

Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

29 June 2014

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD!" Psalm 122:2

Topics

A.M. Bible Class:

Northwest India Missions Report
with Scott Richards

A.M. Lesson:

Becoming a Master Builder (1 Corinthians 3:9-15)
with Scott Richards

P.M. Lesson:

Suffering for Doing Good (1 Peter 3:8-22)

Wednesday:

Singing

Pulpit Evangelist

Ken Knowlton: 428-3494

Elders

Greg Briggs: 428-8756

John Cunningham: 428-0895

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

Is This the Best of All Possible Worlds?

What I Would Think If I Were a Calvinist

Roger E Olson, June 17, 2014 (severely condensed)
Author of *Against Calvinism* (Zondervan)

I have a penchant for seeing the logical outcome of everything. The moment I read or hear an idea I automatically, without even trying, think of where it leads logically. And I think that's good. We should not believe in ideas whose good and necessary consequences are unbelievable or objectionable (to ourselves). In other words, if idea A leads inexorably,

by dint of logic, to idea B and idea B is something I do not believe in, I ought not to believe in A either.

One of my professors warned me about this penchant. He said "Roger, you shouldn't push everything to its logical conclusion." I was surprised at him then and I still disagree. It's one sound way of testing ideas as to their validity. Of course, it's not always easy to tell whether idea A leads to idea B as its good and necessary consequence. That's something philosophers and theologians talk about all the time. The "chain" of logic is not always as clear as people claim.

However, the point I want to make here is that I believe divine determinism and meticulous providence, idea "A" that God plans, ordains and governs everything without exception, leads inexorably by dint of logic to idea "B" which is that this is the best of all possible worlds. In other words, if I were a Calvinist of that type, one who believes (with Calvin and Jonathan Edwards) that God plans, ordains and governs everything without exception, I would have to believe this is the best of all possible worlds. I cannot see any escape from it escape illogic. Would a God who is perfectly good, omnipotent, and all-determining plan, ordain and govern anything less or other than the best possible world. I cannot imagine that he would.

And yet, strangely to me, most Calvinists I have asked about this (and the few I've read who discuss it) have been reluctant to affirm that this is the best of all possible worlds.

If I believed that God plans, ordains and governs everything without exception I would believe this is the best of all possible worlds—for now.

I simply don't understand why people who believe God plans, ordains and governs everything don't also believe that this is the best of all possible worlds. I think they should.

I can only attribute that they often don't to

either 1) lack of logic in their thinking, or 2) fear of having to explain how this is the best of all possible worlds in light of the Holocaust and events like it.

I agree with the theologian who said that no theology is worthy of belief that cannot be stated at the gates of Auschwitz.

It takes real guts to say that God planned, ordained and governed the Holocaust. I admire and respect those Calvinists (and other divine determinists) who do it—for their logical rigor and courage. And I've read a few who do say it. But most imply it with their doctrine of God's providence.

So, my mind runs to the idea that this is the best of all possible ideas and I put it under the microscope of Scripture, tradition, reason and experience. The problem that immediately jumps up is that if this is the best of all possible worlds then nothing can really be irreducibly evil. If this is the best of all possible worlds then I must say even of the Holocaust "It is a necessary part of the greater good." Then I cannot consider it truly evil. I would have to redefine "evil" far away from what I and most people mean by that term. I would do my best to stop feeling or expressing any outrage about anything and simply Stoically consider it "for the best."

Again, finally, if I cannot accept that this is the best of all possible worlds, and with it the belief that even the Holocaust was "for the best," then I cannot logically accept that God plans, ordains and governs everything in the sense that Calvin clearly meant it—as did Edwards and as do most spokesmen for "the new Calvinism" today.

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/rogereolson/2014/06/is-this-the-best-of-all-possible-worlds-what-i-would-think-if-i-were-a-calvinist/>

News

The 5th Sunday special collection will be taken up today. This contribution will support Manuelito Children's Home.

Please continue to pray for Billy Martin and Joy Gibson.

Barbara Eisenburg was taken to TMC for treatment of a scary heart symptom.

Esther, Nysha and Sara Atchley are traveling.

Mary Ritz is in Alpine.



Prayer List:

Bill Eisenberg, H.L. Boling, Mike and Sandy Cavazos, Nicolas and Annie Self, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.

JULY 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Singing Night	3	4 Independence Day	5
6	7 Kupala Night	8 Family Day	9	10	11	12
13	14 Cindy Waller birthday	15	16	17	18 Louella & Greg anniversary	19
20 Fellowship Meal	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Parents' Day Navy Day Jonda Gardner birthday	28 Kyle Cocke birthday	29	30	31		
		June 2014 S M T W Th F Sa 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30		August 2014 S M T W Th F Sa 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31		Calendars by Vertex42.com © 2013 Vertex42 LLC. Free to print.
		2014 Calendar		2015 Calendar		