

Reformation Church, Boerne, TX
www.ReformationChurchTX.com
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Rev. 22:17

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

OK, you Calvinists. Game over. Here's the verse that blows you out of the water. Away with your babbling about election and predestination, God choosing who will and won't be saved. He couldn't make it any clearer. It's so simple even Calvinists can grasp it. What don't you understand about "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely?"

It's such an obvious truth that it is even a popular hymn theme. We had to write hymns about it because we couldn't find it taught in the Psalms, but never mind about that. That's never a problem for us anyway. The point is, it's in hymns. What more proof do you need?

Songs are a great way to teach theological truths, right or wrong.. Now, we know that the Bible says women aren't supposed to teach men theology, at least in church, but we make an exception for Fanny Crosby because she was such a good lyricist. Plus, she wrote over 8,000 hymns, and God could only write 150, so what does that tell you?

These weighty verses are from her hymn "Whoever Will"

Whoever will, whoever will,
Whoever will may come today;
Whoever will may come today,
And drink of the water of life.

Behold His hands extended now,
The dews of night are on His brow;
He knocks, He calls, He waiteth still,
Oh, come to Him, whoever will.

Poor Jesus! Poor pitiful Jesus! He's reaching out to you, extending His bloody nail-pierced hands, He is still pouring forth sweat from His torment on the cross, yet He knocks on your heart, He calls to you, He longingly waits for you to decide for Him.

Poor pitiful Savior! Why won't you have mercy on Him? Won't you do what He is begging you to do, what He is powerless to make you do, simply believe that He is your Savior? What a trifle to ask when He has given His life for you. Just say the words, recite the sinner's prayer.

Fannie graced us with another hymn, "Why Will Ye Wander"?

O ye thirsty ones that languish
On life's drifting sand!
'Tis the Savior bending o'er you,
Reaching out His toil-worn hand.

Lo, the summer days are ending,
They will soon be o'er;
While the Spirit still is pleading,
Grieve your dearest Friend no more.

Poor toil-worn, grieving Jesus! Why, His heart will just fill up with tears and up and burst open if you don't reach out to Him and accept Him!

Umm....wait just a minute. I seem to recall something from the Bible...doesn't it say somewhere that Jesus is the creator of the universe? Yes, in John 1. That He is the risen Savior to whom all power has been given in heaven and on earth (Mt. 28:18), the One to whom the Father has given the earth as His footstool (Ps. 110:1; Mt. 24:44; Mk. 12:36; Lk. 20:43) the One who has "power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (Jn. 17:2), the One who saved HIS people, not "ALL" people, from their sins (Mt. 1:21), the One who said "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (Jn. 6:44); the One who said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you" (Jn. 16:15). So...He can't get the job done until people decide to come to him?

There seems to be a disconnect here. A huge disconnect. It's like, "earth to Fanny Crosby." No, actually — "heaven to Fanny Crosby. Have you not been paying attention to what God says?"

Fanny — whose hymn lyrics I'm using to represent almost all evangelicals and fundamentalists today, since they sing her little dittys in church — would say, "Oh, but Rev. 22:17 says "whosoever will." That means "whosoever wills to come to Christ will be saved."

Guess what. That is absolutely true.

But what about all those other verses that say that He saves only those the Father has chosen?

Guess what. That is absolutely true.

But how can that be? How can anyone who wills to come to Christ be saved, and yet only those who have been chosen will be saved?

The Bible gives us the answer, and it is very simple: Only those who have been chosen will want to come to Christ. Phil 2:13: "For it is God which worketh in you both to *will* and to *do* of his good pleasure." He gives us the will and the power to carry out His will in our actions. C. S. Lewis put it this way: "Unless He wanted you, you would not be wanting him."

Spurgeon: "There are two great truths from this platform I have proclaimed for many years. The first is that salvation is free to every man who will have it; the second is that God gives salvation to a people whom He has chosen; and these truths are not in conflict with each other in the least degree."

Please understand that the motivation of Fannie Crosby and other sincere Arminians is wonderful and I share it. They want everyone to be saved from Hell and enjoy eternal life with Christ. And proclaiming the Gospel is the only way to reach people. The problem is that the Arminian message that Christ is begging you to make a decision for Him is not the Gospel and will not save anybody. Where countless evangelicals and fundamentalists go seriously wrong is when they present Christ as this pitiful, weak, pleading figure begging you to come to Him. They try to make people feel so sorry for Him that they will adopt him like they would the sad-faced but cute runt of the litter.

Moreover, they often ignore sin and the necessity of repentance, which is critical. The typical Arminian approach is admitted by people like Joel Osteen and Robert Schuller, just to name a few of many: they have said they don't talk about sin because it turns people off. Or, as Osteen said in a recent interview, he talks about sin "in a positive light." He doesn't want people to feel bad. How you can repent of something you don't feel bad about, he doesn't say.

If people aren't told what sin is, they won't recognize that they are sinners. If they don't recognize they are sinners, why would they want a savior to save them from their sins?

Of course telling people about sin makes them feel guilty! That's the whole point. But you don't leave it at that. You then present the Gospel, the good news of Christ the Savior. A person must recognize that they are a sinner before they recognize their need for a savior. They need to know what sin is, realize that they have sinned, and come to repentance, BEFORE they can come to Christ.

Did Christ not talk about sin because it turns people off? Did He avoid talking about the need to repent of your sins? Not at all: "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Mt. 9:13; Lk. 5:32; "...repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Lk. 24:47

Calvin: "The Holy Spirit teaches us in Scripture that our mind is smitten with so much blindness, that the affections of our heart are so depraved and perverted, that our whole nature is vitiated, that we can do nothing but sin until He forms a new will within us.

The belief that we have free will, uncorrupted by sin, and we are able to judge the claims of Christ and make a decision for or against Him is the crux of what is called Arminianism, named after the man who popularized it. It is preached, taught and believed by millions of evangelicals and fundamentalists, but it is demonstrably not the message of the Bible. The Jesus Christ preached by Arminians — weak and powerless, begging people to make a decision for Him — never lived.

The Jesus Christ of the Bible is the creator of the universe: Jn 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made; the source of all life: Jn 1:3 He is the One who said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Mt. 28:18. Who said He has power that no man has, the power to forgive sins: Lk. 5:24; Who said that it was

impossible for anyone to take His life, and that He had power to rise from the dead — No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down , and I have power to take it again. “ Jn. 10:18. Who said He has power over all flesh, Jn. 17:2. Who in Him IS life”; the One who keeps the universe, including our bodies, from falling apart: Col 1:17, by him all things consist. The One who said, “without Me you can do nothing” (Jn. 15:5). The One who told Pilate, who threatened him with the most painful death, crucifixion, that had ever been invented, that he, Pilate, could have no power at all against Him except that it was given to Pilate from above, Jn. 19:11. The Jesus Christ of the Bible is the One to whom the Father has given the earth as His footstool (Ps. 110:1; Mt. 24:44; Mk. 12:36; Lk. 20:43), “put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church” Eph. 1:22. Weak and pitiful and begging people to judge His claims and make a decision for Him? God forbid! That Christ is a fiction, too powerless to save anyone. On the contrary, Eph 1:4-5, “he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world...Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,.” We believe “according to the working of his mighty power” Eph. 1:19

To be an Arminian you have to ignore all those verses and many, many more or spiritualize them into either heresy or mushy meaninglessness. That’s what many sermons and most so-called Christian books do today. When they’re not in error or outright heresy, it’s because they aren’t saying anything.

Most books published for the Christian market either ignore or rip out of context verses that don’t fit into the author’s idea of what they wish the Bible says, or they spiritualize them into fog. That is why they are often so lifeless. Sometimes the authors realize this, so they pump up their writing with emotionalism, hoping the reader will be tricked into responding with their feelings instead of realizing that the book is either pointless or outright heretical. You’ll recognize this especially if you have read some of the Protestant Reformers, the Puritans and their successors. Comparing their books to what is published as Christian books today is like comparing dining at the finest restaurant of your dreams to eating out of the dumpster behind McDonalds.

Again, Rev. 22:17, “And the Spirit and the bride say , Come . And let him that heareth say , Come . And let him that is athirst come . And whosoever will , let him take the water of life freely” How can that be reconciled with the rest of the Bible? Again, the Bible gives us the answer: Phil 2:13: “ For it is God which worketh in you both to *will* and to *do* of his good pleasure.” **Only those who have been chosen will want to come to Christ.**

What about “let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come.”?

Let me ask you the simplest of questions. Can someone without physical hearing, hear? Can someone without thirst glands thirst?

Where does hearing come from? Did you one day realize you couldn’t hear and decide, “Hey! I can’t hear! I have to grow some ears!”? Did you one day decide, “Hey! I can’t live without water! I have to grow some thirst glands!”?

Of course not. You were born with ears to hear and a hypothalamus to tell you when to drink. God gave them to you.

And God gives spiritual ears to hear and desire, spiritual glands to thirst, to those He has chosen to come to Christ.

Please turn to Jn 11:1-44.

Lazarus was dead for three days. No doubt. The Bible makes it so very clear. His flesh was rotting, and people smelled it. Yet Jesus stood at his grave and called to him to come out. Excuse me? Lazarus' ears were rotten. He was as dead as the wood of this podium. He couldn't hear a hydrogen bomb if it went off next to him. Yet he heard Jesus calling. How is that possible? Because Mk 10:27, "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible." God gave Lazarus ears to hear, and then He called to Him, "let him that heareth say, Come."

Lazarus is a vivid picture of every one of us who is dead in our trespasses and our sins,. (Eph. 2:1, Col 2:13). We cannot hear Christ calling us, we cannot thirst after Him, we cannot will to come to Him, unless He gives us spiritual ears to hear, spiritual thirst for Him.

"whosoever will , let him take the water of life freely" The key word is "will." Arminians, that is most Christians today, consciously or unconsciously, add a word to the verse that isn't there. They add the word "free." They think it is saying, "Whosoever of free will, let him take the water of life freely." But "free will" isn't there. Those words aren't even in the Bible anywhere else. Don't take my word for it. Use a concordance and look it up. The word "freely" is in the verse, but it refers not to the will, but to receiving the water of life, that is, salvation. It means there is no limit to the abundance of the new life.

Charles Spurgeon said, "Free will I have often heard of, but I have never seen it. I have met with will, and plenty of it, but it has either been led captive by sin or held in blessed bonds of grace."

Again, we cannot hear Christ calling us, we cannot thirst after Him, we cannot will to come to Him, unless He gives us spiritual ears to hear, spiritual thirst for Him. Unless He wanted you, you would not want Him. Cling to that truth, and pursue Him every day more than the day before, even as He draws you.
