

Romans 8 - God's Sovereignty and Us

When we read Scripture, we learn that God has created the world and everything in it, and He is directing history toward His purposes according to a plan prepared in eternity flowing out of His self-giving love, to have a self-giving relationship with people.

Isaiah 14:24 "The Lord Almighty has sworn, "Surely, as I have planned, so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will happen."

Psalms 139:16 "You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed."

Acts 2:22-23 "God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know. ²³ But God knew what would happen, and his prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed."

Acts 17:24-26 "He is the God who made the world and everything in it...He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need. ²⁶ From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries."

Millard Erickson, Introduction to Christian Doctrine summarizes:

- God's plan is from all eternity
- God's plan is all-inclusive
- God's plan is efficacious
- God's plan involves His Divine Sovereignty and Our Human Responsibility

Tension of Divine Sovereignty and Human Free Will

Calvinist: God predestines what will happen because He has decided what is to happen, His decision has rendered it certain that every person will act in a particular way.

John 6:44 "For no one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them to me, and at the last day I will raise them up." See Exodus 33:19, Acts 13:48, Romans 9:15-18

Arminian: God allows and expects humans to exercise the free will they have been given. God foreknows what each of us is going to do and therefore wills what He foresees happening.

Matthew 11:28 "Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." See Ezekiel 33:10-11, Acts 17:30, 2Peter 3:9

God has a plan and purpose for us and He is at work (sovereignly and lovingly) in all our circumstances that we might make choices towards Him.

Romans 8:28-30 "And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. ²⁹ For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory."

Bible Project Esther = God's Silent Sovereignty and Our Choices

God is always at work even when we see no evidence of it

Delighting in the Trinity, Michael Reeves

For Calvinism, Michael Horton

Why I am not a Calvinist, Jerry Walls & Joseph Dongell