

Can God Do Anything He Wants? by Gene McCoy

Some contend that God can do anything He desires, even if it is contrary to what He revealed in the Bible. Contrary to fact, they think they are honoring God's sovereignty by that assertion.

The context in which this discussion recently surfaced related to the terms of pardon. Expressed was the idea that God can save whomever He wishes on whatever terms He determines. This view reveals a flawed understanding of divine sovereignty.

Inherent in sovereignty is authority and rule. God's ownership, power and lordship are absolute. But that also applies to His self-imposed limitations. For example, He limited Himself by creating man with free will. **God exercised His limitless freedom by limiting His freedom.**

If God can save *anyone* upon any basis, it follows that He can (actually **must**) likewise save *everyone*, which is consistent with His nature of not showing partiality (Acts 10:34). But this would clearly violate His very nature of holiness, justice, faithfulness to His word, etc. One of God's self-imposed limitations is that He cannot lie (Heb. 6:18). Yet God said many will perish due to sin. If God may save some who have rejected *one* element of His terms of pardon, then He is obligated by His nature to save others who have rejected *all* His terms. That strips God of sovereignty and makes man sovereign.

The basis of this discussion is flawed. It isn't a matter of God's power and ability, but rather of God's will. We agree that God has all power and authority in heaven and earth. He has revealed His will to us in the Bible. His desire is to save all (2 Pet. 3:9). But His sovereignty includes the limitation of letting people choose Him by means of faith and repentance or reject Him by means of unbelief. Would those who assert God can act by fiat carry their reasoning to its logical conclusion and insist that God could save the angels who sinned despite the fact that the Bible affirms they are committed to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment (Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4)?

We know what God wants by reading His Word. Those whose faith compels them to repent

and be immersed into Christ for the forgiveness of sin will be saved. Those who do not believe shall not be saved (Mk. 16:16). To allow that God will save others is pure speculation at best but certainly bold presumption. We should avoid both in our evangelistic and teaching efforts!

We may wish that God will save people who have not responded in faith to His revealed will;

even those who have actively rebelled against Him. But to say that God can do anything He wants by fiat or caprice—especially when it contradicts His stated will and command—not only cheapens His sovereignty, but also produces false hope within the disobedient, resulting in their eternal damnation. If God can act in ways contrary to His revelation, as some presume, then the Bible is discounted as being less than authoritative and final. This position is untenable on all levels, except an emotional one, and should be rejected by all who honor God's sovereignty and the authority of His Word.

To suggest that God can save people by fiat is also fruitless and unnecessary. We have the privilege of showing people God's promises, explain to them the conditions He set, and persuading them to comply. We should devote our energies to learning how to effectively relate the truth of God's Word rather than speculating about possible exceptions God might make based upon our human conclusions.

If we concede the point for a moment and allow that God can save someone by fiat, no one but God would know the individual is saved until the final day. And that will be one day too late for a person to do what he can and should do today. The one displaying faith in the blood of Jesus by repenting and being immersed into Christ may know he is saved. God so promised. The promise of God is the only sure and solid foundation upon which man may know he is saved. Let us, then, communicate this word of hope and security based upon what **God promises He will** do instead of our **speculations** of what God **might** do based upon our philosophical human reasoning.