

THE OPERATIONS OF GRACE AND FREE WILL

With few exceptions (Martin Luther comes to mind), theologians in the Christian tradition have maintained that their view of divine grace is compatible with human agency and free will. However, it is a rare occurrence in Christian theology to actually and consistently maintain a view that respects the autonomy of human agency in relationship to God. However, in LDS thought it is imperative that humans remain free to reject the salvation of God even if it is God's will to save them. It is important to see why even those who claim to maintain human agency in relation to divine grace fail in their attempts. It is also imperative to see why such genuine choice in relation to God is essential to the loving fellowship that God seeks to have with us. Because salvation entails an interpersonal relationship between us and God, it is impossible to realize without free agency, which genuinely leaves it up to us whether to respond to God's overtures of love and persuasion.

Grace and Free Will in Interpersonal Relations

Calvin maintained that God "foresees future events only by reason of the fact that he decreed that they take place, they vainly raise a quarrel over foreknowledge, when it is clear that all things take place rather by his determination and bidding."¹ The problem of free will that arises from