

God promises to give us the necessary strength if we seek Him with our whole heart.

Man is not autonomous. Everything he does is part of God's plan. Yet man is not merely an inert substance that God moves about, but a creature with the power to make decisions and to attempt to act upon them. God holds us responsible for the decisions we make. Both elements are taught in Scripture. Both are vital to the Christian Life.

In our human wisdom we cannot see how these two aspects fit together. To our finite minds they seem to clash. The Arminian says, "Let us get around this by cutting down God's power, by saying that it is not God's decision but our goodness and wisdom that has led to our salvation." The hyper-Calvinist says, "We cannot do anything; we are merely inert pieces of flotsam that God moves in whatever direction He chooses". If the hyper-Calvinist were right God would be wicked to punish us for our sin, simply because He had made us sinners or had chosen not to give us the grace of salvation. Such views are explicitly ruled out by the statements of the Westminster Confession.

Both aspects are important and God knows exactly how they fit together. Despite our human inability to understand how this can be, we have a responsibility to accept both truths and to act accordingly. If we err on either side we do despite to the Word of God and injure the progress of His kingdom. When we find people erring in one of these regards there is a natural tendency to go to the opposite extreme. Instead we should insist on the truth of both aspects and give each its proper place.

After reading your letter I re-examined the NIV of John 6. It seems to me that this chapter clearly shows God's initiative in salvation. Verse 44 reads: "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him." Verse 63 says: "The Spirit gives life" and verse 65 declares that no one can come to Christ unless the Father has enabled him by means of this life that the Spirit gives. Thus regeneration precedes conversion. Faith is the first act of a redeemed soul.

Many aspects of the English language have changed greatly during the past three centuries. In the KJV, part of John 6:65 reads: "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." This makes no sense in today's English. If I