

Does God Choose You, or Do You Choose God?



**Exploring what the Bible actually says
about Predestination and Free Will.**

One Scripture, Two Radically Different Conclusions



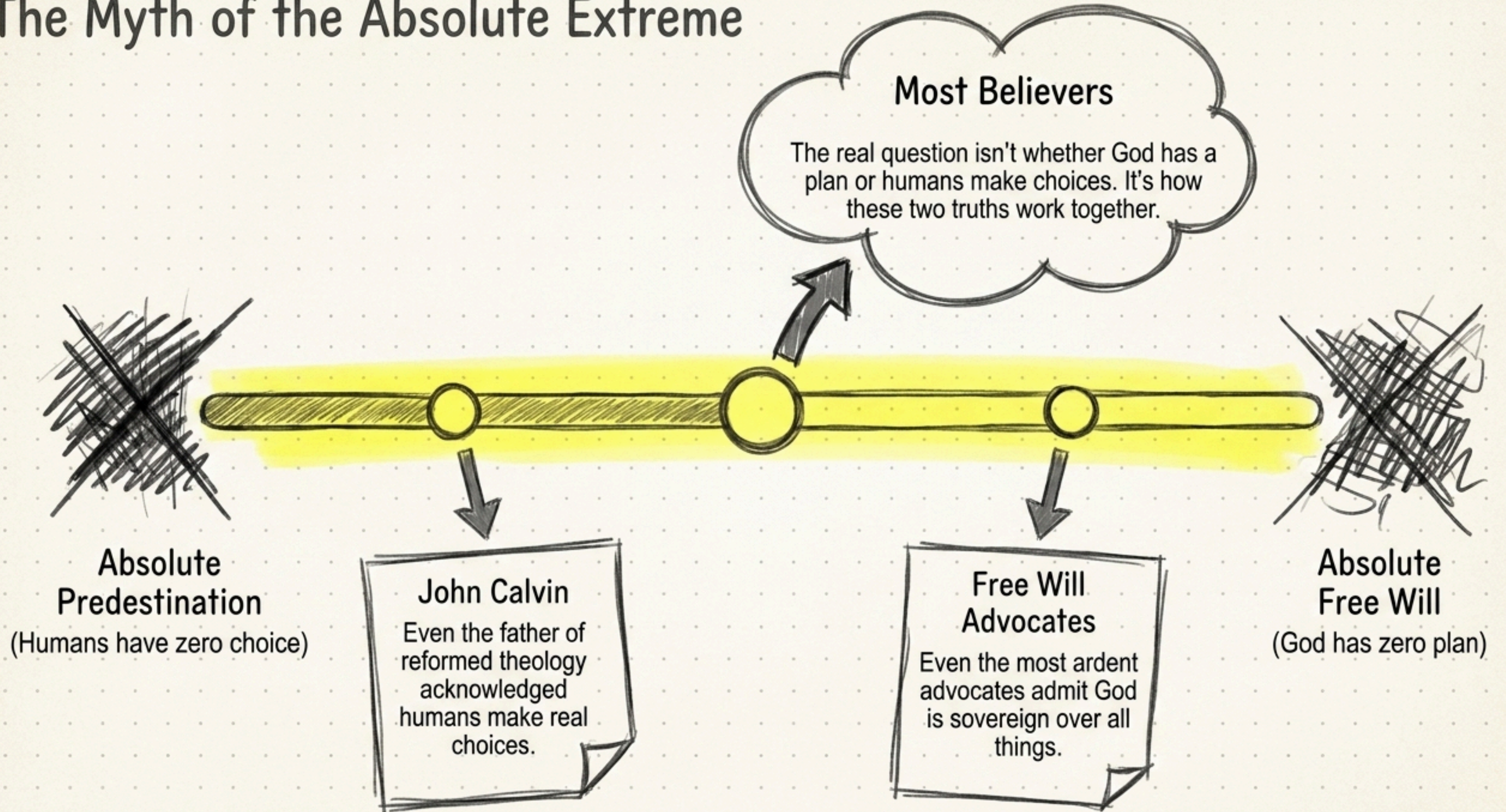
God chose you.
(Predestination)



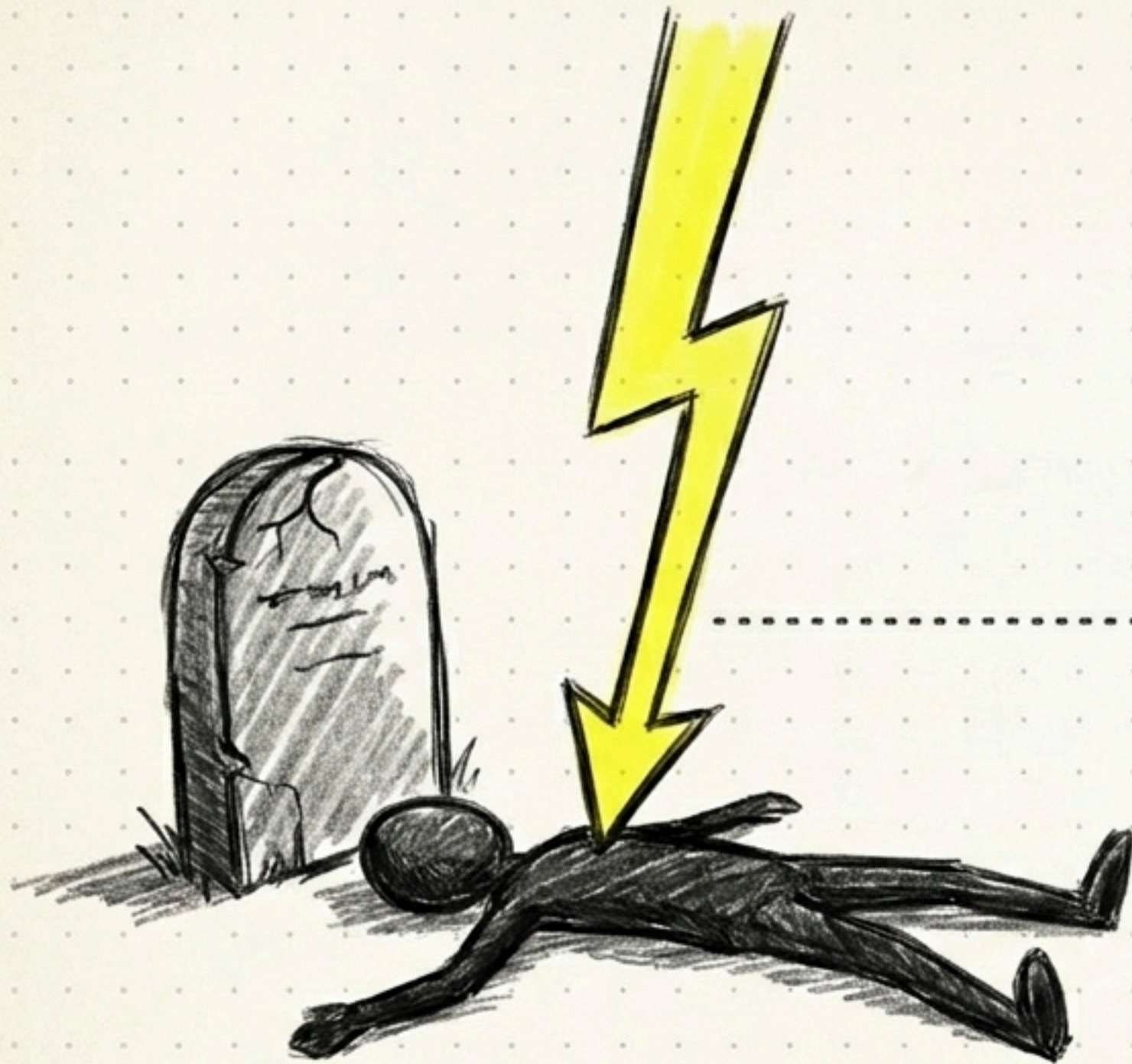
You chose God.
(Free Will)

For 2,000 years, this debate has sparked reformations and divided denominations. The **goal** is not to declare a **winner**, but to build understanding. Both sides use the exact same Bible to prove completely **opposite points**.

The Myth of the Absolute Extreme



The Case for Predestination



Definition: The belief that God, before the foundation of the world, actively selected certain **individuals** for salvation. This is not just foreknowledge—it is active determination.

Core Premise: Dead in Sin

Romans 3:10-11: There is no one righteous...
no one who seeks God.

Ephesians 2:1: Dead in transgressions and sins.

If humans are spiritually dead, they cannot choose spiritual life unless God first makes them alive.

(John 6:44: No one can come to me unless the Father... draws them.)

The Unbreakable Sequence of Romans 8



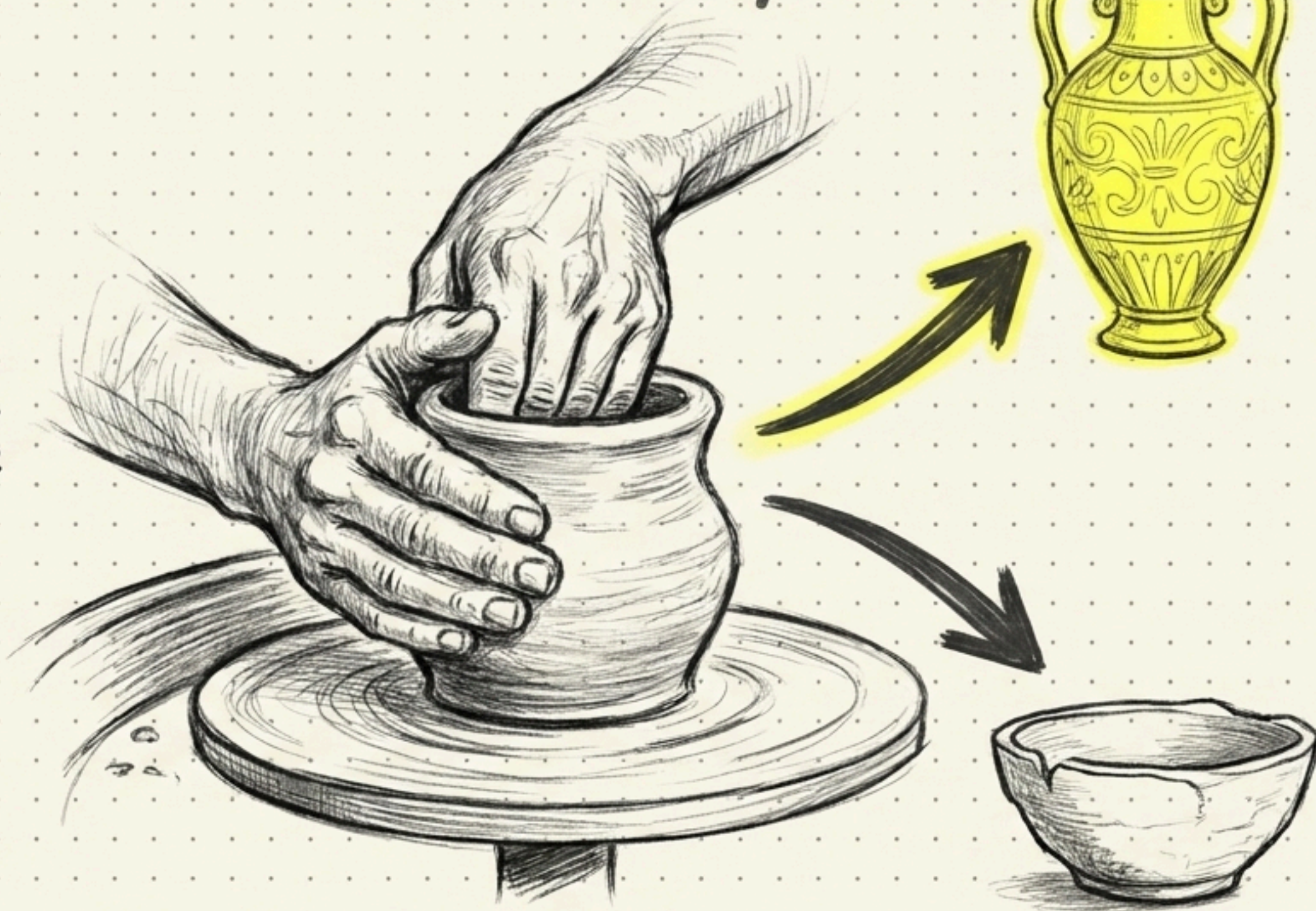
Notice the sequence. **Everyone** God **foreknew** makes it completely to **glorification**. The chain **does not** depend on human intervention to hold together. (Romans 8:29–30)

Ephesians 1:4-5: For he chose us in him before the creation of the world... This happened before humans even existed to make a choice.

The Divine Potter and the Clay

Romans 9:15-16

"I will have mercy on whom I have mercy... It does not therefore depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy."



Romans 9:21-22

"Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use?"

If salvation depends on human choice, humans ultimately determine their destiny. Predestination argues that God alone holds the rights of the Potter.

The Case for Free Will

Definition:

The belief that humans possess genuine ability to accept or reject God's offer of salvation. God extends grace to all, but each person must freely respond.

Core Premise: The Genuine Invitation

- **2 Peter 3:9:** The Lord is not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.
- **1 Timothy 2:3-4:** God wants all people to be saved.

The Greek word for wanting (boulomai) means to purpose or desire. If God genuinely desires everyone to be saved, how can active predestination of only a select few be true?



When Human Will Resists Divine Desire

Divine Desire

Ezekiel 18:23, 32: Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked?... I take no pleasure in the death of anyone... Repent and live."

If God's will cannot be resisted, what does this ongoing resistance in scripture actually mean?
Jesus wanted to, but they were not willing.

Human Resistance

Matthew 23:37: How often I have longed to gather your children together... and you were not willing."

Acts 7:51: You always resist the Holy Spirit.

The Logic of the Biblical Appeal



The Command to Choose

Joshua 24:15 - Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.

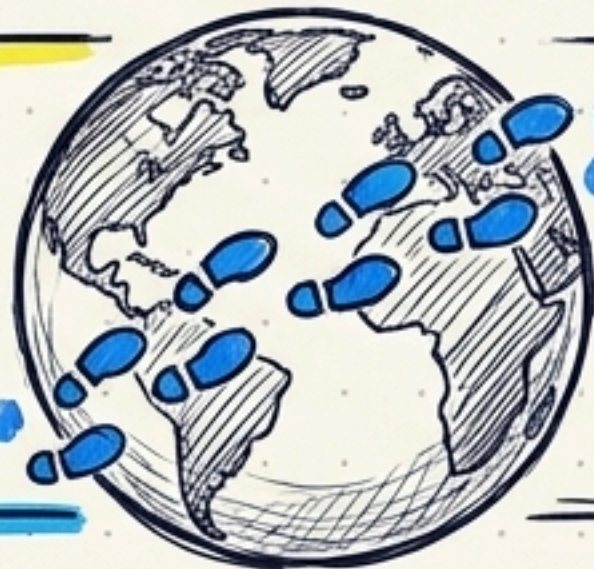
Why command choice if choice doesn't exist?



The Call to Reason

Isaiah 1:18 - Come now, let us reason together.

Reasoning implies genuine persuasion, not predetermination.

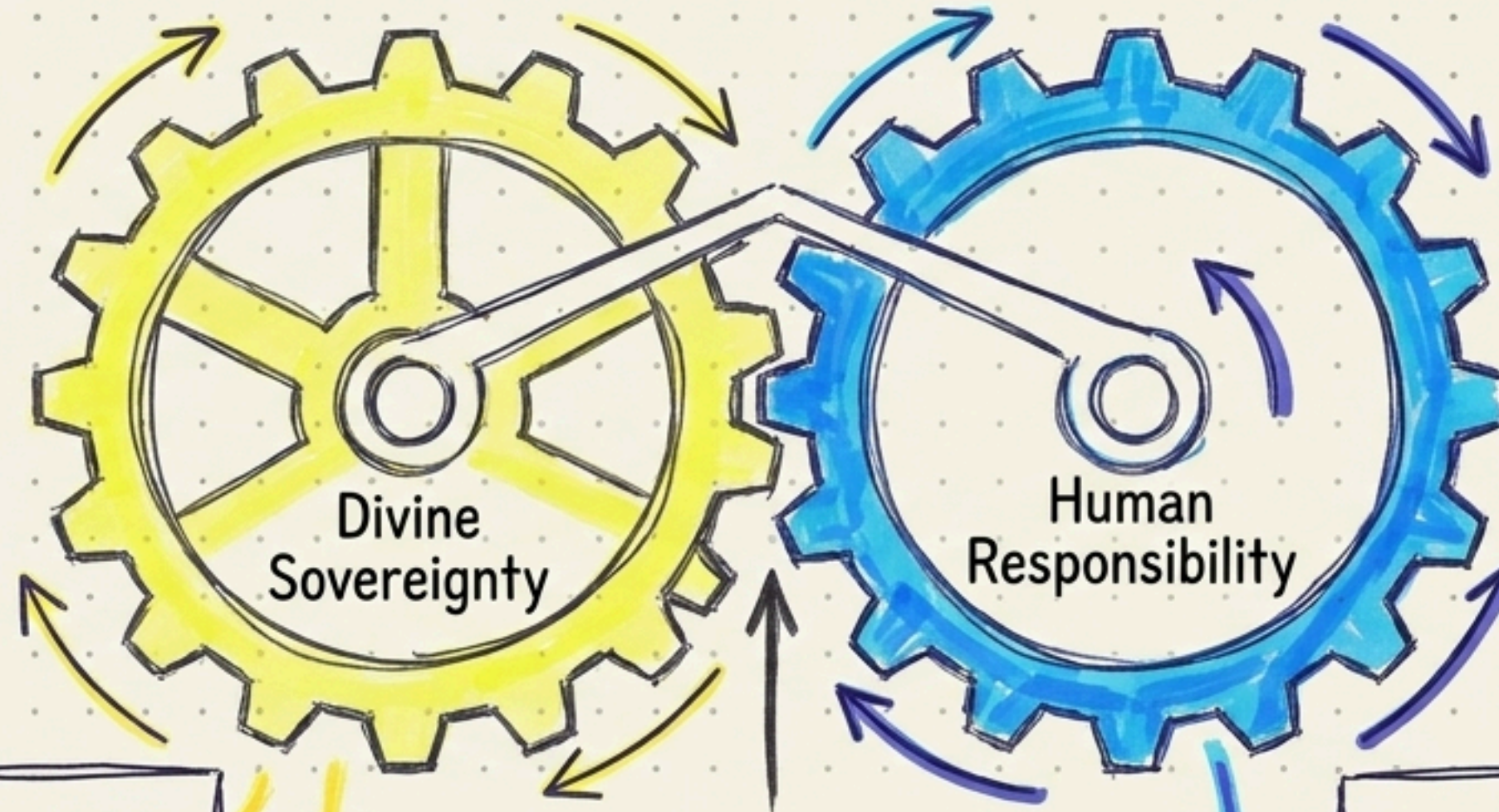


The Great Commission

Matthew 28:19 - Go and make disciples of all nations.

Why urgently preach if conversion is entirely predetermined?

The Paradox in Scripture



Acts 2:23

Jesus's death was by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge (Left Gear)
AND you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death (Right Gear).

Philippians 2:12-13

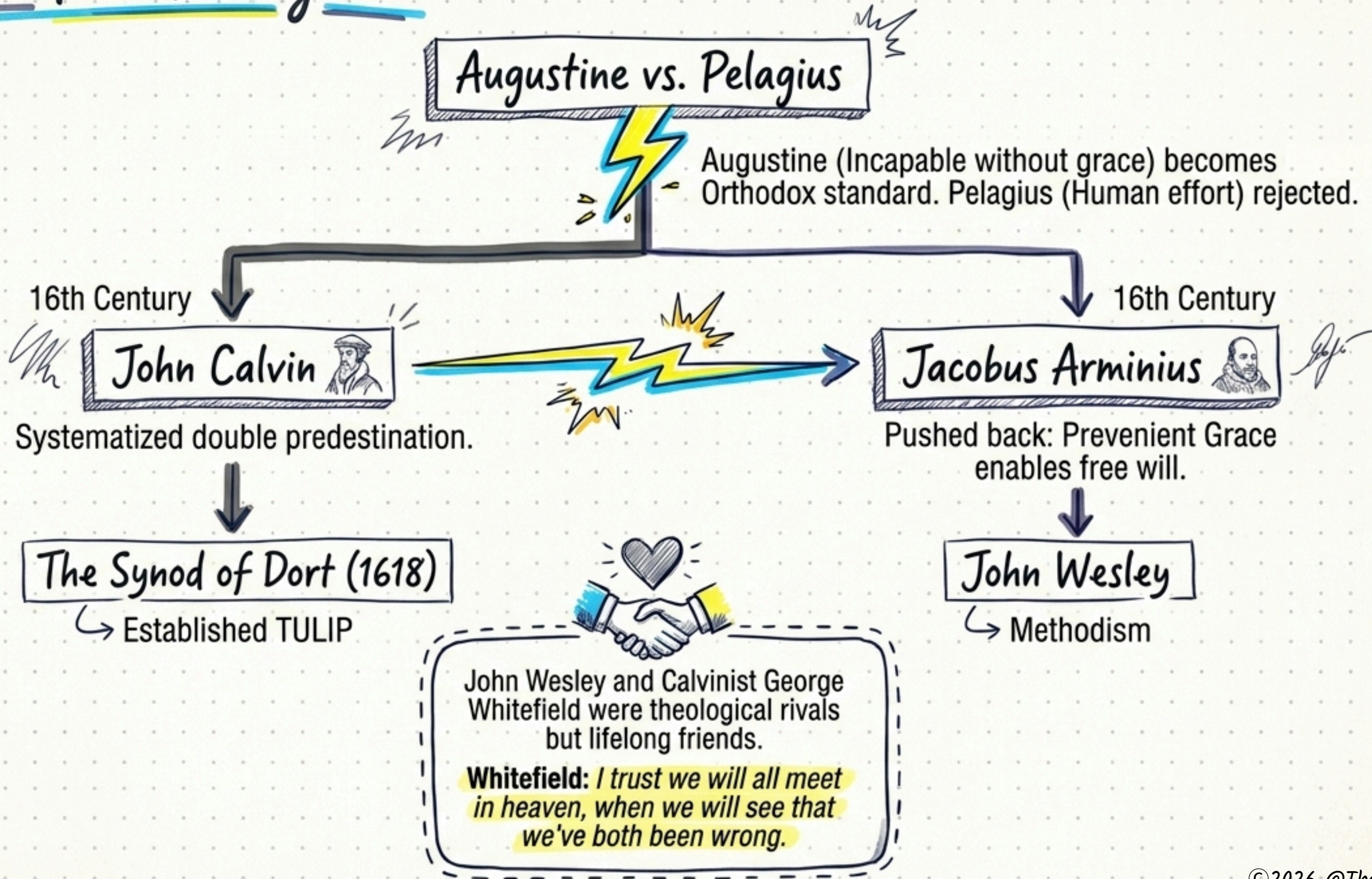
Work out your salvation with fear and trembling (Right Gear)
FOR it is God who works in you to will and to act (Left Gear).

Acts 13 vs Acts 15

All who were appointed for eternal life believed (Acts 13)
YET God made a choice... that the Gentiles might hear from my lips and believe (Acts 15).

Both gears are turning at the same time. The Bible doesn't try to resolve the paradox; it presents both simultaneously.

A 2,000-Year Family Tree



The Theological Diagnostic Matrix

Predestination Focus

Free Will Focus

Divine Attribute Emphasized

Absolute Sovereignty & Trustworthiness

Love, Desire, & Fairness

View of the Human Fall

Spiritually dead; requires active resurrection

Disabled but aided by Prevenient Grace

Primary Practical Benefit

Total Assurance; salvation is entirely God's work

Evangelistic Urgency; souls are genuinely at stake

The Core Theological Danger

Fatalism

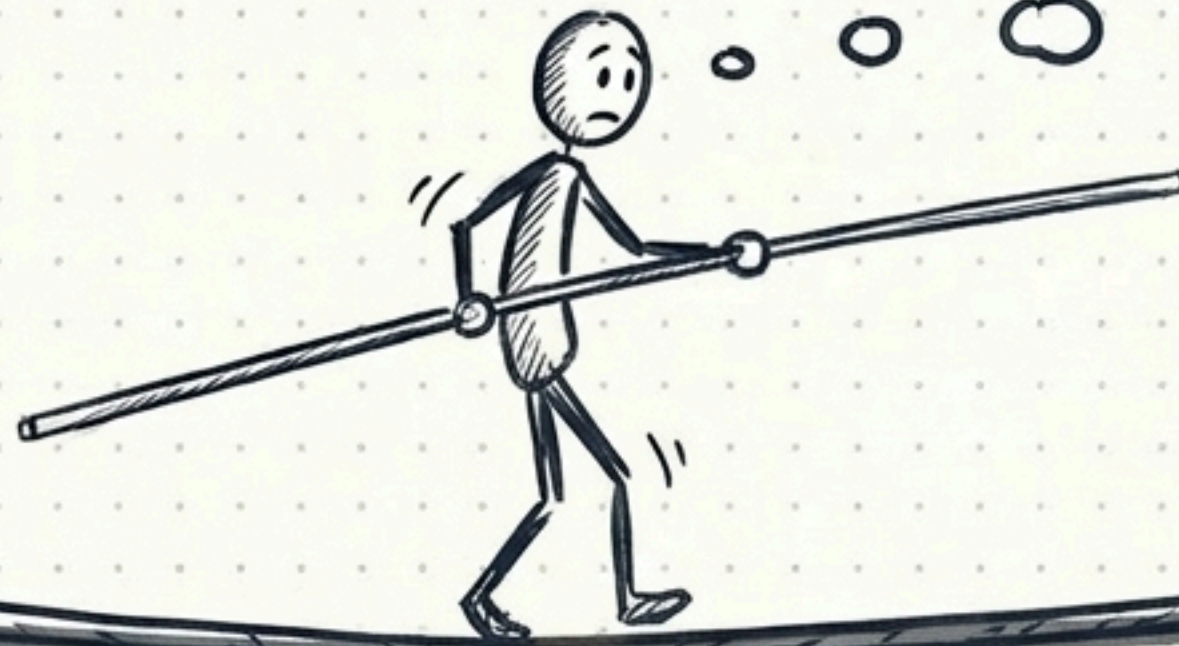
Anxiety

The Danger of Falling Off the Edge

The Healthy Tension

We work faithfully, and we trust God fully.

I give my **full human effort** while **trusting God completely** with the divine outcome.

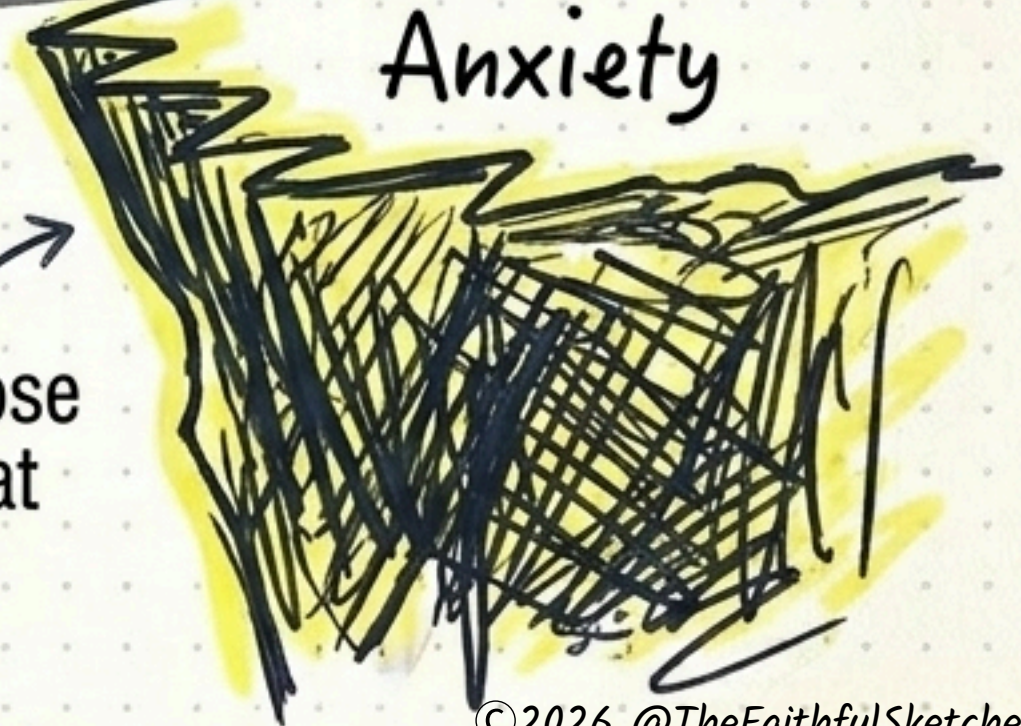


Fatalism



Why evangelize or pray if God has already decided?

Anxiety



Did I really choose correctly? What if I fall away?

Living with the Mystery



The Locked Chest (Deuteronomy 29:29)

“The secret things belong to the Lord our God.”

Note: The exact mechanics of how divine sovereignty and human choice work together is a secret thing. God is bigger than our systematic theologies.



The Open Book (Deuteronomy 29:29)

“But the things revealed belong to us.”

Note: Trust God’s sovereignty.
Take responsibility for choices.
Share the gospel urgently.

CS Lewis: We are faced with a wholly mysterious difficulty ... The best I can do is to tell you parables which will show you what this difficulty is like.

The gospel is not at stake in this debate. Jesus died for sinners. Faith in Him saves. That is the revealed truth.