

Volume II of his *Systematic Theology* He writes: "We maintain that the man is free; but we deny that the will is free in the sense of being independent of reason, conscience, and feeling. In other words, a man cannot be independent of himself, or of any one of his faculties independent of all the rest." (p. 291) He also states, "Free agency is the power to decide according to our character; ability is the power to change our character by a volition. The former, the Bible and consciousness affirm belongs to man in every condition of his being; the latter, the Bible and consciousness teach with equal explicitness does not belong to fallen man." (pp. 293-294) Again he says, "When we say that an agent is self determined, we say two things. (1.) That he is the author or efficient cause of his own act. (2.) That the grounds of reasons of his determination are within himself. He is determined by what constitutes him at the moment a particular individual, his feelings, principles, character, dispositions; and not by any *ab extra* or coercive influence." (p. 295)

And A. A. Hodge, in his *Outlines of Theology* adds a few helpful thoughts to these distinctions. He writes: "The term 'will' is often used to express the mere faculty of volition, whereby the soul chooses, or refuses, or determines to act, and the exercise of that faculty. it is also used in a wider sense. . . . to include the faculty of volition, together with all of the spontaneous states of the soul, . . . the dispositions, affections, desires, which determine a man in the exercise of his free power of volition A man in willing is perfectly free, i.e., he always exercises volition according to the prevailing disposition or desire of his will at the time." (p. 282)

To return to the objection: how does the doctrine of predestination destroy free will? Two major points must be made. First, it should be recognized that since the fall no human being (except Jesus) has been free of guilt or of depravity. And, since men are bound to depravity and corruption, all of their faculties have been permeated by sin. This means that whenever men choose or decide or intend or purpose or desire or determine to do something, sin will to some degree enter in. The net result of all of this is that men's wills are not free from their own depraved natures. What they determine to do will inevitably reflect what they are. So in one sense freedom of the will means freedom to commit sinful acts. And how does this relate to predestination? As far as election is concerned, God's gracious selection of some to salvation obviously cannot be based upon their foreseen free decision to turn to God and choose Christ. Left to their own free choice, none would seek after or choose God! Thus the doctrine of unconditional election comports perfectly with the scriptural doctrine of the freedom of man's will.

The second point that should be made is this: free will must be distinguished from free agency. Each man is free to will as he pleases. Volitions are determined only by the character of the agent willing. Thus the unregenerate man, viewed psychologically is a free moral agent when he sins, because he wills as on the whole he desires; but the same man viewed theologically is a moral bonds slave when he sins, because his will is bound to the evil dispositions and desires of his own heart. And how does this relate to predestination? Apart from God's gift of grace, the nonelect freely choose to continue in their sin. As free moral agents, they choose not to seek after God. Presented with the warnings, commands, invitations, and promises of Scripture, they exercise their prerogative and choose to disregard the call of God!