

Emmaus Essentials
The London Baptist Confession of 1689
Chapter 9 - Of Free Will
For Distribution the Week of 02/23/2014

Chapter Outline

Taken from ST 535 Baptist Symbolics Chapter Outlines by Dr. Renihan

Introduction

- A. The way that man addresses men is through covenant (Chapter 7)
- B. Man exists in various states or conditions (Chapter 9)
- C. Chapter nine deals with mans relation to covenantal grace at the various stages of his existence

II. Paragraph 1 - A general statement about man's will

God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty and power of acting upon choice, that it is neither forced, nor by any necessity of nature determined to do good or evil.
(Matthew 17:12; James 1:14; Deuteronomy 30:19)

- A. True Calvinism never denies that man has a true and free will
 - 1. Man is always and in every circumstance truly free
 - 2. But we must define, according to the scriptures, what this means
- B. Whatever man is, he has received it from God - endued
 - 1. Endued is a technical term - to invest with a power or quality
- C. God has made man, and he has made his will with certain inherent qualities
- D. What has God endued the will of man with?
 - 1. Natural liberty
 - a) General statement about mans will - it has liberty
 - 2. Power of acting upon choice
 - a) This is a clarification of what this will, which has liberty, does - it acts upon choice. When confronted with choices the will of man acts.
 - 3. It is not forced
 - a) We are not robotic
 - 4. "Nor by any necessity of nature determined to do good or evil."
 - a) God did not make man with a will that could do only good or only evil
 - 5. In summery, men and women do what they want to do from the heart/will
 - a) We are free beings in that we make true chooses from the heart
- E. Scriptural Support
 - 1. James 1:14 (ESV) 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.
 - 2. Matthew 17:12 (ESV) 12 But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man will certainly suffer at their hands."
 - 3. Deuteronomy 30:19 (ESV) 19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live,
- F. This is not the end of the story, but the beginning

III. Paragraph 2 - Man in innocency: a mutable (changeable) being

Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom and power to will and to do that which was good and well-pleasing to God, but yet was unstable, so that he might fall from it.
(Ecclesiastes 7:29; Genesis 3:6)

- A. This paragraph speaks to mans state prior to the fall

1. Natural ability, in and of themselves, to do freely what was pleasing to God
 - a) They could keep the Covenant of Works
 2. They had the potential to change - not confirmed, mutable
 - a) Probation
 3. How does a good being, fall?
 - a) Confession doesn't answer this - it simply asserts what the word of God teaches
 - b) Murray says this is an insoluble mystery
 4. Look at where freewill got us!
- B. Scriptural Support
1. Ecclesiastes 7:29 (ESV) 29 See, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes.
 2. Genesis 3:6 (ESV) 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

IV. Paragraph 3 - Man after the fall: total inability

Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able by his own strength to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto. (Romans 5:6; Romans 8:7; Ephesians 2:1, 5; Titus 3:3-5; John 6:44)

- A. Assumes the historicity of Adam and Eve, the fall, and the representative nature of Adams act
- B. Man lost the ability to will that which is good
 1. That is, *spiritual good*, accompanying salvation
 - a) It is not that man has lost the ability to will
 - b) This does not deny that people do good
 - c) Man has lost the ability to choose to do, in themselves, what is pleasing to God
- C. From the fall, man's free choices can only be made according to what he is - and he is a sinner
 1. Man's will fell with him.
 2. He has a sinful freewill that will always sins.
 - a) Romans 3:23 (ESV) 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
 - b) Isaiah 64:6 (ESV) 6 We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
- D. It is for this reason that a fallen man cannot convert himself or prepare himself for salvation - there are no seekers.
 1. The second part of paragraph 3 exegetes the first part of paragraph 3
 2. You will not understand the teaching of chapter 10 (Of Effectual Calling) unless you first understand the teaching of chapter 9, especially paragraph 3
- E. Scriptural Support
 1. Romans 5:6 (ESV) 6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.
 2. Romans 8:7 (ESV) 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.
 3. Ephesians 2:1, 5 (ESV) 1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins... 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—
 4. Titus 3:3–5 (ESV) 3 For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. 4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness,

but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

5. John 6:44 (ESV) 44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

V. Paragraph 4 - Man in Grace: freedom from bondage

When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin, and by his grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; yet so as that by reason of his remaining corruptions, he doth not perfectly, nor only will, that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.

(Colossians 1:13; John 8:36; Philippians 2:13; Romans 7:15, 18, 19, 21, 23)

- A. This paragraph addresses the case of man in grace
- B. Freed from natural bondage
 1. John 8:36 (ESV) 36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.
 2. Colossians 1:13 (ESV) 13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,
- C. and by his grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good (obedience is by grace)
 1. Galatians 5:22–25 (ESV) 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.
 2. Philippians 2:13 (ESV) 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.
- D. The confession recognizes the struggle - already, not yet
 1. Galatians 5:17 (ESV) 17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

VI. Paragraph 5 - Man in Glory: an immutable will

This will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to good alone in the state of glory only.

(Ephesians 4:13)

- A. Immutable will in glory
- B. Side note: States of Man
 1. Innocency - Able to good, able not to sin, will is mutable
 2. Fallen - Man continues to have a freewill, but that will acts according to what man is - not able not to sin
 3. In Grace - Man by grace both does good and sins
 4. In Glory - Man only that which pleases God
 - a) 1 corresponds to 3, 2 corresponds to 4
 - b) A question for my Arminian friends - Is man a robot in heaven?
- C. Scriptural Support
 1. Ephesians 4:13 (ESV) 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

Conclusion

- A. This is a very impactful doctrine in that what we believe about the state of man determines how we interact with men and women today.
 1. It effect how we do evangelism/apologetics
 2. This should make us people of prayer

B. This teaching is also important in that it helps us to understand ourselves.

Romans 7:18–25 (ESV)

18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. 19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. 21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. 22 For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, 23 but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.