

Predestination, Free Will and a little Pascal?

Discussion at The Park

Wednesday 30 November 2016 7:30pm at *The Park Tavern, Macclesfield*

Predestination:

A Christian doctrine. Man is fallen, innately evil, turns his face against God and has no capacity to know God, without salvation that comes from God alone - *Soli Deo Gloria*. Hence those who are saved are the Elect, that is, they are chosen by God.

Free Will:

Or Pelagianism, semi-Pelagianism, or Arminianism. Man has the capacity to choose or to reject God. There is no Biblical statement that says that God gave man free will.

In History:

Absolutist regimes chose free will, e.g Charles I and Louis XIV. Dynamic and autonomous communities tended to choose Predestination, e.g the Dutch republic, the Pilgrim Fathers, the Huguenots. Why?

Fatalism:

Is Fatalism the same as Predestination? We'll meet again some sunny day, Insh'allah.

Science:

Is determinism the same as Predestination? Biological determinism strikes me as a dangerous idea. Why?

Blaise Pascal:

He was (1623-1662) a French mathematician, physicist, inventor, writer and Christian philosopher.

Finally:

Do we make our own choices, or are we destined to make our choices due to who and what we are? Am I responsible for my crimes? If you prevent my crimes are you committing a crime against my free will?

Further Reading

For those who like a little bit of reading, here are some notes from Wikipedia, including definitions.

- Predestination: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Predestination>
- Free Will: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_will
- Blaise Pascal: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blaise_Pascal

Thanks to David M for these notes.

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