

Boule/ Greek = God's sovereign predetermined resolute plan, purpose and decree that is absolute and cannot be thwarted by man or anyone else.

- Acts 2:23, 5:38-39, 13:36, 20:27, Romans 9:19, Hebrews 6:17

There are those who teach that God predetermines everything that happens. As we will see, this is a distortion of the full counsel of God. Such teaching suggests that God is responsible for all evil that takes place, but this denigrates the character of God. God did create the angel Lucifer who rebelled by choice to become Satan (the adversary), and became the source of all evil and sin in the world.

God is the author of the author of evil, but He cannot be the author of sin itself for sin is the result of a rebellion against God. How can God rebel against himself? - E.J. Carnell

Since man is finite and God is infinite, we cannot fully understand all of God's ways, but we can trust Him to always do what is just and right.

- The crucifixion of Jesus was carried out by evil persons but it was God's boule - Acts 2:23
- God's kingdom boule for his church cannot be overthrown by the plans of man - Acts 5:38-39
- King David fulfilled God's boule purposes for his own generation - Acts 13:36
- The apostle Paul taught the whole counsel / boule of God - Acts 20:27

God does whatever He pleases - Psalm 115:3, 135:6. In that sense He is sovereign. However, not everything that happens is His will. This is why we continue to pray for His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. For the most part, **His perfect will** is not being done by people, but **His permissive will** is done. Man makes moral or immoral decisions, which have various effects. It is more accurate to say **God is in charge** rather than to say He is in control. An earthly father can be in charge of his family, but that does not mean he is in control. Each member of the family has free will to make decisions and choices that may be contrary to the wishes of their father. The sovereignty of God includes the freedom given to mankind to choose to love God or not to love Him. Forced love is not love. We should be grateful for the great truths brought to us from the Reformers of the church such as Luther, Calvin and others. However, some adopted ideas from St. Augustine about God's sovereignty which included the idea of determinism.

Augustine was formally trained in Greek philosophy, stoicism and dualism from Manes from Persia. In his early life, Augustine believed that a meticulous micromanaging God predetermines every detail in the universe. He rejected the traditional view of election based upon God's foreknowledge, replacing it with a 'predestination' as 'necessity based on fate'. Upon conversion, he combined Christian doctrine with determinism where man has no free will but is in total bondage and depravity.

Such belief reminds me of the fatalism one finds in the religions of Islam and Hinduism. In my late 20's, I became more drawn to evangelism as seen in the lives of Charles Finney and John Wesley rather than John Calvin. My pastor's wife was

more into Calvinism and once confronted me about being too evangelistic and even said that she did not even like Billy Graham!

Fatalism/determinism is contrary to the idea that God gives mankind the **ability to choose** whom they will serve. God does not predestine some people to heaven and others to hell.

Jesus is the chosen one and anyone that comes to Jesus and receives him into their life now partakes in the eternal life that is only found in Him - Ephesians 1:4-5. **In Christ** they are thus predestined to be conformed to the image of Jesus - Romans 8:29.

(At **thenarrowpath.com** Steve Gregg has topical lectures on **God's Sovereignty** and Man's Salvation with the pros and cons of Calvinism)

God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance
- 2 Peter 3:9.

Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life. - Jesus / Revelation 22:17

Not everything that happens is God's will, but **God is able to redeem** even bad choices we have made and turn them out for good, for He is in the **restoration** business! - Romans 8:28