

“And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den. Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; for he is THE LIVING GOD” – (i.e., He is dealing with all matters whatsoever, in the light of historic, current, and future events – THE LIVING GOD, vis-a-vis, a Pan Hellenic council of dead idols – and the flat out worship of the dead.) – “for he is the Living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, he worketh signs and wonders in Heaven and earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.” (Dan. 6:24-28.)

The old preachers used to love to quote truisms, like this: *“All things whatsoever arise from and depend upon the divine decrees.”* Call it, AXIOMATIC. Self-evident. Obvious. All that happens in time, was decreed to happen in eternity. Are you here, Mr. Atheist? Does it make you feel more secure to call the precious will of our Father a sterile thing like AN AXIOM? Are you here, Mr. Arminian, who feels the force of Zanchy’s gentle arguments until you have nothing left but expediency (argument for argument’s sake); to wit: *“Whatever comes to pass, comes to pass by virtue of this absolute omnipotent will of God, which is the primary and supreme cause of all things.”*

“Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.”
(Rev. 4:11)

“Our God is in the heavens; He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased.”(Psa.115:3)

“He doeth according to His will, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?”
(Dan. 4:35)

“Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.”(Psa. 135:6)

“Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father.”(Matt. 10:29)

To all which Augustine subscribes when he says, *“Nothing is done but what the Almighty wills should be done, either efficiently or permissively.”* As does Luther, whose words are these, *“This therefore must stand; to wit, the unsearchable will of God, without which nothing exists or acts.”* And again, *“God would not be such if he was not Almighty, and if anything could be done without Him.”* And elsewhere he quotes these words of Erasmus: *“Supposing there was an earthly prince, who could do whatever he would and none were able to resist him, we might safely say of such an one that he would certainly fulfil his own desire; in like manner the will of God, which is the first cause of all things, should seem to lay a kind of necessity upon our wills.”* This Luther approves of, and adds, *“Thanks be to God for his orthodox passage in Erasmus’s discourse! But if this be true, what becomes of his doctrine of free-will, which he, at other times, so strenuously contends for?”*

Sunday, January 15, 2012

Sermon Outline...page 2

(NOTE: These quotations are from a famous debate in the 15th Century, between Martin Luther and Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, contained in an English language, 300-page book, entitled, "The Bondage of the Will.")

This subject is fundamental to an understanding of the primary doctrines of the Gospel, and in these pages Luther gives extensive treatment to what he saw as the heart of the Gospel. Free will was no academic question to Luther. And it is no academic question to the saints meeting at Westboro Baptist Church. The whole Gospel of the grace of God, is bound up with it, and stands or falls, according to the way one decides it. We affirm our total inability to save ourselves, and the sovereignty of divine grace in our salvation. We uphold the doctrine of justification by faith, and defend absolute predestination as taught, unconditionally, in **Ephesians, chapter 1**, and numerous passages throughout the Scriptures; to wit:

“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; having PREDESTINATED us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will...that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him; in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, BEING PREDESTINATED ACCORDING TO THE PURPOSE OF HIM WHO WORKETH ALL THINGS AFTER THE COUNSEL OF HIS OWN WILL.”(Eph. 1:4-11)

"Your thoughts of God are too human," Luther blurted out to Erasmus, suggesting THAT as the reason that Erasmus could not grasp the 5 points of Calvinism. I have no doubt that such is the reason for today's total spiritual blindness all throughout the world's populations – without exception. There is no fear of God before their eyes. Blasphemy and heresy is the order of the day. Listen up! America, and all you sons and daughters of Adam: YOUR THOUGHTS OF GOD ARE TOO HUMAN. YOU'RE GOING TO HELL (!)

"The will of God is so the cause of all things, as to be itself without cause, for nothing can be the cause of that which is the cause of everything. So that the Divine will is the ne plus ultra of all our iniquities; when we ascend to that, we can go no farther. Hence we find every matter resolved ultimately into the mere sovereign pleasure of God, as the spring and occasion of whatsoever is done in heaven and earth..."

“Thou hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight.”(Matt. 11:25)

“It is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”(Luke 12:32)

“I will, be thou clean.”(Matt. 8:3)

“He went up into a mountain, and called unto Him whom He would.”(Mark 3:13)

“Of His own will begat He us, with the word of truth.”(James 1:18)

“Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”(John 1:13)

“I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. Therefore, He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.”(Rom. 9:15,18)

“...And no wonder that the will of God should be the main spring that sets all inferior wheels in motion, and should likewise be the rule by which He goes in all His dealings with His creatures, since nothing out of God (i.e., exterior to Himself) can possibly induce Him to will or nil one thing rather than another. Deny this, and you, at one stroke, destroy His immutability and His

independence, since He can never be independent, who acts pro re nata, as emergency requires, and whose will is suspended on that of others; nor unchangeable whose purposes vary, and take all shapes, according as the person or things vary, who are the objects of those purposes. The only reason then, that can be assigned why the Deity does this or omits that, is because it is His own free pleasure. Luther, in answer to that question, 'Whence it was that Adam was permitted to fall and corrupt his whole posterity, when God could have prevented his falling,' etc., says: 'God is a Being, whose will acknowledges no cause, neither is it for us to prescribe rules to His sovereign pleasure, or call Him to account for what He does. He has neither superior nor equal, and His will is the rule of all things. He did not therefore will such and such things because they were in themselves right, and He was bound to will them; but they are therefore equitable and right because He wills them. The will of man, indeed, may be influenced and moved, but God's will never can. To assert the contrary is to undeify God.'" (The Bondage of the Will)

Bucer likewise observes: "*God has no other motive for what He does than ipsa voluntas, His own mere will, which will is so far from being unrighteous that it is justice itself.*" Since, as we lately observed, the determining will of God being omnipotent cannot be obstructed or made void, it follows that He never did, nor does He now, will that every individual of mankind should be saved. If this was His will, not one single soul could ever be lost (for who hath resisted His will?) and He would surely afford all men those effectual means of salvation, without which it cannot be had.

Now God could afford these means as easily to all mankind as to some only, but experience proves that He does not; and the reason is equally plain, namely, that He will not, for whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that does He in heaven and on earth. It is said, indeed, by the apostle, that God "**would have all men saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth,**" i.e., as Augustine, consistently with other Scriptures, explains the passage, "God will save some out of the whole race of mankind," that is, persons of all nations, kindreds and tongues. Nay, He will save all men, i.e., as the same father observes, "*Every kind of men, or men of every kind,*" namely, the whole election of grace, be they bond or free, noble or ignoble, rich or poor, male or female.

Add to this that it evidently militates against the majesty, omnipotence and supremacy of God to suppose that He can either will anything in vain, or that anything can take effect against His will; therefore Bucer observes, very rightly, "*God doth not will the salvation of reprobates, seeing he hath not chosen them, neither created them to that end.*" Consonant to which are those words of Luther, "*This mightily offends our rational nature, that God should, of His own mere unbiased will, leave some men to themselves, harden them, and then condemn them; but He has given abundant demonstration, and does continually, that this is really the case, namely, that the sole cause why some are saved and others perish proceeds from His willing the salvation of the former and the perdition of the latter. And this – as we have noticed before – MIGHTILY OFFENDS OUR STUBBORN, RATIONAL WILLS. As God doth not will that each individual of mankind should be saved, so neither did He will that Christ should die for each individual of mankind. This is self-evident. God, as we have before proved, wills not the salvation of every man, but He gave His Son to die for them whose salvation He willed; therefore His Son did not die for every man. All those for whom Christ died are saved, and the Divine justice indispensably requires that to them the benefits of His death should be imparted; but only the elect are saved, they only partake of those benefits, consequently for them only He died and intercedes.*"

The apostle (**Rom. 8**) asks, "**Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifies,**" i.e., His elect, exclusively of others; "**who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died**" for them, exclusive of others. The plain meaning of the passage is that those whom God justifies, and for whom Christ died (justification and redemption being of exactly the same extent,) cannot be condemned.

These privileges are expressly restrained to the elect: therefore God justifies and Christ died for them alone. In the same chapter Paul asks, "*He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all* (i.e., for all elect persons), *how shall He not, with Him, also freely give us all things?*" i.e., salvation and all things necessary to it.

Now, it is certain that these are not given to every individual, and yet if Paul says true, they are given to all those for whom Christ was delivered to death; consequently he was not delivered to death for every individual. To the same purpose Augustine argues in Johan. Tract. 45, col. 335. Hence that saying of Ambrose, "*if you are an unbeliever, Christ did not die for you.*" Meaning that whoever is left under the power of final unbelief is thereby evidenced to be one of those for whom Christ did not die, but that all for whom He suffered shall be, in this life, sooner or later, indued with faith.

Therefore Westboro Baptist Church – standing alone in these dark days – but proud to assert the truth of God – THAT ALL MEN ARE ELECTED, – SOME TO SALVATION, AND SOME, JUSTLY, TO CONDEMNATION. WBC boldly asserts that as all men universally are NOT elected to salvation, so neither are all men universally ordained to condemnation. This is undeniable from Scripture: God will not save every individual of mankind!

Are you here, Mr. & Mrs. Simpleton? and have you checked your brains at the door? If so, we will listen while you debate with the Lord Jesus, who diagnosed your condition to a "T"; to wit:

***"Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."* (Matt. 22:29)**

Mark it down, Beloved. The brave evangelists who sally forth from these humble halls daily, especially for the last 20 years, will testify against your ignorant, lazy, Bible-dumb souls, from one end of this country to the other. Make no mistake, ignoramus. Jesus said it; to wit:

***"YE DO ERR, NOT KNOWING THE SCRIPTURES, NOR THE POWER OF GOD."* (Matt. 22:29)**

God Almighty never designed to save every individual of mankind. Get over it. If the Almighty God had purposed such a thing, then every individual would and must be saved, for, make no mistake, for, "*His counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure.*" (Isa. 46:10.) We assert that the number of the elect, and also of the reprobate, is so fixed and certain that neither can be added to nor subtracted from by so much as one.

It is written of God that "*He telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names.*" Now, it is as incompatible with the infinite wisdom and knowledge of God to be ignorant of the names and number of the rational creatures He has made as that he should be ignorant of the stars and the other inanimate products of his almighty power. And, we say again, that God does indeed precisely know, to a man – and every detail of every man down to the last hair of the head of every man.

"Brethren," said St. Augustine in the 5th Century, "*Let us not imagine that God puts down any man in His book, and then erases him.*"

Luther agrees: "*This is the very thing that razes the doctrine of freewill from its foundations; to wit: That Gods eternal love for some men and hatred of others is immutable and cannot be reversed.*"

I love you.

Amen.