

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Christology, Session 4, Patristic Christology, Part 3, Apollinarianism, Nestorianism

Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Peterson, Christology, Session 4, Patristic Christology, Part 3, Apollinarianism, Nestorianism, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Robert Peterson's lecture, "Election," explores the historical and systematic theology surrounding God's choosing of individuals for salvation. The session begins with a prayer emphasizing God's sovereign grace in salvation. **Peterson traces the development of this doctrine by examining key figures like Augustine and Pelagius in the early church, followed by Luther, Calvin, Arminius, and Spurgeon.** The lecture highlights the contrasting views of monergism (God alone saves) and synergism (God and humanity cooperate), particularly in the context of Augustine's debate with Pelagius over original sin and free will. **The discussion extends to the Reformation, contrasting Luther's strong Augustinian perspective with Erasmus's and later Melanchthon's views, before concluding with a preview of debates in the Dutch church.** Ultimately, the source provides an overview of differing theological perspectives on divine election throughout Christian history.

2. 30 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Peterson, Christology, Session 4 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Theology → Theology, Peterson → Christology).



Peterson_Christology_Session 04.mp3

3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Salvation, Session 4, Patristic Christology, Part 3, Apollinarianism, Nestorianism

Briefing Document: The Doctrine of Election - Historical Theology

Overview: This briefing document summarizes the main themes and important ideas presented by Dr. Robert Peterson in Session 4 of his lectures on salvation, focusing on the doctrine of election. The session primarily delves into the historical theology of election, tracing its development through key figures and theological movements, starting with Augustine and Pelagius.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. Introduction to Election and Historical Theology:

- The session begins with a prayer acknowledging God's sovereign grace in election, drawing, saving, keeping, and leading believers home.
- The lecture then moves to the doctrine of election, specifically focusing on historical theology as the initial subtopic.
- Peterson outlines the key figures to be studied: Augustine and Pelagius, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Arminius and the Synod of Dort, and Charles Spurgeon and the Hyper-Calvinists. He emphasizes the "amazing story" of these debates.
- He defines election as "God choosing people for salvation."

1. Augustine and Pelagius: The Foundational Debate:

- The historical roots of predestination debates are traced back to Augustine of Hippo (354-430) and the British moralist Pelagius.
- Peterson recounts Augustine's conversion experience, highlighting the influence of his mother Monica's prayers and his reading of Romans 13:14 after hearing children chanting "tole lege, take up and read."
- Augustine's impact on Christian theology is emphasized, with both Luther and Calvin crediting him for the Reformation. Calvin is quoted as saying, "I could get all of my teaching from the writings of Augustine." B.B. Warfield's statement regarding the Reformation as a revival of Augustinian teachings on predestination and grace is also noted.

- Augustine's background, including his immersion in Manichaeism and Neoplatonism, and the influence of Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, in leading him to Paul's letters, are discussed.
- The introduction of the concept of **monergism** (God working alone in salvation) through Augustine is highlighted, contrasted with **synergism** (God and man working together). Peterson mentions his book *Why I Am Not an Arminian* as relevant to this distinction.

1. **Theological Taxonomy: Monergism vs. Synergism:**

- Peterson presents a taxonomy developed by his co-author Michael Williams, positioning Pelagianism as **humanistic monergism** (man alone saves) and Augustinianism/Calvinism as **divine monergism** (God alone saves).
- He explains that both Augustine and Calvin believed that even faith and repentance, necessary for salvation, are gifts from God due to humanity's spiritual deadness.
- Between these two extremes lie **semi-Pelagianism** and **semi-Augustinianism**, both forms of synergism where God and humans cooperate in salvation.
- Peterson clarifies that being a semi-Augustinian does not preclude being a true believer (e.g., Roman Catholicism, best Arminian positions). He also notes that some believers might hold semi-Pelagian views (e.g., Norman Geisler, Clark Pinnock, Charles Finney).

1. **Finney's Illustration of Salvation:**

- Charles Finney's analogy of a person falling into the Niagara River is used to illustrate the different viewpoints:
- **Pelagianism:** The person can swim out on their own (human monergism).
- **Semi-Pelagianism:** The swimmer must make the first move ("God, save me!").
- **Semi-Augustinianism:** God makes the first move (prevenient grace), but the sinner must respond.
- **Augustinianism/Calvinism:** God alone works; the person is spiritually dead, and God rescues them and gives them faith (divine monergism).

1. Augustine's Anti-Pelagian Writings and Doctrine of Grace:

- Pelagius' concern for Christian morality and his offense at Augustine's prayer ("grant what you command and command what you will") are presented as the context for his opposition to Augustine's theology. Pelagius believed Augustine's teaching fostered sin.
- Peterson reiterates that Roman Catholicism and various Methodist denominations are generally not Pelagian but lean towards semi-Augustinianism.
- Augustine's doctrine of sin and grace is described as growing out of his conversion experience and his deep sense of sinfulness. He formulated a "monergistic doctrine of grace in which salvation was all of God's doing and none of humans doing."
- Peterson lists Augustine's anti-Pelagian writings in chronological order, highlighting their systematic biblical exposition.
- Augustine's view of **free will** as merely the ability to do what one wills according to a fallen nature, not moral freedom to choose God, is explained. He taught **total inability** of unsaved people to contribute to their salvation, including the inability to believe without God's grace.
- While acknowledging this view, Peterson clarifies he is not saying non-Augustinians/Calvinists don't believe in saving grace. He contrasts Calvinist emphasis on the "inability of sinners" with Arminian emphasis on "gracious ability" due to **prevenient grace**.
- The Wesleyan doctrine of universal prevenient grace is described as a "brilliant move" that enables all to believe, even though technically fallen. Peterson discusses Brian Shelton's book on prevenient grace, acknowledging its strengths but expressing his own biblical reservations.
- Peterson notes that some contemporary Calvinist philosophers have adopted the opposing view of free will, a point of disagreement for him.

1. Augustine's Doctrine of Efficacious Grace and Election:

- Augustine taught that salvation is a gift of God's **efficacious** or **effective grace**, which saves sinners and gives them repentance and faith.
- He believed God's prevenient grace is **particular** and **effective**, not universal.

- Regarding why some receive grace and others do not, Augustine attributed it to "the secret judgments of God," referring to **absolute divine election**: "Before creation, God chose some for eternal life and others for eternal punishment."
- Peterson affirms his agreement with this concept but notes he would express it differently. He explains his understanding of God giving grace to some from the "massa damnata" while passing over others, allowing them to receive the judgment they deserve.
- He emphasizes that predestination and grace are divine matters beyond human probing.
- He recounts an anecdote about Calvin comforting a woman fearful of not being elect, advising her to look to Christ as the "mirror of the election." Belief in Christ, enabled by God, is presented as evidence of being chosen.

1. **Pelagius' Counter Theology:**

- Foundational to Pelagius' theology is the idea that human responsibility assumes human ability. He is quoted as believing "God does not command anything which we're not able to do," a view Peterson refutes by citing biblical commands for perfection and holiness, arguing these serve to humble us and highlight our need for God's grace.
- Pelagius believed that since God commands belief in the gospel, humans must have the ability to believe. Peterson suggests testing theology by the Bible instead of human logic.
- Pelagius denied Augustine's view of **original sin**, believing Adam's sin only sets a poor example. Peterson presents his understanding of Romans 5:12-19, where both actual sin and the sin of Adam contribute to condemnation. Pelagius believed all humans are free to choose good or evil without inclination towards evil ("we are all our own Adam"). This is identified as **human monergism**.
- Pelagius' understanding of **grace** is contrasted with Augustine's. For Pelagius, grace includes free will, God's commandments, and Jesus' example, not God's powerful saving love.
- Pelagius' doctrine of **election** centered on God's **foreknowledge** of human faith or unbelief: "to predestine is the same as to foreknow." He believed God chose those he foresaw would believe.

- Greg Allison's clarification of Pelagius' interpretation of Romans 9:15 is included, where Pelagius understands God showing mercy to those "whom I have foreknown will be able to deserve compassion," highlighting a **merit theology**.

1. **The Outcome of the Augustine-Pelagius Debate and the Rise of Semi-Augustinianism:**

- The theological collision between Augustine and Pelagius lasted 20 years.
- The church ultimately sided with Augustine, condemning Pelagius' views at the ecumenical Council of Ephesus in 431.
- However, the Roman Catholic Church eventually adopted **semi-Augustinianism**. Peterson notes that folk theology can sometimes deviate towards semi-Pelagianism or even Pelagianism.
- He shares an anecdote of Methodist students who found Reformed teaching helpful in moving from semi-Pelagianism to semi-Augustinianism, expressing concern for fellow Methodists holding more semi-Pelagian views.

1. **Martin Luther and the Bondage of the Will:**

- Martin Luther (1483-1546), an Augustinian monk and Protestant Reformer, is introduced as a key figure who defended the free grace of God in justification by emphasizing God's election of sinners under the bondage of the will.
- His break with the Dutch humanist Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) over the freedom of the will in 1524 is highlighted. While Erasmus welcomed Luther's critique of Roman abuses, he disagreed on this theological point.
- Luther's strong critique of Erasmus' book on free will is mentioned, with Luther viewing it as destructive to Christian faith. Erasmus' semi-Pelagian view of a weakened but not extinguished free will is noted.
- Peterson acknowledges Luther's strength and courage in opposing the established church but also points out his tendency to label differing views as Pelagian without nuance.
- Luther's response, *On the Bondage of the Will*, a direct attack on Erasmus, is mentioned. Luther agreed with the existence of absolute free will but insisted only God possesses it. He also accepted Augustine's doctrine of original sin and the bound human will.

- Luther's juxtaposition of the **theology of glory** (initially described as synergism, later corrected to human monergism) with the **theology of the cross** (monergism) is explained. The theology of glory exalts human accomplishment, while the theology of the cross focuses on Christ and God's grace, highlighting human helplessness.
- Election is presented by Luther as demonstrating God's great grace and human inability.

1. **Melanchthon's Shift Towards Synergism:**

- Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), Luther's "brilliant disciple," is noted for diluting Luther's monergistic view of election, shifting towards a "gracious synergism."
- In his *Loci Communes*, Melanchthon taught that salvation has three causes: Scripture, the Holy Spirit, and free will, a departure from Luther's teaching.
- Melanchthon's answer to why one person believes and another does not ("the reason is in us") is highlighted as a key difference.

1. **Looking Ahead:**

- The lecture concludes by stating that the next session will cover John Calvin and the debates in the Dutch church leading to the five points of Arminianism and Calvinism.

Quotes:

- "God gives the gifts." (Peterson's overused saying)
- "...grant what you command and command what you will..." (Augustine's prayer that offended Pelagius)
- "I could get all of my teaching from the writings of Augustine." (Calvin on Augustine)
- "The Reformation was a revival of the Augustinian teachings of predestination and grace against the Augustinian teachings of the church and sacraments." (B.B. Warfield)
- "...the reason why one person is assigned, assisted by grace and another is not helped must be referred to the secret judgments of God." (Augustine on election)
- "Christ is the mirror of the election." (Calvin's advice on understanding election)

- "God does not command anything which we're not able to do." (Pelagius' principle, refuted by Peterson)
- "to predestine is the same as to foreknow." (Pelagius' view of predestination)
- "I will have mercy on him whom I have foreknown will be able to deserve compassion." (Pelagius' interpretation of Romans 9:15)

Conclusion:

Dr. Peterson's Session 4 provides a rich historical overview of the doctrine of election, focusing on the pivotal debates between Augustine and Pelagius and their enduring influence. The session clearly articulates the distinction between monergistic and synergistic views of salvation, highlighting the key theological contributions of Augustine, the challenges posed by Pelagius, and the later nuances introduced by figures like Melancthon. The groundwork is laid for understanding the subsequent development of these ideas in the teachings of Calvin and the Arminian-Calvinist debates.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, Salvation, Session 4, Patristic Christology, Part 3, Apollinarianism, Nestorianism

Study Guide: The Doctrine of Election

Key Concepts and Figures

- **Election:** God's sovereign choice of individuals for salvation.
- **Historical Theology:** Examining how the understanding of election has developed throughout church history.
- **Systematic Theology:** Organizing and understanding the doctrine of election within a coherent theological framework.
- **Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD):** North African bishop whose conversion and writings greatly influenced Western theology, particularly on grace, sin, and predestination.
- **Pelagius (late 4th - early 5th century AD):** British moralist who opposed Augustine's view of original sin and emphasized human free will in salvation.
- **Monergism:** The belief that God alone works to bring about salvation.
- **Synergism:** The belief that God and humanity cooperate in the process of salvation.
- **Humanistic Monergism (Pelagianism):** The belief that humanity alone initiates and achieves salvation.
- **Divine Monergism (Augustinianism/Calvinism):** The belief that God alone initiates and effectively accomplishes salvation.
- **Semi-Pelagianism:** The belief that humanity initiates salvation and God completes it.
- **Semi-Augustinianism:** The belief that God initiates salvation through prevenient grace, and humanity freely responds.
- **Prevenient Grace:** God's grace that goes before conversion, enabling a person to respond to the gospel.
- **Total Inability:** The Calvinistic doctrine that unregenerate humanity is so corrupted by sin that they are unable to believe in God or contribute to their salvation apart from God's grace.

- **Gracious Ability:** The Arminian/Wesleyan doctrine that God's prevenient grace overcomes the effects of original sin, enabling all people to respond to the gospel.
- **Martin Luther (1483-1546):** German theologian and key figure in the Protestant Reformation who emphasized God's sovereign grace in salvation and the bondage of the will.
- **Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536):** Dutch humanist who initially supported Luther's critiques but disagreed with his doctrine of the bondage of the will.
- **Theology of Glory:** (According to Luther's critique of synergism) An approach to theology that emphasizes human ability and achievement in salvation.
- **Theology of the Cross:** (According to Luther) An approach to theology that emphasizes human helplessness and God's saving work through the crucified Christ.
- **Philip Melancthon (1497-1560):** Luther's close associate and successor who later shifted towards a synergistic view of salvation.
- **John Calvin (1509-1564):** Influential theologian of the Protestant Reformation who further developed Augustine's doctrines of grace and predestination.
- **Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892):** Prominent Calvinistic Baptist preacher in 19th-century London.
- **Hyper-Calvinism:** A strict form of Calvinism that often limits the offer of the gospel or denies the duty of evangelism.
- **Synod of Dort (1618-1619):** A synod of the Dutch Reformed Church that formulated the Canons of Dort, which affirmed the Calvinistic understanding of predestination and election in response to Arminianism.
- **Arminius (Jacobus Arminius) (1559-1609):** Dutch theologian who challenged the strict Calvinistic doctrines of predestination, leading to the development of Arminianism.

Short-Answer Quiz

1. Describe Augustine's conversion experience as recounted in the lecture. What key event and Bible verse played a significant role?

2. Explain the fundamental difference between monergism and synergism in the context of salvation. Provide one historical figure associated with each view as discussed in the lecture.
3. According to the lecture, how did Pelagius's view of human ability influence his understanding of God's commands? What was Augustine's counter-argument?
4. Summarize Augustine's doctrine of original sin as presented in the lecture. How did Pelagius's view on the impact of Adam's sin differ?
5. Explain Pelagius's understanding of divine election. What did he believe was the basis upon which God chose individuals for salvation?
6. How did Martin Luther initially agree with Erasmus, and on what crucial theological point did they strongly disagree? What book did Luther write in response to Erasmus?
7. Contrast Luther's "theology of glory" with his "theology of the cross" in relation to human involvement in salvation. Which does Luther advocate?
8. According to the lecture, what was Philip Melanchthon's view on the causes of salvation, and how did it differ from Luther's?
9. Explain the concept of "prevenient grace" as it relates to the semi-Augustinian understanding of salvation. Whose theology is most closely associated with this concept?
10. How did Calvin address the concerns of the woman who was fearful about whether she was elect? What image did he use to explain the proper way to understand election?

Short-Answer Quiz Answer Key

1. Augustine's conversion occurred in a garden when he heard children playing a game, chanting "take up and read." He picked up a Bible and his eyes fell on Romans 13:13-14, which spoke directly to his sinful lifestyle, leading to his conviction.
2. Monergism is the belief that God alone works to bring about salvation (e.g., Augustine, Calvin), while synergism is the belief that God and humanity cooperate in the process (e.g., semi-Pelagians, semi-Augustinians).
3. Pelagius believed that God would not command something humans were unable to do; therefore, since God commands belief, humans must have the inherent

ability to believe. Augustine argued that God's commands reveal our inability and our need for His enabling grace.

4. Augustine taught that all of Adam's descendants inherited both guilt and corruption from his original sin. Pelagius believed that Adam's sin only set a bad example for humanity, and each person has the free ability to choose good or evil independently.
5. Pelagius believed that God's election was based on His foreknowledge of who would believe. In his view, God chose those whom He foresaw would respond in faith.
6. Luther initially agreed with Erasmus's critique of Roman Catholic abuses, such as the selling of indulgences. However, they strongly disagreed on the freedom of the will, with Luther arguing for the bondage of the will in his book *On the Bondage of the Will*.
7. Luther's "theology of glory" (which he associated with synergism) emphasizes human ability and contribution to salvation, leading to pride. His "theology of the cross" (associated with monergism) focuses on Christ's sacrifice and humanity's utter helplessness, giving God all the glory.
8. Melancthon taught that there were three causes of salvation: Scripture, the Holy Spirit, and free will, indicating a synergistic view. This differed from Luther's monergistic emphasis on God's sole work in salvation due to the bondage of the human will.
9. Prevenient grace, associated with semi-Augustinianism (and notably John Wesley), is the grace of God that precedes conversion, overcoming the effects of original sin and enabling individuals to freely respond to God's offer of salvation.
10. Calvin told the woman that we should not try to understand election by probing God's secret councils before creation, but rather by looking to Christ as the "mirror of election." If she believed in Christ, she was chosen.

Essay Format Questions

1. Analyze the key differences between Augustine's and Pelagius's views on human nature, free will, and the role of grace in salvation. Discuss the lasting impact of their debate on Christian theology.

2. Compare and contrast the concepts of monergism and synergism as presented in the lecture, using historical figures like Augustine, Pelagius, and Luther to illustrate each perspective. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each view.
3. Explain the development of the doctrine of election from Augustine to Luther. How did Luther's understanding of election relate to his broader theological concerns, particularly his doctrine of justification by faith alone?
4. Discuss the significance of the concept of "prevenient grace" in the theological landscape between strict monergism and Pelagianism. How does it attempt to reconcile divine initiative and human responsibility in salvation?
5. Examine the practical implications of different views on election for evangelism, assurance of salvation, and the understanding of God's character. How might a monergistic perspective and a synergistic perspective lead to different approaches in these areas?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Election:** God's sovereign act of choosing individuals or a people for a specific purpose, particularly salvation.
- **Predestination:** God's foreordination of all things that will come to pass, including the eternal destiny of individuals.
- **Sovereign Grace:** God's grace that is freely and powerfully given according to His own will and purpose.
- **Original Sin:** The state of sin and corruption inherited by all humanity as a consequence of Adam's disobedience.
- **Free Will:** The capacity of humans to make choices and act independently. The theological understanding of the extent and nature of this capacity is debated.
- **Grace:** God's unmerited favor and love extended to humanity.
- **Justification:** God's act of declaring a sinner righteous in His sight through faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Repentance:** A sincere turning away from sin and toward God.
- **Faith:** Trust in and reliance upon God, particularly in Jesus Christ for salvation.
- **Salvation:** God's deliverance of humanity from sin and its consequences through faith in Jesus Christ.

- **Theology:** The systematic study of the nature of God and religious beliefs.
- **Exegesis:** The critical interpretation and explanation of a text, especially of scripture.
- **Systematic Theology:** A discipline of theology that formulates an orderly, rational, and coherent account of the doctrines of the Christian faith.
- **Historical Theology:** A branch of theology that studies the development of Christian doctrines throughout history.
- **Moralism:** An emphasis on moral behavior as the primary indicator of righteousness or the means to achieve salvation.
- **Humanism:** A philosophical stance that emphasizes the value and agency of human beings, often prioritizing human reason and ethics.
- **Determinism:** The philosophical belief that all events, including human actions, are causally determined by prior events.
- **Loci Communes:** Latin for "commonplaces," a type of theological textbook that organizes doctrines under specific topics.
- **Efficacious Grace:** Grace that inevitably produces its intended effect; in salvation, grace that irresistibly leads to regeneration and conversion.
- **Universal Grace (Common Grace):** God's grace that is extended to all humanity, regardless of their response, often seen in the provision of earthly blessings and the restraint of sin.
- **Particular Grace:** God's saving grace that is specifically directed toward and effective in the lives of the elect.
- **Massa Damnata:** Latin for "damned mass," referring to the entirety of fallen humanity under the judgment of God.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Salvation, Salvation, Session 4, Patristic Christology, Part 3, Apollinarianism, Nestorianism, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on Election (Based on Dr. Peterson's Session 4)

1. What is the doctrine of election as discussed in this lecture? The doctrine of election, as presented here, refers to God's act of choosing certain individuals for salvation. This is understood as an act of God's sovereign grace, preceding any actions or merits of the individuals chosen. The lecture traces the historical understanding of this doctrine through key figures in Christian theology.

2. Who were Augustine and Pelagius, and why are they important in the history of the doctrine of election? Augustine of Hippo (4th-5th century) and Pelagius (4th-5th century) were pivotal figures who held contrasting views on grace, free will, and salvation, laying the groundwork for subsequent debates on predestination and election. Augustine, influenced by his own conversion experience and his reading of Paul's letters, developed a monergistic view where salvation is entirely God's work, including the gift of faith. Pelagius, concerned with Christian morality, emphasized human free will and responsibility, suggesting that individuals have the inherent ability to obey God's commands and that grace primarily consists of free will, God's law, and Jesus' example. Their disagreement sparked a debate that has shaped Christian theology ever since.

3. What is the difference between monergism and synergism in the context of salvation? Monergism is the theological view that God is the sole actor in salvation. It posits that salvation is entirely God's work, from beginning to end, including the individual's faith and repentance, which are seen as gifts from God. Synergism, on the other hand, is the view that salvation involves the cooperation of both God and the individual. While God's grace is necessary, the individual must also exercise their free will to accept or cooperate with that grace for salvation to occur.

4. How did Augustine's view on free will and original sin influence his understanding of election? Augustine believed that as a result of the fall of Adam, humanity inherited both guilt and a corrupted nature, leading to a state of total inability to save oneself or even to will to turn to God. He argued that free will, after the fall, is merely the ability to act according to our sinful nature, not a moral freedom to choose God. Consequently, Augustine taught that salvation must be entirely the work of God's efficacious grace, which not only enables but also effectually brings about the salvation of the elect, whom God sovereignly chose before creation.

5. How did Pelagius' understanding of grace and free will differ from Augustine's, and how did this affect his view of election? Pelagius believed that humans retain the inherent ability to choose good or evil and to respond to God's commands. For him, grace was not an internal, efficacious work of God but rather included free will itself, God's commandments which imply human ability to obey, and the example of Jesus. Consequently, Pelagius understood election based on God's foreknowledge of who would freely choose to believe and live according to God's standards. God chooses those whom He foresees will exercise their free will to have faith.

6. What are semi-Pelagianism and semi-Augustinianism, and how do they relate to the views of Augustine and Pelagius? Semi-Pelagianism and semi-Augustinianism are intermediate positions between the monergism of Augustine and the humanistic monergism of Pelagius. Semi-Pelagianism generally holds that while humanity is weakened by the fall, individuals still possess the initial capacity to turn to God or at least desire salvation, with God then providing the necessary grace. Semi-Augustinianism, often associated with Arminianism and Roman Catholicism, teaches that God's grace takes the initiative (prevenient grace) to enable human free will to respond to God in faith and cooperate in salvation.

7. How did Martin Luther engage with the ideas of Augustine and Erasmus on the topic of free will and its relation to election? Martin Luther, an Augustinian monk, strongly affirmed Augustine's doctrine of the bondage of the will and God's monergistic work in salvation. He engaged in a significant debate with the humanist scholar Erasmus, who argued for a weakened but not extinguished free will that could cooperate with God's grace. Luther, in his work "On the Bondage of the Will," argued that only God possesses absolute free will and that human will is bound by sin, incapable of turning to God without God's prior, efficacious grace. He saw this understanding as crucial for upholding the gospel of grace and God's sovereignty in election.

8. What is the significance of the distinction between the "theology of glory" and the "theology of the cross" in relation to the doctrine of election? Luther contrasted the "theology of glory" with the "theology of the cross." The theology of glory, which he associated with synergism and human pride, exalts human ability and contribution in salvation. In contrast, the theology of the cross emphasizes human helplessness and God's saving work through the crucified Christ. In the context of election, the theology of the cross underscores that God's choice is not based on any human merit or ability but solely on His gracious will. Election, therefore, highlights God's great grace and humanity's utter inability to save themselves, focusing attention on Christ's sacrifice as the foundation of salvation.