

# The divine Sovereignty of God and its relationship with Free Will



# Definition of Divine

of, relating to, or  
proceeding directly  
from God

-*divine* inspiration

-*divine* love

-praying for *divine*  
intervention

# Definition of Sovereignty

: supreme power  
especially over a  
people considered  
as a collective unit

# Definition of Free Will

: freedom of humans to make choices that are not determined by prior causes or by divine intervention.

So first let's go over a few different theological systems involving this topic.

Calvinism: the theological system of Calvin and his followers marked by strong emphasis on the sovereignty of God, the depravity of humankind, and the doctrine of predestination

Now the opposite side of the tracks.

Arminianism: of or relating to Arminius or his doctrines opposing the absolute predestination of strict Calvinism and maintaining the possibility of salvation for all

# Monergistic or Synergistic

## Monergistic

the doctrine that the Holy Ghost acts independently of the human will in the work of regeneration.

Synergistic: the doctrine that the human will cooperates with the Holy Ghost in the work of regeneration.

So for starters as we go through this, I want to say, that if you believe in one of these and when were done. You see that I don't agree on this bit of theological thought that you have. Know this, I still love you as my fellow brother or sister in Christ. This I believe is a great topic to discuss between christians and needs to be.



Also, ultimately as the flawed human beings we are. We cannot at this time ultimately fully understand God's Divine Sovereignty (and we may never). Though we can discuss these theological thoughts with each other in love and being sympathetic, compassionate, and humble in the way we discuss this with each other.

1 Peter 3:8-9 Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, *be tenderhearted, be courteous*; 9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

This verse is not to say that I'm right and your wrong. This is rule on how each of us should approach each other on topics like this.

**2 Timothy 2:24-26** And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, **25** in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, **26** and *that* they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.

Let's begin to dive into the Word of God and see these examples for these viewpoints, so that we can continue to learn and grow closer to God. Praying that the holy spirit guides us. And may this all be to God's Glory and Honor.

Last note: As I go through this material with you I'm going to highlight and underline in different colors to point out words and phrases that point to that particular view (in their opinion.)

Calvinism

Arminianism

BOTH

God is all knowing.

Matthew 11:20-22 Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: 21 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you

First Things most agree on.

had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

Acts 17:26-28 And He has made from one man every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, **27** so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; **28** for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'

Continued revelation of God's all knowing understanding.



Luke 12:48

.....,For everyone to whom much is given,  
from him much will be required; and to  
whom much has been committed, of him  
they will ask the more.

Note:God requires more of those  
who are placed in better  
circumstances to come to know him.

Alright let's really dive into the Word.

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, **9** not of works, lest anyone should boast.

More of Paul and his revelation from God. Strongly arguing for total depravity.

**Romans 3:10-18** “There is none righteous, no, not one;  
11 There is none who understands;  
There is none who seeks after God.  
12 They have all turned aside;  
They have together become unprofitable;  
There is none who does good, no, not one.”

13 “Their throat is an open tomb;  
With their tongues they have practiced  
deceit”;

“The poison of asps is under their lips”;

14 “Whose mouth is full of cursing and  
bitterness.”

15 “Their feet are swift to shed blood;

16 Destruction and misery are in their ways;

17 And the way of peace they have not

known.”

18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

This scripture seems to point toward total depravity from God, yet you must also keep reading.

## Romans 3:23-26

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **24** being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, **25** whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were

I highlight faith in Jesus because as we continue, in Romans we see that faith is freely given.

previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

## Romans 4:3

For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

Now as Abraham has been brought up, I think it's important to look back at God's promise to him.



Genesis 22:17-18 I think God can speak for himself  
(He did not say the Elect of each Nation)

I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.

# Romans quotes for the Calvinistic side.

Romans 1:6-7 6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

7 To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

# Romans quotes for the Calvinistic side.

Romans 8:28-30 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. **29** For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that

This section is a Calvinists bread and butter, if a discussion were to come up about it.

He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

A main point from the Calvinist that I believe should be mentioned here is:

That if you take a full take of Arminism in these scripture then you take power away from God. Making him seem that he is not Omnipotent (all powerful). Because he needs us to be involved in our salvation in any way. But this also removes free will in this point of view. But more on that later.

Romans from an Arminianism side just a minute later

Romans 10:12-13 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. 13 For “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

More armeniac tendencies.

Acts 7:51 “You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.

How can the Holy spirit be resisted if there are a select elect that can't resist.

In my opinion a interesting topic to bring up to a Calvinist would be the suppression of the Holy Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 5:19

Do not quench the Spirit.

This is interesting since this is also from Paul and I believe creates a problem in the Calvinistic theory.



# Calvinism & Arminianism

## Arminianism

1. Sinner, can do good & respond to God
2. God elects on basis of foreseen faith
3. Christ died for all
4. Man can resist God
5. Believer may lose salvation

## Calvinism

- Man unable of self to respond to God
- God elects according to His good pleasure
- Christ died for Elect
- Irresistible election
- Elect can never lose salvation

Acts 17:30-31 Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,  
31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”

1 Timothy 2:1-6 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time

Now if God wants all to be saved but only predestines the Elect to come to know him, then God would be contradicting himself.

This is why I see the predestination of Christ knowing us fully, but also see that he has given us free will to choose to reject him.

## 1 Timothy 4:10

For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.

## 2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

# 1 Peter 1:1-2

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus,  
Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2

elect according to the foreknowledge of

God the Father, in sanctification of the

Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the

blood of Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace be multiplied.



## John 7:17 Pointing to the free will of humans

If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.

## John comparison

John 6:65 And He said, “Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.”

1 John 2:2 And **He Himself is the propitiation for our sins**, and **not for ours only but also for the whole world.**

## John 7:37-39

On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”

39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit,  
whom those believing in Him would receive;  
for the Holy Spirit was not yet given,  
because Jesus was not yet glorified.

## John 3:16-18

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. **17** For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

**18** “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God

## Quote from Robert Shank using the Calvinistic theory in relation to John 3:16

Thus the call, addressed by God to all, by design of God is *not* to all, but only to some [on the Calvinist view]. The ungodly have “an asylum to which they may betake themselves from the bondage of sin,” [to quote Calvin] and they are utterly without excuse for not doing so – despite the fact

that God by immutable decree has rendered them totally unable to do anything other than to “ungratefully reject the offer that is made to them.” When God asks “Why will you die?” the real answer is that God has so ordained.[\[4\]](#)

“God so loved the world” that He determined that few shall believe and be saved. “Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth,” cries God to a lost world . . . while making certain that most men do not comply.



“Whosoever will, let him come,” pleads the Risen Christ . . . while the Father makes certain that most men will not come. “God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved” . . . but He has effected a “hidden” arrangement ensuring that most of the world *shall not* be saved.

This is a very scary way to begin to look at scripture. I say this:

- A. Because you begin changing it to match the theology you hold.
- B. Because without the Free Will to make that decision to come to know Christ, we become just as the atheist say. A moist Robot.
- C. Because if there is no Free Will there is no Love, Because love by definition is freely given.

I truly see that there is Divine sovereignty of God present throughout scripture but I also see the representation of God allowing us to make free will decisions. I see where God intervenes if necessary to make sure that the world is set on the correct path like in Jonah but I also see where he lets the decisions of men like with Joseph's brothers, leads to unimaginable good for the future.

I believe we may just be getting to bold in the way that we say with definity, that Calvinism or Arminianism is true. Do we really think as men that we can truly and fully understand the thoughts and actions of God?..?

I believe we all may need to go back to Job and learn just as he had to, that we need to be very careful when speaking for God. Understanding who he truly is.

Acts 10;34-35 So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, 35 but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.

The Ripple Effect: a spreading, pervasive, and usually unintentional effect or influence  
Meaning God in his infinite Wisdom and Power can see everything from the beginning to the end. So although we may not understand everything that happens in life to us or around us, it ultimately via God can be used for good.

This is where i believe the ripple theory is correct.

Also on both sides I see them breaking the Big Rock fallacy. I'll explain.

This is the question easily portrayed, that I believe both sides end up boiling down to.

Tim: Can God create a rock that God can't lift?

Dan: How big?

Tim: Really Big?

Dan: How big is really big?

Tim: you know infinitely big?

You can't have an infinitely big /finite rock, that doesn't exist.

Another question in the same manner would be can God create a square circle or a 1 ended stick?

These are all things that break the law of noncontradiction and the laws of logic.

In the same way both of these views limit God in one way or another in my opinion.



Lastly, the God we serve who created everything that there is in the universe. Whom loves everyone would have created a world with the most people coming to know him because he wishes for no one to separate themselves from him. For this reason and many others I do not hold to either of these views completely.

I try to let all of God's word dictate what can be known about him. But to pick and choose and manipulate on either side to change the scripture in any way. Is an abomination, I truly believe with the Holy Spirit and the complete word we see a combination of these views. I do not see one perfect concept of God. Nor do I think,

...that man will ever be able to completely perceive and know the totality of God's Divine Sovereignty, it is just another illusion of man.

The END

I do have another theory set by Luis Molina that i believe is a modest assessment of the gospel on this subject but again I'm not saying this is perfectly right either but I believe it does fill some holes left by both groups in my opinion.

Middle ground article by William Lane Craig

Luis Molina (1535–1600) defined providence as God's ordering of things to their ends, either directly or indirectly through secondary causes. In explaining how God can order things through secondary causes that are themselves free agents,

Molina appealed to his doctrine of divine middle knowledge.

Molina analyzed God's knowledge in terms of three logical stages. Although whatever God knows, he knows eternally, so that there is no temporal succession in God's knowledge, nonetheless there does exist a sort of logical order in God's knowledge in

the sense that his knowledge of certain truths is conditionally or explanatorily prior to his knowledge of certain other truths.

In the first stage God knows all possibilities, not only all the creatures he could possibly create, but also all the orders of creatures that are possible. By means of this so-called natural knowledge, God has

knowledge of every contingent state of affairs that could possibly be actual and of what any free creature could freely choose to do in any such state of affairs.

In the second stage, God possesses knowledge of all true counterfactual propositions (statements of the form “If x were the case, then y would be the case”),



including counterfactuals about what creatures would freely do in various circumstances. Whereas by his natural knowledge God knew what any free creature could do in any set of circumstances, now in this second stage God knows what any free creature would freely do in any set of circumstances. This so-called middle knowledge is like natural

knowledge in that such knowledge does not depend on any decision of the divine will; God does not determine which counterfactuals are true or false. By knowing how free creatures would freely act in any set of circumstances he might place them in, God thereby knows that if he were to actualize certain states of affairs, then certain other contingent states of

affairs would be actual as a result. For example, he knew that if Pontius Pilate were the Roman procurator of Judea in AD 30, he would freely condemn Jesus to the cross.

Intervening between the second and third stages of divine knowledge stands God's free decree to actualize a world known by

him to be realizable on the basis of his middle knowledge. By his natural knowledge, God knows the entire range of logically possible worlds; by his middle knowledge he knows, in effect, the proper subset of those worlds that it is feasible for him to actualize. By a free decision, God decrees to actualize one of those worlds known to him through his middle

knowledge. In so doing he also decrees how he would freely act in any set of circumstances.

Given God's free decision to actualize a world, in the third and final stage God possesses so-called free knowledge of all remaining propositions that are in fact true in the actual world, including future-tense

propositions about how creatures will freely behave.

Molina's scheme effects a dramatic reconciliation of divine sovereignty and human freedom. In Molina's view God directly causes certain circumstances to come into being and brings about others indirectly through either causally determined

secondary causes or free secondary causes. He allows free creatures to act as he knew they freely would when placed in specific circumstances, and he concurs with their decisions in actualizing the effects they desire. Some of these effects God desired unconditionally and so wills positively that they occur. Others he does not unconditionally desire, but he

nevertheless permits due to his overriding desire to allow creaturely freedom, knowing that even these sinful acts will fit into the overall scheme of things, so that God's ultimate ends in human history will be accomplished. God thus providentially arranges for everything that happens by either willing or permitting it, and he causes everything that does happen, yet in such a way as to preserve freedom and contingency.



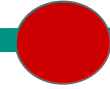
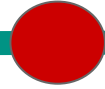
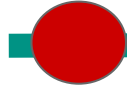
# View point of GOD's knowledge - simplified molism chart.

NATURAL  
KNOWLEDGE

MIDDLE  
KNOWLEDGE



FREE  
KNOWLEDGE



GOD  
knows  
anything  
that  
could  
happen

GOD  
knows  
everything  
that would  
happen

GOD's Divine  
Decree

GOD  
knows  
what  
will  
happen

Again, I still love any person on any side of this and pray that we all come to know as much as God will allow.

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By William Lane Craig

The Apologetics Study Bible

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Elect in the Son: A Study of the Doctrine of Election

By Robert Shank

Westcott Publishers; 1st Edition (January 1, 1970)