

required. Though they showed unanswerably that salvation is the free gift of God and lies entirely at His sovereign disposal, that men can of themselves do nothing spiritually good, and that it is God who of His own pleasure works in them both to will and to do, yet they did not neglect to address their auditors as beings possessed of reason and conscience, nor omitted to remind them of their duties to such; but showed them their sin and danger by nature, and laid before them the appointed way and method of salvation as exhibited in the Gospel.

"Our Saviour Himself expressly, and *in terminis* assures us that no man can come to Him except the Father draw him, and yet He says, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour,' etc. . So then, all these being means whereby the elect are frequently enlightened into the knowledge of Christ, and by which they are, after they have believed through grace, built up in Him, and are means of their perseverance in grace to the end; these are so far from being vain and insignificant that they are highly useful and necessary, and answer many valuable and important ends, without in the least shaking the doctrine of predestination in particular or the analogy of faith in general. Thus St. Augustine: 'We must preach, we must reprove, we must pray, because they to whom grace is given will hear and act accordingly, though they to whom grace is not given will do neither.' "

This objection that the doctrine of predestination eliminates the necessity of means does not credit God with even the intelligence of an ordinary human being. No human being would seriously purpose to do a certain thing without then deciding upon the means by which to achieve that thing. The man who makes the statement -- "I am a Calvinist! If it is the will of God that I should live, then I need not concern myself about eating, for I shall live whether I eat or not." -- is not a representative of Calvinism, but a plain fool! God has ordained eating as a means to the end, of sustaining physical life.

Thus the preaching of the gospel, and the exercising of faith and repentance, are means to the end of the application of Christ's redemption. If a man says, "If I am of the elect, I shall be saved whether I believe and repent or not," he will certainly not be saved, and will most certainly prove himself not to be of the elect, since God has purposed to save His elect by the means which He has ordained.

Edwin H. Palmer, in his booklet The Five Points of Calvinism attempts to illustrate this point. He says:

"The story is told of a man who did not believe in predestination for reasons similar to the arguments above. He lived a notorious and wicked life because he figured that if he were elected, he would be saved; and if not, he would be lost regardless of his actions and faith. Then one night the man became critically ill. His temperature was up and death seemed near. He called for a doctor to help him. But the doctor replied, 'Ah, but if your number is up, it makes no difference whether I give you medicine or not. It won't help. If you are foreordained to die, why should I give you help? And if not, then you will get well anyway. So what's the use?' But the sick man knew that if he did not get the medicine he would surely die, whereas if he had it, the chances were good that he would live.