

We have reached a point where some review will be helpful

And the rest of our time this morning will be spent going back over something we have already talked about

We started off this whole series

- By showing that God is displaying Himself and making Himself known
- This is the supreme purpose of everything
- This is why you exist, why Heaven exists, why Hell exists, why sin exists, why salvation exists
- It is ALL so God would be rightly glorified

Then we tried to understand what the Bible says about free will

- We said there are 2 main definitions of free will
 - Open theists and Arminians affirm libertarian free will
 - This is the freedom of contrary choice
 - Your responsibility and freedom of choice is found in your ability to choose contrary to what you did choose
 - Someone who rejects the Gospel makes a meaningful choice that they will be held responsible for BECAUSE they “could” choose to receive the Gospel
 - This view of free will is not biblical
 - So we worked on a definition of free will that I am convinced is biblical and logical
 - It is the power of volitional choice
 - Any choice a person makes is meaningful and accountable because they chose what they wanted to in that moment
 - Someone who rejects the Gospel makes a meaningful choice that they will be held responsible for BECAUSE they willingly choose to reject the Gospel
 - Their responsibility and meaningful choice is not determined by what they COULD do but WHY they did what they did

When you reject libertarian free will, expect 3 main objections

- Libertarian free will people will say w/o lib. free will
 - Love cannot be genuine
 - Men cannot be responsible
 - God is responsible for evil
- They mean that if a person can't help but love God, then their love for God is robotic and meaningless
 - How did we counter that?
- They also mean that if a person can't help but choose whatever they did choose, then they can't be held responsible
 - Does your ability to do otherwise make you guilty?
 - Not biblically...
 - It is the fact that you willingly chose whatever you chose
- We saw the reality that many Christians try to stay away from
 - God ordains whatever comes to pass
 - Yes this includes sin
 - He ordains all things for His glory and for the good of His elect
 - When God ordains sin, He does so for only the purest of reasons
 - It is how He is fulfilling His ultimate goal of revealing Himself
 - Greater knowledge of God is the best thing we could ever ask for

The push we have been trying to make this whole time is that God's sovereignty and human freedom are compatible

- In order to be biblical in our handling of this, we must:
 - Biblically define God's sovereignty
 - God's authority and power to accomplish his will as the supreme Ruler of all things
 - Last week we saw God is effectively sovereign over all creation, history, people, decisions, sins, and salvation
 - Biblically define man's freedom
 - Everyone does exactly what they most desire to do
 - Man is free in that he voluntarily does whatever he does

We affirm their compatibility insofar as the Bible demonstrates that God's determination of what people do is compatible with their carrying out those determined actions with genuine human freedom and responsibility

- If we appeal to one in exclusion of the other, we are imbalanced
- Hyper-Calvinists emphasize God's sovereignty to the exclusion of freedom and responsibility
- Arminians and Open Theists emphasize a wrong definition of man's freedom and responsibility to the exclusion of God's sovereignty
- These two errors are equally unable to account for many passages in the Bible

Biblical Examples Of Compatibilism

- Exodus 3:21-22

- In these verses, we learn of God's plan to redeem Israel from Egypt
- God was able to determine something that would require for its fulfillment people acting freely according to what they most want to do
- NOTICE: God does not merely say He KNOWS this will happen
 - He specifically says He will do this
- We can know from this that God determined this would happen AND that the Egyptians freely gave to the Israelites out of their wealth
- Both answers are true, but each is only partially true if left alone

- Isaiah 10:5-15

- God brought punishment upon the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah through the military conquests of foreign nations
 - He caused the Assyrians to take Samaria in Israel
 - He raised the Babylonians to take Jerusalem in Judah
- It is clear in all of these passages that God brought these nations against Israel and gave them victory AND that these nations were doing exactly what they wanted to do
 - None of them were innocently sitting in a field and God just plucked them up and used them against their will
 - God determined these nations would come against and defeat Israel and Judah
 - These nations wanted to come against and defeat Israel and Judah
- God is the ultimate actor here and only has good motives
 - Assyria is likened to an axe and a saw - v. 15
 - Assyria is a rod in God's hand - v. 5
 - God is sending and commanding Assyria - v. 6
 - God's work would eventually be finished - v. 12
- Assyria was clearly doing all of this for their own sinful reasons
 - They will be judged for pride - v. 12
- The Assyrians are freely doing what they wanted, and we can rightly say that God determined all of this
- Again, we need both answers to be fully biblical
 - The Assyrians arrogantly brought destruction to Israel
 - God lovingly and righteously brought destruction to Israel
 - Individually they are true but partial answers

- Isaiah 44:28-45:4; Ezra 1:1

- Cyrus, king of the Medo-Persians, issued a decree that enabled the Israelite exiles in Babylon to return to Jerusalem to begin rebuilding the Temple
 - God determined to do this - Jeremiah 24:6; 29:10
- Cyrus was freely doing exactly what the Lord determined and was most likely completely unaware
 - Cyrus is God's "shepherd" (44:28), "anointed" (45:1)
 - Cyrus will fulfill all God's purposes (44:28)
 - God gave Cyrus his military victories in order to be in a world-dominating position (45:1-3)
 - All of this is happening even though Cyrus does not know YHWH (45:4)
- Even the decree Cyrus issues was determined by God (Ezra 1:1)
 - Again, this is not a case where God simply knew the future
 - God worked in all the details that led to this moment in order to accomplish exactly what He purposed
- Again, God determined what would happen, and Cyrus acted according to his own desires
 - You need both of these answers

- Acts 2:23; 4:27-28

- Who put Christ on the cross?

- Wicked people - 2:23

- God - 4:27-28

- Both of these answers are necessary

- God's plans are not thwarted by men

- Men are not innocent just because they were doing what the

Lord determined

- The men wanted Christ on the cross for all the wrong reason

- God wanted Christ on the cross for all the right reasons

General Observations From These Examples

- Many try to counter compatibilism by saying if God determined these actions, then these men weren't free
- If they were UNABLE to do anything besides what they did, then they are not free
- Again, this view MUST lead to open-theism
- **REMEMBER:** Your freedom is found in your ability to do what you want, NOT in your ability to do anything else
- These men acted freely because they did EXACTLY what they wanted to do

- Many try to counter compatibilism by saying if God determined these actions, then these men aren't responsible
 - If they were UNABLE to do anything besides what they did, then they cannot be held accountable
 - Again, this view MUST lead to open-theism
 - **REMEMBER:** Your responsibility is found in your doing what you want, NOT in your ability to do anything else
 - These men are responsible because they did EXACTLY what they wanted to do

- A few try to counter compatibilism by saying if these men acted freely and are responsible, then God could not have determined what they did
 - **REMEMBER:** God was not just saying what would happen; He was saying what He would do!

All of this is helped out if you remember your responsibility and God's will

- There are only 2 aspects to God's will - Deut. 29:29
- There is a sovereign will
- There is a revealed will
- You are never told to nor encouraged to try to live according to the sovereign will
 - This keeps you from guessing if what you're doing is secretly His will...
- You are only to concern yourself with knowing and obeying His revealed will
- Knowing His sovereign will would not always be that helpful either
 - The cross
 - The girl you'll marry
 - Someone you know will never believe

You already live as a compatibilist

- You pray for food that you also work hard to get

So how do we live in light of the reality of compatibilism???

- Consume yourself with knowing & doing the revealed will of God
- Remember that everyone acts in a way that is 100% freely chosen by them AND in a way that they will be help 100% responsible for all they do
- Pray for God to change the desires of all people who do not desire to know Him
 - If you know of someone who needs a heart change, beg God to do the work that only He can do
 - This is one of the means He uses to do this work
 - Many will say don't pray if God is sovereign
- Trust that God always has everything under control, and His plans are always for your good and His glory