

**Determinism** is the belief that if God is sovereign, then everything must be determined by Him. If God is in control of all, then He must be the cause of all, including all human choices and actions. Determinism says that God's omniscience necessitates God's ordination. What God knows, He must cause or ordain.

### **Libertarian Freedom (Free Will)**

We have free will if we have the ability to choose between two or more things. If we have free will, we must be able to act on various inclinations and not just our strongest inclinations.

**Compatibilism** means that you are free as long as you are doing what you most desire to do. However, God causes your greatest desire to be what He ordains for you to do so that you "freely" do it. So if God determines that you will reject Jesus, He will cause your greatest desire to be to reject Jesus. Therefore, you are "freely choosing" to reject Jesus.

**Genesis 1-3 gives us the first biblical basis for the doctrine of the free will of man.**

#### **1:27**

Man was created in the image of God. Man's creation, therefore, suggests that man has free will.

#### **1:28 2:7-9 2:15-17**

God gave man commands to obey and warned him of the consequences of his disobedience. This suggests that man has the ability to obey or disobey, which means He has the ability to choose freely.

#### **2:19-20**

God gave man an assignment to carry out which would require man to make decisions. Making decisions requires the ability to choose.

#### **3:1-6**

Adam and Eve exercised their free will by choosing to disobey God, to sin.

#### **3:7ff**

Adam and Eve had the ability to realize their guilt before God and to respond to their guilt before God.

**KEY QUESTION:**

**“If Adam and Eve did not have libertarian freedom, free will, then why did they choose to sin?”**

**The answer of Calvinism has to be either determinism or compatibilism. God in His sovereignty caused Adam and Eve to sin. In other words, God is the cause of sin and evil.**

God not only foresaw that Adam would fall, **but also ordained that he should...** “I confess it is a horrible decree; yet no one can deny but God foreknew Adam’s fall, and therefore foreknew it, **because he had ordained it so by his own decree.**”

*John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, III, xxiii, 7*

We have to come to the point where we confess that we do not understand how is it **that God can ordain that we carry out evil deeds** and yet hold us accountable for them and not be blamed Himself: We can affirm that all of these things are true, because Scripture teaches them. But Scripture does not tell us exactly how God brings this situation about or how it can be that God holds us accountable **for what he ordains to come to pass.**

*Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology, p. 330*

Nothing in this world happens by chance. God is in back of everything. He decides and causes all things to happen that do happen. He is not sitting on the sidelines wondering and perhaps fearing what is going to happen next. No, **he has foreordained everything “after the counsel of his will” (Ephesians 1:11):** the moving of a finger, the beating of a heart, the laughter of a girl, the mistake of a typist – **even sin.**

*E. H. Palmer, The Five Points of Calvinism, p. 30*

“I wish very frankly and pointedly to assert that if a man gets drunk and shoots his family, **it was the will of God that he should do so...**”

*G. H. Clark, God and Evil: The problem Solved, p. 27*

*Bruce Little, Evil and God’s Sovereignty, chapter 11 of Whosoever Will, by David Allen and Steve Lemke*

Examples:

- Jessica
- 9/11
- Pol Pot 1.5 -3 million deaths
- The Holocaust, 17 million deaths
- Joseph Stalin, 20-25 million deaths

“God ordains the evil He commands humans to refrain from doing. Either God ordains the world under moral principles different from those He gives mankind, or there is a contradiction in the nature of God.” p. 279-280

“Some claim that God has a purpose in all evil that He allows, but they give some room for human will. Others, such as [John] Piper, maintain that God has a purpose and **actually ordains**

**or wills the evil** for this purpose. In the latter case **the purpose of evil is to glorify God** and is solidly constructed on God's sovereignty." p. 283

"As I write this concluding paragraph, I have just received a news item on my computer reporting that a man fatally stabbed his 17-year old sister and decapitated his five year old sister during her birthday party before police shot him. These acts were also ordained by God if Piper and others are right." p. 298

**Two Reasons Why I am Not a Calvinist:**

1. I believe it violates the first principle of hermeneutics.
2. I believe it misrepresents the character of God.

**Isaiah 55:8-9**