

Short Dialog With A Staunch Arminian (Free-Willer) Which Addresses The False Idea Of “Prevenient Grace”

This article is a short dialog on a discussion forum (patheos.com) that I had with a man who thinks he's an expert on the subject of salvation and so he is not about to be convinced that his views on soteriology (salvation) are wrong. For additional information on the subject of Prevenient Grace, please check out the links at the bottom of this article.

Roger Olson:

... The cross made forgiveness possible but not guaranteed. And, even if the cross meant the reconciliation of all with God and God with all, God still respects his human creatures enough not to force them into his fellowship if they decline.

RayFromPA:

Roger, you say that “God still respects his human creatures enough not to force them into his fellowship if they decline”. My understanding of scripture is that that statement is unbiblical. God adopts people into His kingdom and regenerates them at that point. That act is necessary to create “new creatures in Christ ” who will WANT to fellowship with God if God is to have anyone to fellowship with for all eternity, because we are talking about people whom God describes as follows: John 3:19-20 “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and MEN LOVED DARKNESS rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, NEITHER COMETH TO THE LIGHT, lest his deeds should be reproveth.” Romans 3:11 “There is none that understandeth, THERE IS NONE THAT SEEKETH AFTER GOD.” Ephesians 2:1 “And you hath *he* [NOT YOURSELF] quickened, WHO WERE DEAD in trespasses and sins; Colossians 2:13 “And you, being DEAD in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath *he* [NOT YOURSELF] quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses” I can understand how God himself can bring the spiritually dead to life without any help on the part of the spiritual dead man (including any decision) but I cannot understand how a spiritual dead man in whom dwelleth no good thing and whose heart is deceitful and desperately wicked – can even want to come to Christ of his own sin-loving, God-hating free-will.

Roger Olson:

Read Prevenient Grace: God's Provision for Fallen Humanity by W. Brian Shelton (Francis Asbury Press). Or one of my books about Arminianism or Calvinism. Your question is so old as to be commonplace and has been answered by non-Calvinists many, many times ...

RayFromPA:

Roger, The whole idea of “prevenient grace” relies on a lack of understanding of **Election** and **Propitiation**. For the idea of prevenient grace to be true, we

need to have an unbiblical view of Election and a misunderstanding of what was accomplished by the Propitiatory sacrifice of Christ on the cross, as most if not all Arminians (free-willers) do. The concept of Preventive Grace was promoted to justify the preaching and teaching of the false free-will (synergistic/cooperative) gospel and it has its roots in the Church Of Rome's Council of Trent (and in fallen mankind's desire to be the final determiner of his salvation). When a true believer in Christ has the correct understanding of who God really is and how lost man is, and when that person realizes just how much they are at God's mercy for salvation, then and only then will they agree with the Almighty that He has a right to do whatever He pleases (Psalm 115:3). It takes REGENERATION, not preventive grace, for a person to see these things. "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?" [Matthew 20:15]

NOTE: My second comment (associated with RayFromPA) shown above was never posted by Roger Olson on his blog page. Mr. Olson has a doctorate in Religious Studies and is a professor of theology at a seminary. Yet if the apostle Paul were here today, he (Paul) would have to preach his Mars Hill sermon about the "unknown God" to Mr. Olson. This lack of understanding among Christian clergy and theologians today of God's total Sovereignty in salvation is pandemic throughout the modern church. Obviously we can't trust the seminaries - who are producing all these free-will pastors who are either ignorant of Church history or simply hate a God who does not allow man to be in the driver's seat with regards to salvation.

Additional Articles On The False Doctrine Of Preventive Grace:

Does the Bible teach Preventive Grace? by R. C. Sproul

Is Preventive Grace in the Bible? by Joseph M. Gleason

A Short Response to the Arminian Doctrine of Preventive Grace by John Hendryx

Arminians And Preventive Grace by Sam Storm

What does the term "preventive grace" mean, and is it biblical?
