

LECTURE 9:
Is God the Author of Sin?—as *ordainer/disposer*

FOREORDINATION DOES NOT DESTROY HUMAN LIBERTY

- I. The objector's three options:
 - A. If God's decree destroys human freedom, it is either by means of (1) the decree itself, or (2) the certainty of the action decreed, or (3) the manner by which God guarantees that action
 - B. It is not in the decree itself
 - C. It is not in the certainty of the action
- II. So it would have to be in the manner God guarantees the action; and this is the question of God's providential relation to free actions in time and space.

HOW GOD PROVIDENTIALLY CONTROLS SINFUL ACTIONS

- I. Propositions to be avoided—the two extremes of...
 - A. First, the extreme of bare permission:
 - B. Secondly, the extreme of physical concursus:
 - C. What we must affirm, and where our affirmations must stop:
- II. There are two distinct but related points we need to understand: in what sense God “permissively *wills*” these sins and in what sense God “*actively occasions*” these sins:
 - A. First, in what way God permissively wills sinful actions:
 - 1. The distinction between passive and active permission.
 - 2. Now, from this concept of active permission comes another distinction for our overall explanation—i.e., between the intention of the sinner, as perpetrator, and the intention of God, as the permitter:
 - B. Secondly, the manner in which God *actively occasions* sinful actions:
- III. Explanation of texts which suggest that God directly causes sin:
 - A. Hardening texts
 - B. Sending evil spirits to incite evil:

QUESTIONS/OBJECTIONS

- I. Doesn't the doctrine of infallible occasioning reduce to a form of hard determinism?
- II. Doesn't the doctrine of infallible occasioning undermine James' statement that God does not tempt anyone?
- III. In permitting sin, isn't God complicit in what he could have prevented?