

## Providence vs Free Will

# Augustine vs Rowe

## Augustine:

1. In order to sin, we must *will to sin*.
2. Our will is by definition in our power.
3. It is contradictory to say, “I will to sin *and* I do not will to sin”.
4. Therefore, the sinner sins of their own free will.

## Rowe:

1. In order to sin, we must *will to will to sin*.
2. It is not contradictory to say “I do not will to will to sin, but I will to sin”.
3. Therefore, Augustine’s reasoning is invalid.

(Cf. Stump, “Augustine on Free Will” and the week 2 debate)

## Evodius's Problem in Rowe's Words

1. God has foreknowledge of all future events.
2. Hence, if a man is going to sin, God foreknows that he will sin.
3. Whatever God foreknows must necessarily happen.
4. Hence, if God foreknows that a man will sin, he must necessarily sin.
5. But if such a man must necessarily sin, there is no voluntary choice in his sinning.
6. Therefore, such a man does not have free will.

(Rowe, "Foreknowledge," 356–357)

### Rowe's analysis:

- ▶ (3) puts the necessity either on the whole proposition or on the the event itself
- ▶ (5) assumes the latter, but that version is not accepted by classical theology
- ▶ Thus, Evodius's argument is invalid.

(Rowe, "Foreknowledge," 361–362)

## Boethius's Rebuttal of Rowe in Defence of Evodius

“ What difference, then, does it make that those things are not necessary, when the condition of God's knowledge will in all ways result in the equivalent of necessity?

*(Consolation 5p6 §33) ”*

## Degrees of Freedom (*Consolation* 5p2)

1. “Heavenly and divine creatures command perceptive judgement, uncorrupted will, and the power to achieve what they desire” (§7)
2. Human souls are “necessarily free when they devote themselves to the vision of the divine mind” (§8)
3. Human souls when descended to the physical world thereby restrict their freedom (§8)
4. Human souls are “less free still when they are bound fast in earthly limbs” (§8)
5. Human souls given to vices are the least free (§9)

## A Hierarchy of Modes of Perception (*Consolation* 5p5)



## God and Time (*Consolation* 5p6)

“ Anything subject to a status within time [...] is not yet such as can be rightly accounted eternal; for it does not grasp and embrace at the one moment the whole extent of its life, even if that life is without end. [...] So what does rightly claim the title of eternal is that which grasps and possesses simultaneously the entire fullness of life without end [... T]he unending course of fleeting time it must possess as the here and now. ”

“ [God's] knowledge too transcends all movement in time. ”

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