

What is Going On?

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: John 11:45-54.

B. There is a great question in Christian circles about whether one has free will or whether events are predetermined.

II. In the opening verses, there is a clear example of people exercising free will.

A. Men resist belief despite the powerful miracle Jesus performed before them. (Luke 16)

B. There is stubborn belief despite overwhelming evidence.

C. The point is that these men rejected Christ out of their own free will.

D. Men are free to choose, but they are not free to choose the consequences--this is how free will and God's sovereignty are compatible.

III. The inescapable results of our wrong free choices.

A. The first reaction of the priests is to call an emergency session to take drastic action.

B. The view of the people.

1. The nation would fall because of their evil.

2. The hand of God was keeping Israel and the temple central, but their crucifixion of Jesus ended this protection.

C. The view of the Sadducees who did not believe in the resurrection or life after death.

1. There was arrogance and contempt.

2. Men still judge a situation based upon how it affects them.

3. The high priest was short sighted and therefore unprincipled.

4. There is something secular wisdom does not know and cannot see.

5. The high priest prophesies Jesus' death for men's sins. God used the high priest despite his moral condition.

6. Nothing can thwart free will or set aside the sovereignty of God--the Bible teaches compatibility.

7. When one rejects truth, he becomes unable to exercise free will--one must understand life from God's point of view. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

8. God's purposes however are always redemptive.

IV. Jesus understood the way God worked, so He adjusted His behavior accordingly.

A. We must also understand the times in which we live.

B. The believer has the mind of Christ to know how to live.

C. Those who think biblically see life as it really is.

Application questions:

1. How does the speaker resolve the issue of free will and predetermination?

2. Under what circumstance does a person lose his free will?

3. How has the Bible set you free or others you know? Explain.
