

301: SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY I

Week 5 - Providence TEACHER NOTES

Today's a fun one we're going through providence. If you remember from the last few weeks, the fall of humanity and the fall of some of the spiritual realm - it begs the question. What is God doing? Did all of this go according to His plan? If so, why? And what's He going to do about it now? This is what providence answers.

To recap, week 1 was about how the Bible is our authority. I say that every week because when we talk about these topics, especially the one today, it's easy to get caught up in emotion arguments that aren't grounded in the Bible. And while certainly we want to respect how we feel about any given topic, and God wired us to feel, we ultimately need to anchor it back on God's authority.

So that's where we're going this morning - how do we explain God's providence?

A few big categories for us to understand first so we can get into the right frame of reference is:

1 - God is holy

We talked about this in week 2. He is categorically other. He's higher than us or spiritual beings. His thoughts are unlike our thoughts. So we can't begin to fathom the things of God unless He tells us directly.

So be comfortable with mystery at certain points.

Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

I love this because this means we know what we know because God tells us, AND there are lots of things God knows that we don't know. And we gotta be ok with it. We need to be ok with mystery.

That doesn't mean it's a mystery about whether or not God loves you. We know that for sure.

That doesn't mean it's a mystery about whether God is in control of not. We know that because He tells us.

2 - God is good

And He's good. But it's a holy good. It's not how we would define good. But we know He loves creation. He loves His people.

Now with that here's how we define providence

Providence: God works within creation to manage all things according to the “immutable counsel of His own will.”

Wayne Grudem

God is continually involved with all created things in such a way that he (1) keeps them existing and maintaining the properties with which he created them; (2) cooperates with created things in every action, directing their distinctive properties to cause them to act as they do; and (3) directs them to fulfill his purposes.

This means that God ultimately God Creates → Sustains → Directs → Finishes

So when it comes to how creation works, every atom in the universe because God is all-powerful and in control He creates it all, He sustains it all, He directs it all, and He finishes it all.¹

When we talk about creation we're not just talking about the world, but us. Human beings are part of God's management.

So we see here two tensions rising up - how is God sovereign while at the same time human beings are free?

We need to define these first.

God's sovereignty - God is all-powerful and fully in control at all times in all things no matter what.

One reason why He is sovereign is because of who He is. According to the Bible, His incommunicable attributes - His omnipotence, His omniscience, His omnipresence means He is the only one with the resume cut out for the job. He knows all and can do all, all at the same time.

Another reason why is because of what He does, specifically His Creator Rights. This is the implication back in Genesis 1:1. Because He created all things, He gets the right to do and say whatever He wants because it's His.

Not only that, His Creator Rights means He created all things, including time itself. So He has right even over history. He can do with it whatever He wishes.

Remember we don't hold to dualism. God is not freaking out about Satan and demons. He's in control. He's not freaking about sinful beings like us. He's got this.

Free will - Human beings have free agency in accordance to their nature.

¹ Hebrews 1:3: He [Jesus] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and **he upholds the universe by the word of his power**. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

Colossians 1:17: And he [Jesus] is before all things, and **in him all things hold together**.

Nehemiah 9:6: You are the Lord, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and **you preserve all of them**; and the host of heaven worships you.

Ps. 135:6 : The Lord does whatever he pleases, in heaven and on the earth.”

Matt 10:29: A sparrow doesn't fall to the ground without the Father's will.

Prov. 16:33: The lot (chance/die) decision is wholly from the Lord.

Psalm 22:28: The Lord rules over the nations.

Psalm 139:16: In God's book were written all of our days.

We are still responsible for our actions.

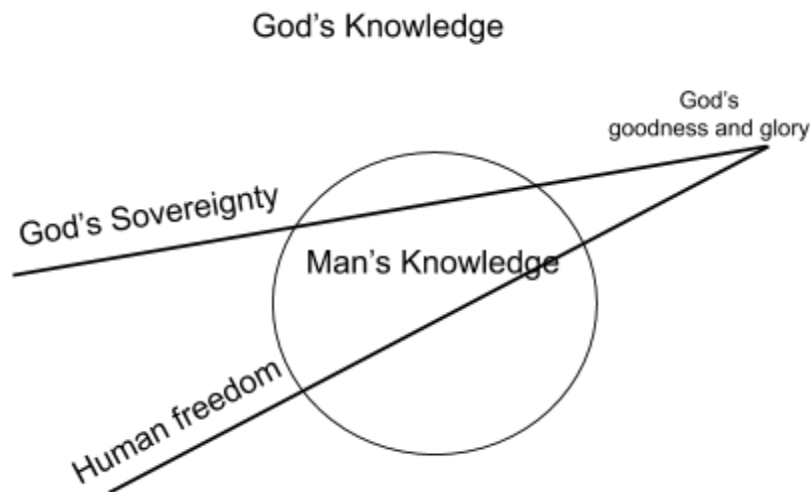
So we have free will but it's a limited free will because you can't do everything you want to do, hence "according to their nature." I'd love it if I could fly, but I can't. It's not in accordance with my nature. I can choose to go to Taco Bell this afternoon. I have within me the ability to do that in accordance with my nature.

The Bible says both are true.

Now how does it work that God exercises His agency while at the same time we exercise our agency? How do they work together?

Ultimately, we don't know. New Testament scholar, Dr. Robert Mounce, who helped translate most of the NIV and ESV translations once drew this on the board to explain how they work.

In the scope of our limited knowledge we know both are true. We are free. God is free to do whatever He wants. But we can't see how they connect exactly. But we know that it's working for God's glory and our good.



Paul echoes this in Romans 8:28, a classic verse on God's sovereignty:

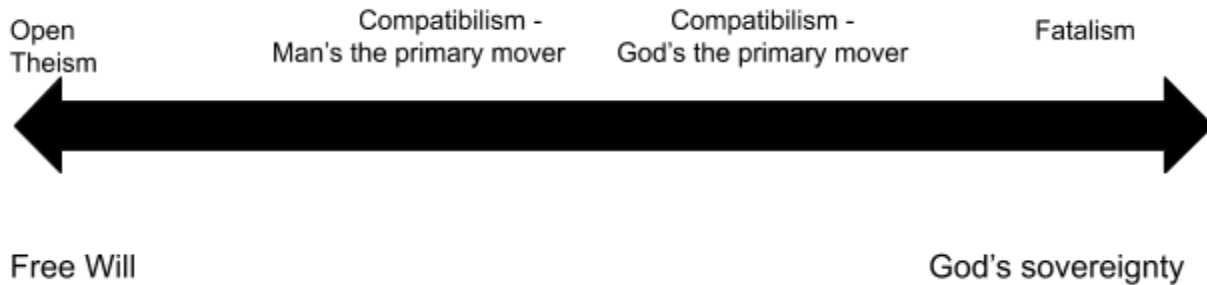
Romans 8:28

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Theologians over the course of a couple thousands years, when it comes to particular topics have drawn up a number of theological systems to work this out.

And similar to the Trinity from week 2, when you overemphasize one component, you do it to the detriment of the other component and you call into something incredibly unbiblical.

So let's break down the unbiblical ones first.



Open-Theism - This is man's freedom taken to the extreme. Was introduced a little over 100 years ago. It's this idea that God doesn't know what's going to happen, He's just acting based on how we act. In open-theism, man has free will to do whatever they want and God is powerless against it. So in the Garden, God created humans perfect. But then sin happened. Uh oh. Now what? As a response, God puts things into motion and goes about a rescue plan to save humanity through the person and work of Jesus. The Pro of this is free will stays in tact. The Cons are massive. God is not sovereign over creation. If He's not sovereign, then He's not God. If He's not God, then He's not worthy of worship. If you haven't caught on this is a wildly unbiblical viewpoint.

Fatalism - This is God's sovereignty taken to the extreme. It's the idea that God knows and works in such an extreme way that human beings don't have free will. The words I am saying are really because God is making me say them. I'm a programmed robot. This idea was really big a couple hundred years ago by pastors who promoted not sharing your faith and not calling people to place their faith in Jesus. The attitude was, "Well, God's gonna do it anyway, so you're off the hook. If God wants to save them, He'll do it so don't be pushy." More on that here in a bit.
 Pro: Enforces God's sovereignty. Absolutely.
 Con: Diminishes our free will. Promotes laziness.
 Also wildly unbiblical.

So embracing one over the other produces unbiblical views, theologians over the last 2,000 years essentially call the healthy balance, "compatibilism". That man's free choice is compatible with God's sovereign act.

Compatibilism: Both-And. You are free and God is in control.

Within this view, it still breaks down to one side or the other. Either man is the primary-mover or God is the primary mover.

Man as primary mover: God knows and acts based on what you are going to do

God as primary mover: God knows and acts based on what He wants you to do

Both of these views are compatible and have lots of Scripture on each side.

Now how does compatibilism play out? Well it's a mystery. Remember that graph with the circle and two lines. We know both are true though.

Here's where the rubber meets the road when it comes providence though: The two biggest categories are the problem of evil and salvation. So let's work through each one.

Problem of Evil

Problem of evil - Theodicy.

Theo - God + Dice - Justice

How can God be just if there's all this evil in the world?

Another way to put it, if God is all loving then He must not be all powerful or else He would have done away with sin and suffering already. If God is all powerful then He must not be all loving or else He could get rid of it.

Either way, there's a tension.

Here's how each viewpoint breaks it down:

- **Open-theism** - God is not all powerful. He can't. He's not sovereign. He's doing the best He can. So suffering is random and chaotic. Both a mix of things that are in our control and a mix of things that are out of our control. God may provide us helpful resources to endure through it, but as far as Him being in control, no not really.
- **Fatalism** - God is all powerful, but there's nothing you can really do. It's all out of your control. Even personal suffering that you experience, it's just going to happen.
- **Compatibilism** - God is all powerful and all loving, and we are free agents. Scripture is clear that God is not the author of evil. And He doesn't delight in suffering whatsoever. Meaning, suffering in this world is a result and consequence of Adam and Eve's sin that they brought into the world. So often times suffering can happen and it is completely out of control, and there are times when we are personally experience the consequences of our sin. And God provides us the resources to endure knowing that He is good and loving.

At the same time, we know God is on a rescue mission. He's sovereign. If you need proof, look to Jesus. God loves you so much that He stepped into the suffering. His resurrection shows that death cannot hold Him, sin and suffering aren't sovereign. He is.

Tim Keller, *The Reason for God*

Christianity alone among the world religions claims that God became uniquely and fully human in Jesus Christ and therefore knows firsthand despair, rejection, loneliness, poverty, bereavement, torture, and imprisonment. On the cross he went beyond even the worst human suffering and experienced cosmic rejection and pain that exceeds ours as infinitely as his knowledge and power exceeds ours. In his death, God suffers in love, identifying with the abandoned and godforsaken.

Why did he do it? The Bible says that Jesus came on a rescue mission for creation. He had to pay for our sins so that someday he can end evil and suffering without ending us.

Jesus is the answer to our suffering. And through His Spirit, we become the hands and feet of Jesus to help people in their suffering.

So we hope in Jesus, while at the same time, we do our part by bringing the light of Jesus into our city. We love with a love of Jesus. We care for the sick. We feed the poor. We mourn with those who mourn.

We send Christians into the medical field to find cures for diseases. We send Christians into the government who enact social changes for the betterment of the city. We share our faith so that more people will become followers of Jesus who can then in turn do all this even more.

Salvation

The second question we need to tackle is salvation. And we get more into this in our second semester, but how does someone become a Christian in light of God's providence?

- **Open Theism** - people choose God, but God's not in control.
- **Fatalism**² - God chooses you and you have no say in the matter. It just kinda happens. This was what was known in the early 20th century as Hyper Calvinism.
- **Compatibilism** - two major camps:
 - **Arminianism/Wesleyian**³ - God is sovereign and we are free, but man is the primary mover and God responds accordingly.
 - **Calvinism/Reformed**⁴ - God is sovereign and we are free, but God is the primary mover and man responds accordingly.

To give you a break down of how each works.

Calvinism - God is the primary mover and man responds accordingly.

Background - This theological system for how to understand this doctrine comes from John Calvin, a Bible teacher from the 16th century. He wrote a lot of commentaries and wrote the systematic textbook, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*. It's a dense read but really beautiful and poetic and biblical. And within it he talks a lot about the Bible and works through the same order we look through for the most part in our class - the Bible is our authority, God is Trinity, man is sinful, etc. And within there he talks about God's sovereignty as being the primary mover in our salvation.

Here are some of the verses this system uses:

Ephesians 1:3-11

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, **4** even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love **5** he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, **6** to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. **7** In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, **8** which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight **9**

² Another more "in house" term to talk about fatalism is Hyper Calvinism. To read more on the practical, pastoral implications of this view read, *Spurgeon v. Hyper Calvinism: The Battle for Gospel Preaching*.

³ Another variation of Arminianism (and a theological minority) is Molinism. Molinism tries to balance both man's free will and God's sovereignty by a proposed "middle knowledge." In this scenario, before the foundation of the world, God saw an infinite number of possible worlds and chose the reality in which humanity would freely choose God in such a way that He would get the most glory. This theory was proposed back in the 16th century and only recently has been taken back up with theological heavy weights like William Lane Craig and Alvin Plantinga. Biblical evidence for this view is Exodus 13:17, 1 Samuel 23:8-14, Jeremiah 23:21-22, Matthew 11:21-24, 1 Corinthians 2:8 (note how each passage contains an "if," in the Molinist system this implies possible worlds.) While this viewpoint is interesting, this system seems more philosophically grounded than biblically grounded.

⁴ For the sake of simplicity I'm combining Wesleyanism/Arminianism and Calvinism/Reformed. There are of course nuanced theological differences and different historical background. I'm simply combining these to show that, in essence, the question boils down to who's the primary mover in salvation. For example, Baptists have historically lined up with a Reformed view of salvation but would not line up with denominationally Calvinistic and Reformed churches in regards to other theological questions.

making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ **10** as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will

And how do people choose God?

Well according to the Calvinist perspective, no one chooses God. Free will is the ability to choose “according to your nature,” by your nature you can’t come to Jesus. (An Armenian would agree with this too.)

Romans 3:23

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

Ephesians 2:1

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins

Ephesians 2:1 - spiritually dead. A Calvinist will ask, so what can dead people do? Long pause. Nothing. We are spiritually unable. You can’t choose God on your own.

So what God has to do is draw you to Himself. So when the gospel call goes out - as in, when you hear the Gospel, God through the working of His Spirit chooses some to respond.

Known as **particular grace** - God through the preaching of the gospel and a work of His Spirit, draws you to Himself to place your faith in Jesus. (More about this in semester 2 of the class.)

And we know from the Bible and experience, people can hear the gospel shared and freely not choose to become a Christian, and from a Calvinist perspective they would say they haven’t received particular grace from God. God did not draw them. This is what’s known as the distinction between the elect and the non-elect. That person didn’t become a Christian because they’re not one of God’s elect yet. They could be eventually, we don’t know, but so far as we can see if they don’t respond then it means God hasn’t drawn them.

Now the pushback people have towards this view is, “That’s not fair. Why would God not save all that hear the gospel? Why would He only choose some?”

A Calvinist would cite two things that work hand-in-hand - one is God’s grace. Grace, by its very nature is undeserved. He saves some when in reality He shouldn’t save anyone. Praise God He saves anybody. Two, a Calvinist would cite God’s Creator Rights. He can do what He wants, when He wants and still be holy and good.

And they would go to Romans 9:

Romans 9:10-13

And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, **11** though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls— **12** she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” **13** As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

And then shortly after, Paul talks about God’s Creator Rights:

Romans 9:14-20

14 What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! **15** For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." **16** So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. **17** For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." **18** So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

19 You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?" **20** But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me like this?"

What about people who stop becoming a Christian? Did God "mess up"? Don't Calvinist believe in "once saved, always saved"?

According to a Calvinist, they would say that your perseverance and fruit is evidence of if you are elect. To cite 1 John

1 John 2:19

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

And they would object to the "once saved, always saved." They would say, "If you are truly saved, then you are always saved." It's about fruit. Does a Christian freely and continue to choose the things of God?

So if you notice, a good Calvinist would say while it's true God is the primary mover as to whether someone comes to salvation or not, man is still responsible and free. People still freely didn't want to choose God anyway.

C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*

The gates of Hell are locked from the inside.

Wait but how does that work? Mystery.

Arminianism - God is sovereign and we are free, but man is the primary mover and God responds accordingly.

This theological system was started by Jacob Arminius. He was a seminary student of John Calvins and a pastor who gathered a follower of like-minded people who loved Jesus and loved their Bibles. And while they agreed with most everything Calvin talked about, the biggest issue they had was when it came to the issue of salvation. When they looked at Scripture it seemed in their eyes that people actually had an ability to choose God.

Here are the verses:

Ephesians 2:8

For by grace you have been saved through faith.

Matt 10:28

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

These verses imply, like other commands in the Bible, that you are able to do them. Similar to the Ten Commandments, God says don't murder. What does that assume? That you have the ability to freely choose not to murder.

What do we do with Romans 3 and Ephesians 2?

They would say absolutely we're sinful. Of course. Apart from Jesus's grace that's all of us. And that's why we would need grace.⁵

AND they would say that through Jesus' work on the Cross, He now freely gives people the ability to freely choose Him or not.

This is what is known as prevenient grace. So yes, we are dead in sin and fall short of the glory of God prior to God's prevenient grace. AND through Jesus we have the ability to choose God or not.

Now this can be nuanced even further, there's a split over how prevenient grace works exactly. Two camps:

- **Universal prevenient grace** — This grace is extended to every person.
- **Individualistic prevenient grace** — This grace is only extended to those who come under the intelligent hearing of the gospel, and not to every person.

What about Romans 9? They would cite the context. In its context Paul is not referring to individuals coming to salvation, he's talking about Israel and Gentiles. So a Calvinist taking that on individualistic terms is to pull it out of what Paul is originally talking about.

What about Ephesians 1? What do we do when God talks about predestining people? For an Armenian, God predestines and elects based on what people are going to decide. So he predestined to people before the foundations of the earth, according to the passage, because God looked into the future and saw who would respond positively to Jesus based off of his prevenient grace that He supplied them.

What about people who stop becoming a Christian?

According to an Armenian, since man is the primary mover in salvation, they're also the primary mover when it comes to not being a Christian. They chose in, they can choose out. Something an Armenian would say is that, "God is a respecter of persons."

Now that's a quick summary of two major theological systems. If you want to dive into it more and read scholars who are on each side of the fence, you're welcome to. Those resources are at the bottom of your student sheet.

⁵ Calvinist will sometimes accuse Armenians of being "Semi-Pelagianists." Pelagianism originated in the early fifth century by the teacher Pelagius. He posited that the imperative commands of Scripture implied that man has, according to their nature, the ability to obey all the commands of God, and thus makes sinless perfectionism possible. This was later condemned as heretical according to the Council of Carthage in 418. To accuse an Armenian of Semi-Pelagianism, in my opinion, is to set up a straw man. An Armenian would disagree with Pelagianism and state that you are born into sin and need God's grace in order to come to faith.

But no matter where you lean, here's some practical implications for all of this.

1 - Be charitable to others

The first is depending on which you lean towards, we shouldn't err into overemphasizing sovereignty or free will AND we shouldn't assume that on others. I've noticed over the years that people will assume that because you're an Armenian that you're secretly an open-theist. "Oh so you don't believe God is sovereign?!" When in reality, most of them do. Likewise, most people will assume that because you're a Calvinist you're secretly a fatalist. "Oh, so you don't believe we have free will?" Which many of them do. So we need to be careful depending on what you believe.

And we need to be charitable with people, depending on where they lean. This is an open-handed issue. That doesn't mean we don't care about it, we do care because the Bible talks about this stuff and we care about the Bible. But this isn't something we should divide over or hold grudges about. We have folks in leadership in our church that hold to different viewpoints when it comes to this. And that's great. We want unity over the close-handed stuff, but we're open-handed about others. We can still have fellowship and we can still work together.

Charles Spurgeon, who was a Calvinist and in his life time debated against fatalists and Armenians said this about people who held to Arminian views:

Charles Spurgeon⁶

...whether I am ashamed to be called a Calvinist, I answer—I wish to be called nothing but a Christian; but if you ask me, do I hold the doctrinal views which were held by John Calvin, I reply, I do in the main hold them, and rejoice to avow it. But far be it from me even to imagine that Zion contains none but Calvinistic Christians within her walls, or that there are none saved who do not hold our views. Most atrocious things have been spoken about the character and spiritual condition of John Wesley, the modern prince of Arminians. I can only say concerning him that...if there were wanted two apostles to be added to the number of the twelve, I do not believe that there could be found two men more fit to be so added than George Whitefield and John Wesley. The character of John Wesley stands beyond all imputation for self-sacrifice, zeal, holiness, and communion with God; he lived far above the ordinary level of common Christians, and was one 'of whom the world was not worthy.'

Two things I love about this quote, for one he's so charitable. We're all on the same team. People believe these are things to debate and wage war against, as though either side is heretical. When that happens, we destroy the body of Christ and we throw unnecessary obstacles in the way when it comes to loving Jesus and being on mission.

2 - Love God's Word more than a system.

To explain what I mean, I just want to read to you what Randy Alcorn says in its entirety. He's a theologian, a prolific writer, and a Calvinist but he says this about his views:

Randy Alcorn

If we imagine our position on sovereignty and free will is the only one without problems, we're kidding ourselves, and need a dose of humility. All positions have snags, whether biblical, logical or practical inconsistencies. A position can be entirely true, but there will always be arguments

⁶ Charles Spurgeon. *A Defense of Calvinism*

against it, and if we don't understand those arguments, or if we dismiss them as if only a stupid person could believe them, we can't effectively communicate. God deliver us from theological arrogance!

I think it's a mistake for anyone to attach too much importance to being consistent with our own system. I was an Arminian, as a young Christian in an Arminian church, and after years of studying Scripture I gradually changed my view on election and predestination. But had I allowed my theological system to hold sway, I wouldn't have changed my views, but would have stayed logically consistent, and that would have been a mistake.

But we Calvinists can do the same thing. We end up being accomplished logicians rather than pure biblicists. If we're attempting to be card-carrying Calvinists, trying to keep in step with our theological comrades, our real authority is our theological system, or our logic, not the Bible. (If we depend too much on logic, we would never believe many biblical doctrines, including the Trinity—the mathematics don't add up, do they?)

I recommend being willing to have “leaks” and inconsistencies in your theological system, while remaining unwilling to do violence to Scripture to make it fit your system.⁷

I which I came across this idea when I first found out about this stuff. In my college years and early 20s, this stuff made me wildly arrogant. Now if you asked me if I was being arrogant I would have said no, I just cared a lot about the Bible. But I wanted to debate people to prove a point. I assume that if people disagreed with me then they weren't mature enough and that it was on me to persuade them to my side. I just reeked with pride.

And the reality is, I noticed this still happens a lot. A friend of mine once said, “When someone first learns about this stuff, they need to be locked for the next 5-10 years and not talk to anyone about it.”

Right theology ought to humble you. You may have all the theological answers but if you don't have love or humility, you're doing it wrong. It ought to break you of your pride. God's sovereign whichever way you lean. And if you think you can explain it all away then you've missed it.

Which brings me to the final point...

3 - We hustle. God provides.

Laura Jones in our church family coined this. I love it so much because it endorses those two viewpoints so well. God is sovereign and we are free.

So we hustle.

We pray our guts out. Jesus says and Paul both believed in the power of prayer.

Matthew 9:37-38

“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; **38** therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

⁷“Randy Alcorn on Calvinists, Armenians, and Everything in Between.” *The Gospel Coalition*.
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevin-wax/randy-alcorn-on-calvinists-arminians-and-everything-in-between/>

1 Thessalonians 5:17

...pray without ceasing.

Wait but how does prayer work really if God is sovereign? Mystery. But we do it because the Bible says to.

We share our faith. Jesus and Paul say we still do it.

Matt 28:18-20

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Romans 10:13-15

everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”**14** How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? **15** And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”

Wait but if God is sovereign, then does me sharing my faith really matter? Yes! The Bible says it does, so we obey.

We obey because God says that’s where the good life is found.

How do these work out? Well you may lean as Calvinistic or Arminian but either way, you’re still called to do what God says of you no matter what.

But we do know that God in His mystery uses our efforts for His purposes.

And God provides.

Ultimately God is going to do what He’s going to do. He’s sovereign and He’s in control. And He will use our prayers and our witness to do whatever He pleases.

So if you are walking in disobedience, you need to be reminded you have free will. You are called to obey God.

And if you’re walking in anxiety thinking the weight of the world is on your shoulders, you need to be reminded that God is on the throne and you’re not.

Both truths work hand-in-hand. And we need both truths so that God can bring His kingdom here on Earth.