

II. For the will to be “free” it must act from a position of neutrality, with no bias.

Problems:

1. If the will is neutral, then we make choices for no reason . they are spontaneous . no moral significance . they cannot be judged good or bad.

* But God is concerned with our motives.
2. How can a choice be made if there is no bias, prior inclination, bent, motivation, etc.?

*Joseph . Gen. 50:20 - %You meant evil against me, God meant it for good.+

III. What is true of our wills?

- A. The mind chooses what it desires.
- B. Therefore man's will is the ability to make choices according to his desires.
- C. Self-determinism . we are free to choose what we want.
- D. External determinism . we are forced to do things by external forces.
- E. Man is a slave to sin and will make choices based on his sin nature and its desires.

Man's Responsibility

1. Although fallen, **man is yet a responsible free agent.** He still has reason, conscience, and can recognize moral distinctions and choose or reject as he may so decide. He is not able to understand, seek or do spiritual things which lead to salvation.
2. In a court room a man will be asked if he committed the crime. He may answer yes and then say, %But you don't understand, I didn't have a choice.+

A. But you did . a choice was made.

B. All choices are made dependent on external and internal influences. That never excuses us from being responsible.

C. External and internal influences are always present when a choice is made. In fact it is the only way a choice can be made.

D. If you say, %The only way I can be responsible is to not be influenced by anything . that will never happen.

3. Our independence and bent on free will comes from the garden. It was there that the seed for a desire to be totally free took root.

Problems With Free Will

God is unloving.
Free Will makes God an observer in a world with no ultimate purpose and where people are victims of their circumstances. For God to watch all of the pain, suffering, murder, rape, beatings, disease, starvation, wars, and have the power to stop it but doesn't, portrays a grossly unloving God. Those who believe in Free Will, though they may be saddened by it, accept it because Free Will is being served.

God values Free Will more than people's lives.
In reality those who believe in Free Will are saying that God would rather give us Free Will even though it costs the eternal lives and destinies of billions of people, than to not do so. God looks down on the billions of people burning in Hell and comforts Himself with the thought - %All of this was worth it so that man could have Free Will.+

Problems With Free Will

You cannot pray for the unsaved.
Free Will says that man's will must remain free. It would therefore not only be wrong to pray for the unsaved but futile as well, for that would mean we are asking God to intervene and violate a person's Free Will. Any influence whatsoever would be wrong.

Heaven will limit freedom and therefore be a miserable place.
There will be no choice to sin in Heaven. How sad!!!
What will we do . turn into robots?

Problems With Free Will

God is not fair.
The cry of Free Will is that belief in election makes God unfair.
However it is inconsistent for those who believe in Free Will to say it is fair when God puts people in terrible situations here on earth, but He can't do it in eternity.

John 9:1-3
1 As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.
2 And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?"
3 Jesus answered, "He was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him."

God's omniscience and foreknowledge.
Most Free Will's hold to God's omniscience and foreknowledge. What they overlook however is that what that means is that the future is locked and there is no Free Will.

Problems With Free Will

If the will is truly free, then man is not responsible for his decisions. His decisions will be random. If random, then no inclination. No inclination, no deliberation. You end up with the same criticism as those who believe in election. how can man be responsible? Man is responsible because his decisions are based on his inclinations which are tied to his nature. (Old Sin Nature or New Divine Nature)

One person responds to the gospel and his neighbor does not. That is a question that needs to be answered. Why did you respond and your neighbor, friend, or relative does not? If the answer is found in you, then you have produced self-righteousness.

Free Will can subtly promote a self-righteous view of salvation. It is not: Grace + Free Will = Salvation !!!

Problems With Free Will

The eternal destiny of man depends on the faithfulness and persuasion of another believer.
It is a frightening thought that my salvation is dependent on the knowledge and spirituality of another person.

If they are not faithful in their witness, not knowledgeable in the Word, not persuasive enough, I could spend an eternity in Hell for their failure.

If I am in a remote area, isolated from much of civilization and no one makes the effort to bring the gospel to me, all of the natural revelation in the universe will do me no good and I will be lost for eternity.

Randomness In Our Universe

First, we must realize that randomness does not mean that we can have uncaused effects. This means that there must be causes behind every effect in the universe. Denying this would be a denial of the law of causality which stems from the law of non-contradiction. To put it simply, nothing cannot do something.

Randomness In Our Universe

Second, we must realize that God is not inactive or passive in sustaining His universe.

Paul writes in Col. 1:16-17 **For** by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities . all things have been created through Him and for Him. **17**. He is before all things, **and in Him all things hold together.**

The implication of this verse is that Jesus did not merely create all things and then leave His creation to its own devices as deism teaches.

This passage teaches that God is active in sustaining the creation just as He was in creating it.

Romans 9 : 1-24

I. Intro.

This chapter is not about the election of nations to historical roles. This chapter is about individuals.

II. The Condition of Israel. (1-5)

Rom. 9:1 I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,

Rom. 9:2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart.

Rom. 9:3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ, for the sake of my brethren, my kinsman according to the flesh,

A. Paul's Desire For Israel (1-3)

Paul is stricken with grief by Israel's spiritual condition / rejection of their Messiah.

Rom. 9:4 who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the promises,
Rom. 9:5 whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

B. Israel's Privileged Position. (4,5)
-Israel had it all.
-it certainly would appear that %with it all+their salvation was guaranteed.
-So the big question is:

WHY ISN'T ALL OF ISRAEL SAVED?

III. The Answer – Individual Election. (6-13)

Rom. 9:6 But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel;

A. GOD HAS NOT FAILED.
The Word of God, in its invitation for all to come for salvation, does not fail when all do not. It may look as though God and His Word have failed but they really haven't. It never was God's promise to save every individual who is physically descended from the nation of Israel. There is another explanation for Israel's rejection.

Rom. 9:7 neither are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: %THROUGH ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL BE NAMED.+

Rom. 9:8 That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.

Rom. 9:9 For this is a word of promise: %AT THIS TIME I WILL COME, AND SARAH SHALL HAVE A SON.+

Rom. 9:10 And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac;

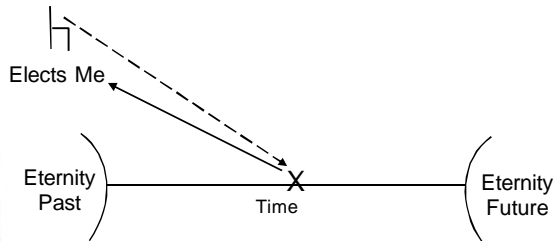
Rom. 9:11 for though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choices might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls,

B. ELECTION/SALVATION DOES NOT COME FROM:

1. Inheritance. (7-9)
2. Future works. Election is not based on what God sees is going to happen in the future. It is based on His calling. (10-11a)

The Foreknowledge View

God looks down through the corridors of time and see that I am going to become a believer and so He elects me.



The Foreknowledge View

10 reasons why this view is false:

1. The example of Jacob and Esau (Rom. 9:9-16) proves that God does not do His choosing based on what He sees man will do. (Titus 3:5 - We saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.)
2. It makes choosing/election meaningless . what is the sense of choosing if it is going to happen anyway?
3. It contradicts the Biblical teaching that man does not seek God. (Rom. 3:10-12)

The Foreknowledge View

- 4. To %foreknow+ means to have a predetermined intimate relationship with someone. It means to %forelove+. It means more than to have a mere knowledge of what will happen. (Jer. 1:5; Gen. 4:17; Matt. 1:25; Amos 3:2; Is. 49:1; Ex. 33:17; Matt. 7:23; Jn. 10:14,15; Acts 2:23; 2 Tim. 2:19)
- 5. You have God gaining in knowledge, therefore He is not omniscient.
- 6. Why create unbelievers who are not going to believe? Isn't it cruel of Him to allow that to happen?

The Foreknowledge View

- 7. It contradicts Rom. 8:28,29 which declares that God is active in bringing about salvation, not merely being an observer. **This view makes God a reactor instead of an initiator. God's decision is dependent on my decision. God can't act until I act.**
- 8. It doesn't solve anything. The future is still fixed. That is what has brought about %Open Theism+.
- 9. It contradicts Eph. 2:1 which says that %man is dead in his trespasses and sins+. Is that what God sees when He looks?
- 10. This view is merely an escape to avoid accepting the biblical truth of election.
