**God will not send anyone to hell, but many people will choose to go there by exercising their free will to reject Christ.**

**Predestination vs. Free Will
By Chuck Missler of** [**K-House**](http://www.khouse.org/)

The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever . . . . ([Deuteronomy 29:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+29.29&t=NKJV))

From the beginning of time, thinkers have puzzled over the paradox of fate vs. free will, or predestination vs. free choice. In theological terms, this leads to the struggle between Calvinism and Arminianism. As we explore this paradox, we find that examining the fruit of each position reveals that the River of Life seems to flow between these two extremes, and that once again, truth involves a careful balance.

At the heart of the controversies between Calvinism and Arminianism is the emphasis on the sovereignty of God by the Calvinists and on the sovereignty (free will) of man - or human responsibility - by the Arminians. Calvinism emphasizes that God is in total control of everything and that nothing can happen that He does not plan and direct, including man’s salvation. Arminianism teaches that man has free will and that God will never interrupt or take that free will away, and that God has obligated Himself to respect the free moral agency and capacity of free choice with which He created us.

Both doctrinal positions are reasonable and both have extensive Scriptures to back them up. Both are, in our opinion, both partially right and partially overextended. As Philip Schaff has put it, “Calvinism emphasized divine sovereignty and free grace; Arminianism emphasized human responsibility. The one restricts the saving grace to the elect; the other extends it to all men on the condition of faith. Both are right in what they assert; both are wrong in what they deny. If one important truth is pressed to the exclusion of another truth of equal importance, it becomes an error, and loses its hold upon the conscience. The Bible gives us a theology which is more human than Calvinism and more divine that Arminianism, and more Christian than either of them.”

Certainly, the Bible does teach that God is sovereign, and that believers are predestined and elected by God to spend eternity with Him. Nowhere, however, does the Bible ever associate election with damnation. Conversely, the Scriptures teach that God elects for salvation, but that unbelievers are in hell by their own choice. Every passage of the Bible that deals with election deals with it in the context of salvation, not damnation. No one is elect for hell. The only support for such a view is human logic, not biblical revelation (which John Calvin did teach).

The concept of total depravity is consistent with Scripture, but the doctrine of limited atonement, that Jesus did not die for the sins of the whole world, is clearly contrary to biblical teaching. The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus died for everyone’s sins and that everyone is able to be saved if they will ~~repent and turn to~~\*place their faith in\* Christ. Limited atonement is a non-biblical doctrine.

Election and predestination are biblical doctrines. God knows everything and therefore He cannot be surprised by anything. He is beyond the constraints of mass, acceleration and gravity, therefore He is outside time. He knows, and has known from “eternity past,” who will exercise their free will to accept Him and who will reject Him. The former are “the elect” and the latter are the “non-elect.” Everyone who is not saved will have only himself to blame: God will not send anyone to hell, but many people will choose to go there by exercising their free will to reject Christ.

On the other hand, no one who is saved will be able to take any of the credit. Our salvation is entirely God’s work, and is based completely on the finished work of the Cross. We were dead in trespasses and sins, destined for hell, when God in His grace drew us to Himself, convinced us of our sin and our need for a Savior, and gave us the authority to call Jesus Lord. Is this grace, this wooing, this courtship, *irresistible*? No, we have free will and we can (and do) resist, even to the damnation of our souls, but God does everything short of making us automata (preprogrammed puppets) to draw us into His forever family.

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(By [K-House eNews by Chuck Missler](http://www.khouse.org/) for July 17, 2007)\*

From [Bible One - Charles Strong's Predestination vs. Free Will](http://bibleone.net/print_tbs144.html)

\*NOTE: The only alteration to this commentary was the substitution of the phrase, “place their faith in” for the phrase “repent and turn to” before the word, “Christ,” in the fifth paragraph. Only the saved can "repent."