



It is Both

Predestination or freedom of choice - which is it? This is a question that has been raging for centuries. Calvinists and Armenianists continue to debate this topic, with no apparent end in sight. There are verses in the Bible that support both sides of this debate. They

both make excellent cases. It is hard to choose between the two, and for the human mind, we feel like we must choose one or the other. But I propose a third alternative. It is both. We are saved by GRACE through FAITH.

Nothing can alter God's plan, and at the same time we are free to make choices every day. Whether we experience God's plan from a prison or a palace often depends on the choices we make, but either way we will experience God's plan for our life. This begins to illustrate the importance of being led by the Holy Spirit. By His leading we stand a much better chance of choosing wisely, albeit unknowingly much of the time. Because we have freedom to choose, it makes being led by the Holy Spirit the most important thing in our lives. To make choices without His guidance is like walking along a ridge line blind – ultimately we get hurt, fall to our death, and possibly hurt those around us as well.

The story of Jonah is a good example. God wanted Jonah to go to Nineveh and warn them of the coming destruction. But Jonah did not want Nineveh to be forgiven, he wanted Nineveh destroyed (he had his reasons). So instead of going to Nineveh, he went in the opposite direction, traveling away from Nineveh. But God REALLY wanted Jonah to go to Nineveh, and before long Jonah found himself headed to Nineveh, and we can safely say that his means of getting there could be described as less than first class accommodations. Jonah had the choice of how God's plan was going to work out in his life. But God's plan in Jonah's life was immovable, it was going to come to pass, Jonah just needed stronger convincing. Like a child arguing with its parents, Jonah in essence was arguing with God. But God persisted, and Jonah finally did what God desired for him to do.

The same can be said of us. God's will is going to be accomplished in our lives, with or without our cooperation. He will never cross our will, just as He did not force Jonah to preach in Nineveh. But He persists with us until we finally choose to go along with His plan, just as Jonah finally chose to preach to Nineveh after he found himself on the Ninevite shore. God could have taken Jonah's free will away and zapped him with the suggestion to go preach to Nineveh, like a hypnotist would do to one of their subjects. But God does not do this. He lets Jonah run away, he lets him jump into the sea to die (Jonah would rather have died than preach to Nineveh). At that point Jonah thought he had Checkmate. But God sent an Uber Fish to taxi him away to Nineveh. We can conclude from this that it is better for us to cooperate with God's will for our lives than it is to fight against Him. Our lives will be more enjoyable if we will use our freedom of choice to go along with God's Plan. Our stories may not be as interesting, but we will travel through life in a better way. We can go by boat or we can go by fish, but ultimately we are going to Nineveh, if that is God's will for our life. How we get there is our choice. I recommend the boat.