

As the first part of this statement says, from all eternity God has freely and unchangeably ordained whatsoever comes to pass.

Not a sparrow falls to the ground without His knowledge. No one of us is born except as God has predetermined that this will happen. No one of us can die except at the time that He determined before the foundation of the world. Nothing happens except as He completely controls it. We are not saved through any goodness of our own. We are not saved because we had sense enough to see the truth of Scripture and accept it. We are not saved because we have had wisdom and strength to seize on to salvation and partake of it. Salvation is part of what God has ordained from all eternity just as are our times of birth and death and every action that we perform and every experience that enters our lives.

This great truth of God's sovereignty is a source of constant blessing to the believer. In denying parts of this truth Arminianism does despite to the honor of God and injures the progress of His work. In all our disappointments, perplexities or sorrows realization of the truth of God's absolute control helps us to rise above the circumstances and praise God for whatever occurs. Calvinists rejoice in this great blessing.

Yet Calvinists believe not only the first half of this section of the Westminster Confession but also the second half. God is not the author of sin. When we sin it is not God's fault. We are responsible. When we fail to turn to God and receive salvation through Christ we cannot say that it is because God has turned His back on us or mistreated us. We alone are responsible for our sin. "Nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures." What is "the will of the creature"? We are rebuked for not exerting our wills as we should. The author of Hebrews says to each of us: "Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Hebrews 12: 4). James says: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God... every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust" (James 1: 13, 14). We are responsible for our sins; we cannot blame our failures on God. We are commanded to turn away from sin and to turn to God with our whole heart.

After we are saved we are commanded to put God first and to move forward in seeking ever to know Him better. None of us has a right to say, "I can't do it because God has not willed it."