

THE BEAUTY OF DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY & HUMAN CHOICE

GOD IS IN ABSOLUTE CONTROL OVER ALL THINGS, DIRECTING AND ORCHESTRATING EVERYTHING ACCORDING TO HIS GOOD PURPOSE.

Psalm 22:28

Psalm 135:5-6

Isaiah 46:10

Proverbs 16:33

Isaiah 45:7

Acts 17:26

1 Corinthians 12:18

James 4:13-15

Acts 16:14

2 Timothy 2:24-25

HUMAN BEINGS MAKE REAL, MEANINGFUL CHOICES, WHICH HAVE REAL IMPACT AND FOR WHICH WE ARE RIGHTLY HELD RESPONSIBLE.

Genesis 2:16-17

Genesis 3:13

Joshua 24:15

Isaiah 55:6

Matthew 16:24

Philemon 14

SCRIPTURE CALLS US TO HOLD FIRM TO BOTH TRUTHS AT ALL TIMES:

IN OUR SALVATION: GOD CHOSE US, AND WE CHOSE GOD

Acts 13:44-45, 48-49

⁴⁴ The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. ⁴⁵ But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. ⁴⁶ And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles."...⁴⁸ And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. ⁴⁹ And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region.

John 6:65-67

⁶⁵ And [Jesus] said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."

⁶⁶ After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. ⁶⁷ So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?"

IN OUR SANCTIFICATION: GOD DOES THE WORK, AND WE DO THE WORK

Philippians 2:12-13

¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Philippians 1:6

"And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."

Philippians 1:27

"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel."

IN DAILY EVENTS: AS GOD ORDAINED, AND AS PEOPLE DECIDE

Acts 2:23

"...this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men."

Genesis 50: 15-20

¹⁵ When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him."...¹⁹ But Joseph said to them,...²⁰ "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today."

The Beauty of Divine Sovereignty & Human Choice

November 14, 2021

Open: What factors do you think influence the choices you make?

Read & Discuss: John 6:60–71

1. In these verses where do you see indications that God is sovereign over our salvation? Where do you see indications that our human choice is real and meaningful? Do you think this should create tension for us as believers? Why or why not?
2. How do you understand Jesus meaning when He says in verse 65, “No one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father”? How does that statement interface with the questions Jesus asks the twelve disciples in verse 67 and later in 70?
3. How do your observations of this passage influence how you think about your faith and the faith of others?

Read & Discuss: Philippians 2:12-13

4. Christians growing in the likeness of Christ is called sanctification. According to these verses, how do you see both God and believers involved in this process? When discipling new believers, how should we instruct them in this regard?
5. In following Paul’s exhortation of verse 12, what practical ways have you been working out your own salvation? Looking back on your life, where have you seen evidence of God’s enabling and empowering work in your sanctification (v. 13)?

Read & Discuss: Genesis 50:15-21

6. How would you describe Joseph’s understanding of God’s sovereignty over the daily events of his life? The brothers described their actions toward Joseph as evil. How can a holy God use evil actions for good purposes? What would be some other biblical examples of this? What are some examples from your own life in which God has used evil for good?
7. What can we do to better adopt Joseph’s perspective of trusting God’s sovereign plans? How would you summarize the way believers should think about the truth that God directs and orchestrates all things even as humans make real, meaningful choices?

Pray: Ask God to help us see the truth of His Word accurately. Pray for discernment, humility and clarity as we engage difficult topics such as divine sovereignty and human choice.

John 6:60–71

^[60] When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" ^[61] But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, "Do you take offense at this? ^[62] Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ^[63] It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ^[64] But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) ^[65] And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."

^[66] After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. ^[67] So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" ^[68] Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, ^[69] and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God." ^[70] Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil." ^[71] He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray him. (ESV)

Philippians 2:12–13

^[12] Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ^[13] for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. (ESV)

Genesis 50:15–21

^[15] When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." ^[16] So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died: ^[17] 'Say to Joseph, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.'" And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ^[18] His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ^[19] But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ^[20] As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ^[21] So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them. (ESV)