



Debate with ‘Mr. C.’

Topic : ‘Doctrines of Grace’

by

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Topic : Calvinism/Arminianism

The following is a debate/discussion on Calvinism/Arminianism. The writer (Mr. C.) is in *italics* and the editor's reply (Terry Arnold) is in **bold**.

Round 1:

[Mr. C.] *Hi Terry, I appreciate your materials and find them handy...[but] it seems like some of your material is becoming more openly Calvinistic in viewpoint.*

[Editor TA] **The question is - is the material Biblical? I have in fact not changed any views on this issue for well over a decade...I do not call myself a 'Calvinist' but if I have to be labelled I would like to be called a 'Biblicist'? It is interesting to me when people say we are preaching 'Calvinism' yet we never mention the word for what we teach as Scripture.**

I do in fact aspire to everything Spurgeon, Whitefield and all the greats taught, Spurgeon being one of my favourites. I would teach no more than what this great evangelist taught in salvation theology ('soteriology'). But if there are any errors in our articles, you could point it out to us. We would be interested. Bless you...

[Mr.C.] *...I particularly question the statements in one of your articles: 'God chooses man in salvation. Man does not choose God'... 'Unsaved man does not seek God and cannot come to God of his own will or ability' ...and that 'There is absolutely nothing about unsaved man choosing salvation in any Biblical text'.*

Whilst I can concur that God initiates the transaction, it is an open invitation.

[Editor TA] **What do you mean by 'open'. Yes, the Gospel is open for all in that it is to be given to *all*. But not all will be saved. Not all are predestined. Not all are elected. What do you mean by 'transaction'? Man *cannot* 'agree' to any 'transaction' (Rom.8:7) unless he is called, predestinated and drawn (Jn.6:44; Rom.8:29,30)**

[Mr.C.] *God chooses, yes. Man also chooses in response.*

[Editor TA] **Can man 'undecide'? Can God undecide? Can we lose our salvation? If man can decide then he can undecide? What Scripture do you have for man to choose God in salvation? Any ability to 'choose' would surely be given by God. But nowhere does it say that man 'chooses' - in any Scripture. To 'choose' you have to 'will'; and this is what Scripture says about our 'will': Did we will to be saved? '*He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to***

become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, NOR OF THE WILL OF MAN, but OF GOD' (John 1:11-13).

So, who chose who and when? *'According as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will' (Eph.1:4,5) .*

The Scriptures are literally replete with God choosing us. But because of our Arminian 20th Century shift in theology we use *logic* to argue that this could not be so. Thus are the Scriptures nullified. Please show me Scripture that says man chooses God.

[Mr.C] *...why would God offer salvation to men, knowing that they couldn't receive it?*

[Editor TA] This is a question the Bible does not answer. But He simply does not predestine and elect everyone, otherwise all would be saved. John 6:37 *'All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out'.*

[Mr.C.] *Are God's offers genuine? (Isaiah 45:19).*

[Editor TA] Isaiah 45:19 is speaking *to the house of Jacob - to Israel specifically*. God reasoned together *with Israel*, not the church Here. You have used 'replacement theology'. And it has nothing to do with God's offer as not being 'genuine'. Of course God's offers are 'genuine'. But the fact is He predestines only some and they are his 'elect' whether we like this fact or not. And man's logic usually does not like it.

[Mr.C.] *It is a gift to be received, a covenant of two parties. A reciprocal act, an exchange, an agreement, a reasoning together, a joint action.*

[Editor TA] Please provide salvation Scripture for this? What of the Scriptures I have given above that clearly says God chooses man?

[Mr.C.] *God works it, enacts it, wills it, and ultimately knows what we will do, yet man has the respondent action of conviction, of repentance, of reception of salvation.*

[Editor TA] **Scripture for this please.**

[Mr.C.] *And, likewise, man may take a response of rejection.*

[Editor TA] There is no such ‘response’ for some and not others *in the unsaved state*. All are, and were since Adam, already ‘rejecting’. All have sinned and ‘gone astray’. All were destined to the lake of fire. All are not seeking God. Rom.8:7 says ‘*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*’. The carnal mind here is all unsaved people. The context is clear. But the predestined and elect will be saved. They will not ultimately reject God - Jn.6:37 proves this: ‘*All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out*’...

[Mr.C.] *Man does ‘not seek’, yes. But not because of ‘Total Depravity’. It is because of pride (Psalm 10:4).*

[Editor TA] If he is not ‘seeking’ then how can he ‘choose’? And is not ‘pride’ simply part of the ‘depravity’ of man. Mans heart is ‘*desperately wicked, who can know it...*’ (Jer.17:9)

[Mr.C.] *God draws and attracts us. Nevertheless man can say ‘no’ to God, as evident through Scripture.*

[Editor TA] What Scripture is there for this and salvation? Nowhere in Scripture do the elect, predestined and called (Rom.8:29,30) say ‘no’. What will we do with Jn.6? What of vs.37 ‘*All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out...* 39 *...all which he has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. ..44 *No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day*’.*

[Mr.C.] *God extends His offer to all. ‘God...now commands all men everywhere to repent’. (Acts 17:30).*

[Editor TA] Yes he demands ‘repentance’. The *responsibility of man and the sovereign election of God* cannot be worked out with logic and emotion - they are two separated truths - it is called a ‘Divine Antinomy’

[Mr.C.] ‘*If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink*’ (John 7:37).

[Editor TA] But read on... vs.38 ‘*He that believes on me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. 39 (But this spoke he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)*’ This refers to those who would believe. It is only for believers - these will ‘drink’. It also refers to the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit would come to believers. The context is clear.

[Mr.C.] *What about 'whosoever will' (in Rev. 22:17); and 'any man' (John 7:37)...*

[Editor TA] **Rev.22: The context is the New Jerusalem and to God's 'servants' (vs.6) taking 'the waters of life freely'.**

As for Jn.7:37 - see above.

[Mr.C.] *How could Christ truthfully say to some Jews, 'You will not come to me that you might have life' (John 5:40) if He knew that they could not come to Him?*

[Editor TA] **And that's what he is literally saying exactly, isn't He? He knew that they would not come. Jn.6:44 'No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day'.**

What do you do with this Scripture?

[Mr.C.] *God does not elect some to be saved and others to go to Hell.*

[Editor TA] **But yes He does! That's exactly what Scriptures teach! Election and predestination are taught in too numerous verses to mention. The word for predestination is mentioned in Acts 4:28; Rom.8:29, 30; 1Cor.2:7; Eph.1:5, 11. Romans 8:29,30 clearly says that predestination is part of the salvation process. Election is clearly taught in the old Testament as God selecting Israel *out of all other nations* (Amos 3:2; Dt.7:6-8; 10:5; Ps.65:4; 135:4; Is.44:1-2; 45:4). Ephesians Ch.1 says election is from '*before the foundation of the world*' and '*according to the good pleasure of his will*'. The whole passage is in fact about God doing the action.**

Numerous Scriptures also speak of individuals being elected, (Eph.1:5,9,11; 1Thess.1:4; 1Pet.1:2,10; Tit.1:1; Rom.8:33; 11:5,7; Col.3:12; Rom.9:15-18; Gal.1:15,16; Jn.6:37; 5:21...etc).

The rest do 'go to Hell' because of their sins.

[Mr.C.] *He wants all sinners to be saved. 'The Lord is... longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance' (2 Peter 3:9). 'Will' (1014) means decree, determine, intend, minded, disposed. This states that God does not decree that any be lost.*

[Editor TA] **2 Peter 3:9: 'The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance'. The context is strictly to believers only! Note the word 'to USWARD'! This Epistle is specifically written to the 'beloved': 'beloved, I now write unto you'**

(vs.1)...*'beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing...'* (vs.8)...*'Wherefore, beloved, seeing that you look for such things...'* (vs.14)...*'You therefore, beloved, seeing you know these things before...'* (vs.17). The primary context is about the end of this age and the sureness of the Lord's coming for his *'beloved'*. It is a clear exhortation to the *'beloved'* to be patient and not to listen to the false teachers (context of previous verses) who were scoffing at the promise of the *'coming'*!

This verse is actually a verse for *Eternal Security* and always was until 20th C. Arminian thinking! Who is the *'usward'*? One primary interpretation rule is this - *who* is the passage speaking to? How many times is *'beloved'* mentioned in the passage? Paul continues even speaking to the *'beloved'* in the verses following!: *'Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought YOU to be in all holy conversation and godliness'* (vs.11).

Commentary by Matthew Henry: 2Pet.3:9 *'What men count slackness, is long-suffering, and that to us-ward; it is giving more time to his own people, to advance in knowledge and holiness, and in the exercise of faith and patience, to abound in good works'*.

[Mr.C.] *There is excellent material combating 'Calvinism' at <http://...>which I have used, in part, above.*

[Editor TA] Like most such sites, this site does not portray historic Calvinism but Hyper-calvinism. I am not a *'Calvinist'* by label but if you really want to know what historic *'Calvinism'* teaches and where it came from, read *'Tulip'* by Duane Spencer. It at least portrays true historic *'Calvinism'* and not the strawman of Hyper-calvinism that is portrayed by Arminians today. Please think these issues through *for yourself* with Scripture, rather than use someone else's thinking from a website.

[Mr.C.] *There is a danger of losing balance here, brother... I do not profess to reach the theological depths that I know you do.*

[Editor TA] ...Do you accept what Spurgeon taught? Where do we teach any different to him? Everything I teach in salvation was taught by him. Do you accept George Whitefield, John Newton, Jonathon Edwards, David Brainerd, John Eliot, John Paton, Tyndale, Carey... Martyn Lloyd Jones... etc, etc? Were these guys *'unbalanced'*?

I urge you to go deeper into *'theological depths'* and get out of the Arminian (and semi-Pelagian) thinking you apply to Scripture. I did this many years ago and I have never looked back. I don't get burned out easily

now and I love seeing souls won as much as ever. The Scriptures have come more alive... I am more into true 'evangelism' than ever...

[Mr.C.] God is ultimate and salvation is entirely of His finished work and His over arching will offered freely to all who will receive it.

[Editor TA] **I agree entirely with this! But you say man can frustrate this against the truth of John 6?**

Round 2

[Mr.C.] *I am taken aback somewhat by some of these statements. I can acknowledge some, but need to look further at this. I thought the...Book did enough of a job on Calvinism. Not sure I can add more. I appreciate your argument. Will hope to respond further. I am stretched for time.*

[Editor TA] **I would still like to send you my 5 studies on the 'Doctrines of Grace'** [available on our website].

Please show exactly what statements we have made that are in error.

Round 3

[Mr.C.] *I query these statements by you: 'God chooses man in salvation. Man does not choose God'; 'Unsaved man does not seek God and cannot come to God of his own will or ability'.*

[Editor TA] **Again, please provide one Scripture that says man chooses God in salvation. Many Scriptures actually prove the above statement but here are just two: 'There is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God' (Rom.3:11); '...Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, NOR OF THE WILL OF MAN, but of God' (Jn.1:11-13).**

[Mr.C.] *As I see it there is a balance between 'divine determination' and 'human responsibility'. It's evident in the story of God and man from Adam throughout Scripture. God responds to man. Man responds to God. Man has the ability to choose good or evil...Eg., Joshua 24:15, Deuteronomy 30:15, 19.*

[Editor TA] **This 'balance' is something we have taught many times in our newsletter 'Diakrisis'. However, 'human responsibility' is not the same as human 'free will' to be saved.**

But does man have the ability to choose God in salvation? - that is the issue. If so, is there a Scripture for this? The answer is 'no'.

When Adam fell in sin he did not 'respond' to God - he ran as fast as his sins would carry him and 'hid'! It was God who went after him! Nowhere

else in the Bible does it say that man can ‘respond’ of his own accord, but rather the opposite: There are *‘none that seeks after God’* (Rom.3:11); Salvation is not by *‘the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God’* (Jn.1:11-13). If man can ‘respond’ then why do we have Scriptures like these?: *‘For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost’* (Lk.19:10); *‘...the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be’* (Rom.8:6,7); If man can ‘respond’ then why believe this Scripture?: Jn.6:44 *‘No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him...’* ...vs.65 *‘...no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.’*

Your reference to Joshua 24:15 is again out of context: *‘Choose you this day whom you will serve’*. You did not complete the verse!... *‘whether the gods which your fathers served which were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell’* (Josh.24:15). The passage is clearly referring to Israel believers who had turned to idolatry. The context is not salvation at all, but idolatry.

[Mr.C.] *God calls us to ‘reason’ together with Him (Isaiah 1:18).*

[Editor TA] **He is speaking here to National Israel - ‘His people’**

[Mr.C.] *God ‘strives’ with man (Gen.6:3).*

[Editor TA] **It actually says the opposite! ‘I will not always strive with man’. And what has this got to do with man ‘responding’?**

[Mr.C.] *There is a sense where God draws, man resists, and God overcomes.*

[Editor TA] **Scripture please!**

[Mr.C.] *Yet man is his own person.*

[Editor TA] **No, he is either in ‘Christ’ or in ‘Adam’.**

[Mr.C.] *Man can reject salvation, as is evident throughout Scripture.*

[Editor TA] **You have still not given a Scripture for this. But what of this - John 6:37: ‘All that the Father gives me shall come to me...’**

[Mr.C.] *The message is sounded worldwide.*

[Editor TA] **There are tribes who have never heard the Gospel. Did they have ‘free will’ to be saved. Was God unfair to them? Why did they not get the same opportunity as you or me?**

[Mr.C.] *Like the sower we distribute the Word and the ground. The condition of the heart is the determining factor - the response determines the destiny.*

[Editor TA] **I have never heard of this explanation of the Parable of the Sower. It's the 'soil' (the heart) that determines the destiny, not the 'response'.**

[Mr.C.] *It is just plain and evident throughout Scripture that God overrules but man responds - yes or no. God allows man that response and then He acts accordingly.*

[Editor TA] **Scripture please!**

[Mr.C.] *Faith is man's heart response.*

[Editor TA] **Scripture please. I thought salvation was '*not of ourselves*' (Eph.2:8,9) and that faith was a 'gift' of God and that every gift came from God: '*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights...*' (James 1:17)**

You have still not addressed the initial e-mail and given Scriptures. Please go back and answer the first e-mail specifically where necessary. There were questions there we asked for answers. Otherwise we end up on so many different tangents. For example, I asked you about Spurgeon...etc. We asked you for *one Scripture* that says man chooses God in salvation...

Round 4

[Mr.C.] *These sites are helpful...http:...[A list of 6 internet addresses followed]*

[Editor TA] **Dear...We are not going to look at any of these until you have looked at Scripture and what we have said with that in the beginning. You send other men's writings to us instead of looking at what Scripture says for yourself and you have promised to respond to the questions and give us Scripture to contradict our statement which you claimed are error.**

Again, please look at what we have written in the beginning and answer the questions - the first question was to give us Scripture that says man chooses God in salvation (in opposition to what we said and with Scriptures: God chooses man in salvation).

We look forward to your reply, not other men's replies, who could be very wrong. We are longing to be shown where our statements are wrong by *Scripture*.

Round 5

[Editor TA] **Dear...Further to my last e-mail. We have looked at some of these sites you listed. One of them says that Calvinism teaches '*some are elected to hell and others to heaven*'. As I have repeated to you at length -**

that is not what we teach, it is not generally what historic ‘Calvinism’ teaches, it is not what Spurgeon taught and it misrepresents the whole issue! Please do not give me material that misrepresents the issue at hand. Why is it you cannot answer our questions or show us our error in our statements you believe to be wrong from Scripture?

Round 6

[Mr.C.] *I'm sorry we seem to be quite at loggerheads here. And I'm not sure this is doing any good. I stand on the simple truth that a sinner can trust the Saviour and receive Him and His gift.*

[Editor TA] **How can we be at ‘loggerheads’ when you have not contradicted with any Scripture or have not shown us where we are wrong in the statements we made that you claim are error? All you did was send website addresses of others writings!**

[Mr.C.] *I stand on the simple truth that a sinner can trust the Saviour and receive Him and His gift.*

[Editor TA] **Why would we, and where have we, ever disagreed with this?**

[Mr.C.] *A gift is offered not forced upon the recipient.*

[Editor TA] **Whoever said anything about it being ‘forced’? Are you saying that is what we teach? If I gave you a new house and car would you feel I had ‘forced’ it upon you - or would you simply refuse it? Not likely - you would gratefully receive it as a gift, would you not? That’s similar to Sovereign Election.**

[Mr.C.] *Christ says that anyone who comes to Him He will receive.*

[Editor TA] **We should certainly hope so - because ‘no man can come to the Father except through ME and I WILL raise Him on the last day’. That’s exactly what we have been saying!**

[Mr.C.] *I stand on that plain and evident theme that Scripture throughout paints a picture of. a man can change God’s will, as evident in prayer and repentance.*

[Editor TA] **This has nothing to do with the salvation issues we are dealing with. Again, please, give us Scripture that says man chooses God in salvation; and deal with the Scriptures we gave to prove that we are in error.**

[Mr.C.] *Man can reject God’s offer, as in the sold birthright.*

[Editor TA] Scripture please - show me where, for those who God has called, chosen, etc, that they can ultimately reject that salvation? Jn.6:37 *'All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out'*. Where is the hint of any 'rejection' in this?

[Mr.C.] *It's as plain as day to me that God in His infinite grace would deign to extend His measureless offer and reach His hand down to me, and I have taken it in simple faith trusting in nothing of mine own and everything of His to save me.*

[Editor TA] **Where have we ever disagreed with this? This is exactly what we teach! We are now seriously getting off the issues we started with?**

[Mr.C.] *And this message of abundant life I want to share, as he would desire - 'not willing that any should perish'.*

[Editor TA] **We have already commented on this Scripture to which you have not replied.**

Again, 2 Peter 3 - it is speaking to the 'beloved'. See back on our comment on this passage and tell me where we are in error.

[Mr.C.] *...and yes even compel them to come in, as it were, yet some reject and spurn it, and it is no fault of His that they will be lost forever.*

[Editor TA] **Scripture please!**

[Mr.C.] *Brother, I can't conceive of God's salvation as being somehow restricted.*

[Editor TA] **It most definitely is not restricted! Where have we ever taught such? Read John 6:37 again. 'All that the Father gives me shall come to me'. Please, again, answer the questions we put in the first e-mail to do with this?**

[Mr.C.] *His hand is not shortened that it cannot save. That's the Lord I place my faith in, knowing that it is by grace through faith, not of ourselves, it is His gift.*

[Editor TA] **You have not quoted one single Scripture in all this e-mail! You have not commented or answered one of our questions or statements. You have not proved your point that we are in error in the three statements you originally believed were 'unbalanced'. Why is it you will not address the Scriptures that we gave to you and show us our error? Why do you continually avoid the real issues here? Again, you have gone off on other tangents of your own. Why are you avoiding the first e-mail?**

This was your original statement: *'I particularly question the statements in the article: 'God chooses man in salvation. Man does not choose God'; 'Unsaved man does not seek God and cannot come to God of his own will or ability'; 'There is absolutely nothing about unsaved man choosing salvation...in...any...Biblical text'.*

To this we replied with Scripture and asked you firstly: *'Please show us Scripture that says man chooses God'*. Surely we deserve some answers and be shown where we are in error by Scripture? Can you not do this? We also asked you to read our *'Doctrines of Grace'* 5 studies [on the website] before replying. It is obvious you have not done so. There are several points you have repeated in error that we already have replied to and asked for your comments. You are also continuing to misrepresent what we believe and are teaching. You are wrongfully judging our writings by applying a *'Hyper-Calvinistic'* spin to them. We are not into hyper-Calvinism which you represent us as...and you are regurgitating others writings...

It is frustrating to us when you will not show us where we are wrong and will not answer the questions and comments...Again, what about Spurgeon and the other questions we asked you? You stated we were in error - the onus is surely on you to show us by Scripture? Until such times as you do so, you are right when you stated - *'I'm not sure this is doing any good'*?

Round 7

[Mr.C.] *Hi...various quotes with tons of Scriptures in this e-mail...*

[Editor TA] **Thank-you, that is what we have been asking for.**

[Mr.C.] *Of course God is ultimately drawing, convicting, saving...Yet His drawing is universal (John 12:32)...*

[Editor TA] **If Jesus draws *'all men'* why are not all men saved? John 6 says that all who are *'drawn'* will be saved and *'raised'* on the last day. Why the seeming contradiction? Please explain John 6 as we have already requested. (John 6:37 *'All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out...44 No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day...65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father'*).**

[Mr.C.] *Some choose to believe, others choose to reject. It's right through God's Word. I can't understand you denying this truth...*

[Editor TA] **You still have not given a Scripture for this. Give me one Scripture for man choosing God in salvation!**

[Mr.C] *It sounds like I have hit a nerve with you the way you are answering.*

[Editor TA] **The only nerve you have hit is that you will not give Scripture and answer the questions clearly. We are answering in a way to get you to give Scripture for what you believe and for what you believe we are in error. You have not done this. That does hit a nerve with me. You also consistently misrepresent what we teach but make no reference to that in the next e-mails. That hits a nerve. Why is it that you cannot deal specifically with each e-mail and each Scripture?**

[Mr.C] *The Bible clearly teaches that the unregenerate man can indeed 'obey from the heart' the form of doctrine that he has been taught, that is, the gospel (Romans 6:17).*

[Editor TA] **This Scripture is not speaking to or about unregenerate man! It is speaking to *believers already saved* (post conversion) and is looking back to when they obeyed! It simply does not say unregenerate man can 'obey'! If it did it would contradict Romans 8:7 '*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*'. Again, you still have not answered this above Scripture in any e-mail**

[Mr.C] *God chose to make available to all mankind, by his grace, salvation through his only natural son. We did not first choose him but he first loved and chose us (1 John 4:19).*

[Editor TA] **That is what we have been saying all along! So, again, please, - what Scripture is there for man choosing God in salvation? Please answer this clearly once and for all?**

[Mr.C] *He...desired that all come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).*

[Editor TA] **Why are you not dealing with this Scripture as we have asked previous? Why continue to repeat the same mantra without dealing with our comments on this Scripture?**

[Mr.C] *All we had to do when God extended his hand of grace was reach out and accept it with our spiritual hand of faith.*

[Editor TA] **What Scripture are you using for this?**

[Mr.C] *...as many as received him, he gave the power to become his sons by adoption (John 1:12).*

[Editor TA] **Who gave the power? WHO GAVE THE POWER!?** Also, you did not continue the context. The entire verse says this: *‘But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but OF GOD’.*

We have previously asked you to respond to this Scripture but you have also ignored it too. What is *‘nor of the will of man’* saying to you?

[Mr.C] *This text reveals two things. First, receiving him is up to us (free will)*

[Editor TA] **What? The text mentions *nothing* about ‘free will’ or that it is ‘up to us’.** An exegesis will show the opposite. It actually says it is **NOT of us or our will!**

[Mr.C] *and ‘as many’ reveals that God knew that not all would accept his call to repent and believe.*

[Editor TA] **The text actually says nothing of the sort! The text rather goes on to say that these people were Born Again entirely ‘of God’ - the text in fact emphasises this by introducing three clauses in the *negative* to prove this! 1. not of blood, 2. nor of the will of the flesh, 3. nor of the will of man.**

[Mr.C] *As stated before, man can choose God or the world.*

[Editor TA] **I am still waiting for Scripture! Scripture please - for man choosing God in salvation.**

[Mr.C] *Whosoever chooses God is born of God.*

[Editor TA] **When will I get Scripture for this?**

[Mr.C] *‘Whosoever therefore will be (wills to be) a friend of the world is the enemy of God’; John 4:4 ‘Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God...’*

[Editor TA] **How does this at all apply to salvation? This Scripture says nothing, absolutely nothing, about man choosing God in salvation, but it simply says we *as believers* are not to be a friend of the world.**

Round 8

[Editor TA] **To clarify the debate, please answer the following and with Scripture:**

1. **Please give Scriptures that says: Man chooses God in salvation.**

[No answer was given for this by Mr.C]

2. Please comment on our Scriptures previously given - what the ‘*nor of the will of man*’ means in John 1:11-13: ‘*He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, NOR OF THE WILL OF MAN, but of God*’ (John 1:11-13).

[Mr.C] *It is two-fold. Note the words ‘as many as’ ‘received’ ‘them that believed’. To them God grants new birth. To receive and to believe takes a choice. I make a choice to believe and to receive. God grants new birth according to His will, as His response to our faith.*

[Editor TA] **But the Scripture plainly states that our ‘will’ is NOT in operation here! You still have not commented on the phrase ‘*nor the will of man*’? That surely must have a bearing on defining the whole passage? Does it mean that this ‘receiving’ is of the will of man or not of the will of man. Which is it? Please answer this. No ‘choice’ is mentioned here at all; no ‘response’ is mentioned either. You have ‘read’ all that into the text.**

[Editor TA] **3. Please also comment on Eph.1:4: ‘*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will*’ (Eph.1:4).**

[Mr.C] *God has chosen us. I do not deny that.*

[Editor TA] **But that is what you have previously denied? We originally stated God chooses us; man does not choose God in salvation. It is either one or the other. Which is it?**

[Mr.C] *Salvation is His work of adoption and according to the good pleasure of His will. Vs.12 & 13 we trusted, believed. We made a choice to believe and trust.*

[Editor TA] **Where does it say this? You have ‘read’ this into the text. It actually says *all of God* in these verses above. The subject is God and the action (Greek ‘voice’ is active) is all of God and none of man.**

[Mr.C] *God in response sealed us. Vs.19 God’s mighty power is effected and working in the one who chooses to believe. Sadly many choose to disbelieve.*

[Editor TA] What are the Scriptures that show that God ‘responds’ to man? Scripture please! These verses do *not* speak of a response at all. They speak of God doing it all!

We asked you to comment on the verses in question - and what of the phrases ‘*chosen us*’; ‘*before the foundation of the world*’; ‘*predestinated us*’; ‘*his will*’...What is your view of ‘predestination’ then? The word literally means a ‘prior decree’ by God...

4. Please give Scripture that refutes our statement: ‘*Unsaved man does not seek God and cannot come to God of his own will or ability*’. Please show Scripture alone where man can come to God of his own ability and own free will in salvation. Please comment on the following Scriptures:

John 6:37 ‘*All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out*’.

Romans 8:7 ‘*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God,neither indeed can be*’.

[No answer was given for this by Mr.C]

[Mr.C] *God in fact commands us to seek...Jer 29:13.*

[Editor TA] This is speaking to *Israel!* - God’s people, believers in Jehovah God. They were commanded to choose between the God of Abraham and in most cases, Baal. What similarity has that to Christian salvation? Why do you continue to use Scriptures for Israel when we have pointed this error out to you now several times? Also, why don’t you have a New testament Scripture? If man can seek God then what do you do with the following Scripture?: ‘*There is none that understands, there is NONE that seeks after God*’ (Rom.3:11).

[Mr.C] *If we can’t seek why would God command us to?*

[Editor TA] Exactly! Scripture says we did not seek!...and ‘*command us*’ to do what? He hasn’t. Scripture states plainly that no man seeks after God. How much plainer can this be?

[Mr.C] *Try Hebrews 11:6; Acts 17:27, Mt.6:33.*

[Editor TA] These are not speaking of unsaved man! They are spoken to *believers* to seek his ‘kingdom’ and ‘his righteousness’...not to seek salvation!

[Mr.C] *God expects people to seek Him. The prodigal son repented, turned about and came to the father, who received him.*

[Editor TA] **To whom did Jesus direct this parable? [to the Pharisees]. The prodigal son did not seek God - quite the opposite! He was also a Jew, a believer. He repented to God of his sin. This is simply not a clear passage that deals with the issues we are dealing with.**

[Mr.C] *Of course we know that the lord seeks and saves the lost. I am not denying that. I am saying that people repent and receive Christ.*

[Editor TA] **A truth we have never denied. The Bible says the power to do that comes from God alone - and that it is only for those He 'draws' to Christ?**

[Mr.C] *God commands repentance and obedience to the Gospel. God would not command something of us that we cannot do. Man can trust Christ and be saved.*

[Editor TA] **Whoever said God would not give the ability to whoever He chooses and whoever He predestinates to come to him? You still have not commented on this Scripture: John 6:37 'All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out'**

3. Please also answer our previous question on 2Pet.3:9. Who is the verse speaking to? Is it not to believers only? (The 'Beloved').

[Mr.C] *God is longsuffering towards us. He is not willing that any should perish. All means all. He wants all to come to repentance. It's black and white.*

[Editor TA] **Yes - 'US'...believers! - The 'beloved'! 'All' means all the 'beloved' Does not the text speak to the 'beloved'? Please answer this. Why are you avoiding this point in all the e-mails. Who is the text speaking to?**

4. Do you accept what Spurgeon taught on salvation doctrine? Where do we teach any different to him? Do you accept George Whitefield, John Newton, Jonathon Edwards, David Brainerd, John Eliot, John Paton, Tyndale, Carey...Martyn Lloyd Jones...etc, etc?

Were these guys also 'unbalanced'?

[Mr.C] *I have not read all of these chap's writings. I am sure we would see many things the same. People differ, as Wesley and Whitefield's.*

[Editor TA] **We never mentioned Wesley.**

[Mr.C] *I am not accusing anyone of being 'unbalanced'. I just think you may be going a bit skew-wift, brethren.*

[Editor TA] **Yes you have. I repeat your words: ‘There is need for balance here’.**

[Mr.C] *Some of these assertions don’t quite stack up.*

[Editor TA] **But what of your complete denial of the words and phrases in our Scriptures which you will not comment on?**

[Mr.C] *There is a human response to God’s invitation.*

[Editor TA] **Of course the elect ‘respond’ to God. That’s exactly what John.6 is saying - all that are ‘drawn’ will come. And that has been the understanding of all the greats mentioned above.**

[Mr.C] *...all I am saying is...We can say yes or no. Is there anything wrong with that?*

[Editor TA] **Yes. As we have been saying all along - everyone in their unsaved state is saying ‘no’ in their hearts and not seeking and unable...Rom.8:7 (‘Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be’.) The ‘elect’, ‘predestined’, ‘called’, etc. will not ultimately say ‘no’. God will save them.**

One theology is ‘monogistic’ (one force), the other ‘synergistic’ (two parties). One is of the faith once delivered and taught by almost all the great divines; and the other is a new Arminian false teaching that was refuted at synods and councils and by Spurgeon and all the revivalists...

Editors final note: ‘Mr.C.’ failed to respond any further. What can be learned from this debate is that we often ‘read’ into Scripture what is actually not there. Our ‘glasses’ can be tainted with what we have been taught. But sound exegesis and right interpretation will only extrude what is *objectively* in the text. Human logic and emotion must be kept separate from sound interpretation.

The other noticeable feature of this debate and others like it is the inability to grapple with Scripture; or to use little or no Scripture for things believed.

For further study see our website section ‘*Sovereignty of God Issues*’ under ‘*Articles*’ in the website www.taministries.net

