

Doctrine of Providence- Part 2

Written by Calvin Fox

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Wayne Grudem has written a popular text, used in many seminaries. His Systematic Theology is written from (the) Reformed perspective.

Here is what he says about predestination and providence. [My comments as well as direct quotes from Grudem]

God plans our days before we are born. He directs all our actions. Our success or failure in life is predetermined by God. -p. 320f

“All things come to pass by God’s wise providence. Nothing just happens.” -p.337

God governs or directs all things to accomplish His will. Human beings are not free, i.e. - outside of God’s control. All decisions are controlled by God. He is in control of our lives, inasmuch as God governs or directs all things to accomplish His will.

“Our words, our steps, our moments, our hearts are all from the Lord...” God causes all things that happen... p.320f

However, “events fully caused by God 100% are also fully caused 100% by the creature as well.” -p.319

The deeds are done by people under God’s influence. This is the Doctrine of Concurrence- “God cooperates with created things in every action, directing their distinctive properties to cause them to act as they do” -p.317

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“God causes all things that happen, but He...somehow upholds our ability to make willing, responsible choices.” This is our only freedom as human beings. Grudem can not explain this, he says we should simply accept it as true.

–p.320f

All this is the Reformed perspective, as expressed in the WCF. What about Evil? Professor Grudem, in agreement with the WCF, insists that God is not evil and can not and has not caused evil.

God is in no way responsible for evil. –p.328

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“God did, indeed, cause evil events to come about and evil deeds to be done. But...it is clear that Scripture nowhere shows God as directly doing anything evil, but rather bringing about evil deeds through the willing actions of moral creatures.” –p.322f

“God ordains that we carry out evil deeds.” –p.330

“There are literally dozens of Scripture passages that say that God (indirectly) brought about some kind of evil.” “Yet, the evil is actually done not by God but by people or demons who chose to do it.”