behind salvation and reprobation.**

### WHY IS THIS GOOD NEWS?

It is good news because God is not just uncontrollable sovereign power, but He is also good, just, true, merciful and gracious. "For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you." (Psa. 86:5 – see also Ex. 34:6; Neh. 9:17; Psa. 25:8; 100:5; 145:8; Joel 2:13; Num. 14:18)

**May we all remember that God is far more just than we realize and far more merciful than we deserve!**

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### THE CHALLENGE OF FULLY GRASPING THIS DOCTRINE

"Much of the difficulty in regard to the doctrine of Predestination is due to the finite character of our mind, which can grasp only a few details at a time, and which understands only a part of the relations between these. We are creatures of time, and often fail to take into consideration the fact that God is not limited as we are." (Lorraine Boettner)

### NOT SAFE BUT GOOD

**To be under the rule of wicked tyrant is a \_\_\_\_\_, but to be under the loving rule of an Infinitely Good King is a \_\_\_\_\_!**



We know that anything which comes to pass - even the things we don't understand and the difficulties we face - are from the nail-scarred hands of a Loving Lord who has objectively shown us the extent of His love on the Cross when He stretched out His hands and said, "it is finished."

### 5 TRUTHS TO HOLD IN YOUR HEART

- I. God is Good.
- II. God is sovereign, evil is not.
- III. We are responsible, but not in absolute control.
- IV. Because God is sovereign, He WILL accomplish His good plans.
- V. God's sovereignty is the basis for our effort and confidence of final victory (cf. Psa. 119:35; Phil. 1:6; Rom. 8:30).

### Recommended Resources:

- Systematic Theology - Wayne Grudem
- What About Free Will? - Scott Christensen
- Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God – J.I. Packer