

“[The Bereans] . . . searched the scriptures daily,

[to see] whether those things were so.” —Acts 17:11

What a Sovereign God Cannot Do

Dave Hunt

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ONE OF THE most common expressions one hears in Christian circles, especially for reassurance when things aren't going well, is that “God is in control, He's still on the throne.” Christians comfort themselves with these words—but what do they mean? Was God not “in control” when Satan rebelled and when Adam and Eve disobeyed, but now He is? Does God's being in control mean that all the rape, murder, war and multiplied evil is exactly what He planned and desires?

Christ asks us to pray, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). Why that prayer if we are already in God's kingdom with Satan bound, as John Calvin taught and Reconstructionists claim today? Could a world of rampant evil really be what God wills? Surely not!

“Wait a minute!” someone counters. “Are you suggesting that our omnipotent God is unable to effect His will upon earth? What heresy is this! Paul clearly says that God ‘worketh all things after the counsel of his own will’ (Ephesians 1:11).”

Yes. But the Bible itself contains many examples of men defying God's will and disobeying Him. God laments, “I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me” (Isaiah 1:2). The sacrifices they offer Him and their evil lives are obviously not according to His will. We are told that “the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God...” (Luke 7:30). Christ's statement in Matthew 7:21 shows clearly that everyone doesn't always do God's will. That is implied also in Isaiah 65:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:17-19; Hebrews 10:36; 1 Peter 2:15; 1 John 2:17 and many other scriptures. In fact, Ephesians 1:11 doesn't say that everything that happens is according to God's will, but according to “the *counsel*” of His will. Clearly the counsel of God's will has given man freedom to disobey Him. There is no other explanation for sin.

Yet in his zeal to protect God's sovereignty from any challenge, A. W. Pink argues earnestly, “God fore-ordains everything which comes to pass.... God initiates all things, regulates all things....”¹ Edwin H. Palmer agrees: “God is in back of everything. He decides and causes all things to happen that do happen.... He has fore-ordained everything ‘after the counsel of his will’ (Ephesians 1:11): the moving of a finger...the mistake of a typist—even sin.”²

Right here we confront a vital distinction. It is one thing for God, in His sovereignty and without diminishing that sovereignty, to give man the power to rebel against Him. This would open the door for sin as solely man's responsibility by a free choice. It is something entirely different for God to control everything to such an extent that He must effectively *cause* man to sin.

It is a fallacy to imagine that for God to be in control of His universe He must therefore foreordain and initiate everything. Thus He causes sin, then punishes the sinner. To justify this view, it is argued that “God is under no obligation to extend His grace to those whom He predestines to eternal judgment.” In fact, however, obligation has no relationship to grace.

It actually diminishes God's sovereignty to suggest that He cannot use to His own purposes what He doesn't foreordain and originate. There is neither logical nor biblical reason why a sovereign God by His own sovereign design could not allow creatures made in His image the freedom of genuine moral choice. And there are compelling reasons why He *would* do so.

Many an atheist (or sincere seeker who is troubled by evil and suffering) throws in our faces, “You claim your God is all-powerful. Then why doesn't He stop evil and suffering? If He could and doesn't, He's a monster; if He can't, then He isn't all-powerful!” The atheist thinks he has us cornered.

The answer involves certain things which God *cannot* do.

But God is infinite in power, so there must be *nothing* He can't do! Really? The very fact that He is infinite in power means He *cannot* fail. There is much else which finite beings do all the time but which the infinite, absolutely sovereign God cannot do *because He is God*: lie, cheat, steal, sin, be mistaken, etc. In fact, much else that God cannot do is vital for us to understand in meeting challenges from skeptics.

Tragically, there are many sincere questions that most Christians can't answer. Few parents have taken the time to think through the many intellectual and theological challenges their children increasingly face, challenges for which today's youth find no answers from so many pulpits and Sunday-school lessons. As a result, growing numbers of those raised in evangelical homes and churches are abandoning the “faith” they never adequately understood.

Is sovereignty and power the cure-all? Many Christians superficially think so. Yet there is much for which sovereignty and power are irrelevant. God acts not only sovereignly, but in love, grace, mercy, kindness, justice, and truth. His sovereignty is exercised only in perfect harmony with all of His other attributes.

There is much that God cannot do, not *in spite of who He is*, but *because of who He is*. Even Augustine, described as the first of the early so-called Church Fathers who “taught the absolute sovereignty of God,”³ declared, “Wherefore, He cannot do some things for the very reason that He is omnipotent.”⁴

Because of His absolute holiness, it is impossible for God to do evil, to cause others to do evil or even to entice anyone into evil: “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted...neither tempteth he any man...” (James 1:13-14). But what about the many places in Scripture where it says God tempted someone or was tempted? For example, “God did tempt Abraham” (Genesis 22:1). The Hebrew word there and throughout the Old Testament is *nacah*, which means to test or prove, as in assaying the purity of a metal. It has nothing to do with tempting to sin. God was testing Abraham's faith and obedience.

If God cannot be tempted, why is Israel warned, “Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God” (Deuteronomy 6:16)? We are even told that at Massah, in demanding water, “they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?” (Exodus 17:7). Later they “tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust....saying, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Yea...they provoked the most high...” (Psalm 78:18-19, 41, 56).

God was not being tempted to do evil! He was being provoked,

thus His patience was being tested. Instead of waiting upon Him obediently to meet their needs, His people were demanding that He use His power to give them what they wanted to satisfy their lusts. Their “temptation” of God was a blasphemous challenge forcing Him either to give in to their desire or to punish them for rebellion.

When Jesus was “tempted of the devil” to cast Himself from the pinnacle of the temple to prove the promise that angels would bear Him up in their hands, He quoted, “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Matthew 4:1-11). In other words, to put ourselves deliberately in a place where God must act to protect us is tempting Him.

James goes on to say, “But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.” Temptation to evil does not come from without but from within. The man who could not possibly be “tempted” to be dishonest in business may succumb to the temptation to commit adultery and thus be dishonest with his wife. It is said that “every man has his price.”

God was not tempting Adam and Eve to sin when He told them not to eat of a particular tree. Eve was tempted by her own lust and selfish desire. Even in innocence man could be selfish and disobedient. We see this in young infants who as yet presumably don’t know the difference between right and wrong.

Additionally, there are a number of other things which God cannot do. God cannot deny Himself or contradict Himself. He cannot change. He cannot go back on His Word. Specifically in relationship to mankind, there are some things God cannot do which are very important to understand and to explain to others. One of the most fundamental concepts (and least understood by “religious” people) is this: He cannot forgive sin without the penalty being paid and accepted by man.

Are we saying that in spite of His sovereignty and infinite power God cannot forgive whomever He wills, He cannot simply wipe their slate clean in the heavenly record? Exactly: He cannot, because He is also perfectly just. “So are you suggesting,” some complain, “that God wants to save all mankind but lacks the power to do so? It is a denial of God’s omnipotence and sovereignty if there is anything He desires but can’t accomplish.” *In fact, omnipotence and sovereignty are irrelevant with regard to forgiveness.*

Christ in the Garden the night before the cross cried out, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me...” (Matthew 26:39). Surely if it had been possible to provide salvation any other way, the Father would have allowed Christ to escape the excruciating physical sufferings of the cross and the infinite spiritual agony of enduring the penalty His perfect justice had pronounced upon sin. But even for the omnipotent God there was no other way. It is important that we clearly explain this biblical and logical truth when we present the gospel.

Suppose a judge has before him a son, a daughter, or other loved one found guilty of multiple murders by the jury. In spite of his love, the judge must uphold the penalty demanded by the law. Love cannot nullify justice. The only way God could forgive sinners and remain just would be for Christ to pay the penalty for sin (Romans 3:21-28).

There are two other matters of vital importance in relation to man’s salvation which God cannot do: He cannot force anyone to love Him; and He cannot force anyone to accept a gift. By the very nature of love and giving, man must have the power to choose. The reception of God’s love and of the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ can only be by an act of man’s free will.

Some argue that if it were God’s will for all men to be saved, the fact that all are not saved would mean that God’s will would be frustrated and His sovereignty overturned by men. It is also argued that if man can say yes or no to Christ, he has the final say in his salvation and his will is stronger than God’s will: “The heresy of free will dethrones God and enthrones man.”⁵

There is nothing in either the Bible or logic to suggest that God’s sovereignty requires man to be powerless to make a real choice, moral or otherwise.

Giving man the power to make a genuine, independent choice does not diminish God’s control over His universe. Being omnipotent and omniscient, God certainly could so arrange circumstances as to keep man’s rebellion from frustrating His purposes. In fact, God could even use man’s free will to help fulfill His own plans and thereby be even more glorified.

God’s grand design from the foundation of the world to bestow upon man the Gift of His love precludes any ability to force that Gift upon any of His creatures. Both love and gifts of any kind must be *received*. Force perverts the transaction.

The fact that God cannot fail, lie, sin, change or deny Himself does not in the least diminish His sovereignty. Nor is He any the less sovereign because He cannot force anyone to love Him or to receive the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ. And from man’s side, the reverse limitation prevails: there is nothing anyone can do to merit or earn either love or a gift. They must be given freely from God’s heart without any reason other than love, mercy and grace.

Wonderfully, in His sovereign grace, God has so constituted man and has so designed a gift that man may receive it voluntarily by an act of his will and respond in love to God’s love. Someone has said, “The free-will of man is the most marvelous of the Creator’s works.”⁶ The power of choice opens the door to something wonderful beyond comprehension: genuine fellowship between God and man for eternity. Without a free will man could not receive the gift of eternal life, thus God could not give it to him.

Pusey points out that “Without free-will, man would be inferior to the lower animals, which have a sort of limited freedom of choice.... It would be self-contradictory, that Almighty God should create a free agent capable of loving Him, without also being capable of rejecting His love...without free-will we could not freely love God. Freedom is a condition of love.”⁷

It is the power of genuine choice from man’s own heart and will which God has sovereignly given him that enables God to love man and for man to receive that love and to love God in return “because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19). It is impossible that the power of choice could challenge God’s sovereignty since it is God’s sovereignty which has bestowed this gift upon man and set the conditions for both loving and giving.

Suggesting that God would be lacking in “power” (thus denying His sovereignty) if He offered salvation and some rejected it is missing the point. Power and love do not belong in the same discussion. In fact, of the many things which we have seen that God cannot do, a lack of “power” is not the reason for any of them, nor is His sovereignty mitigated in the least by any of these.

Thus for mankind to have been given by God the power to choose to love Him or not and to receive or to reject the free gift of salvation, far from denying God’s sovereignty, is to admit what God’s sovereignty itself has lovingly and wonderfully provided.

May we willingly respond from the heart to His love with our love, and in gratitude for His great gift proclaim the good news to others.

TBC

END NOTES.....

1. Arthur W. Pink, *The Sovereignty of God* (Baker Book House, 1984), 240.
2. Edwin H. Palmer, *The Five Points of Calvinism* (Baker Books, 1999), 25.
3. C. Norman Sellers, *Election and Perseverance* (Schoettle Publishing Co., 1987), 3.
4. Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (n.p.n.d.), V. 10.
5. W. E. Best, *Free Grace Versus Free Will* (W. E. Best Books Missionary Trust, 1977), 35.
6. Junius B. Reimensnyder, *Doom Eternal* (N.S. Quiney, 1880), 257; cited in Samuel Fisk, *Calvinistic Paths Retraced* (Biblical Evangelism Press, 1985), 223.
7. Edward B. Pusey, *What Is Of Faith As To Everlasting Punishment?* (James Parker & Co., 1881), 22-23; cited in Fisk, op. cit., 222.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Submit your own questions to: PO Box 7019 • Bend, OR 97708

or e-mail: editorial@thebereanall.org

QUESTION (COMPOSITE OF SEVERAL): A number of us think you have given more than enough attention to the subject of Calvinism. This should not be the focal point of your ministry! It is time to move on to more edifying subjects; you are only adding fuel to the fires of division. You admit there are good Christians on both sides—so let it go at that.

ANSWER: I appreciate (and share) your concern lest too much attention be given to debating Calvinism. But I am confronted by a dilemma. Almost everywhere I look in God's Word one's understanding of the passage depends entirely upon whether one is a Calvinist or not. That's a fact I can't escape no matter how much I'd prefer to ignore it!

For biblical understanding, one must either accept or reject Calvinism. Much of Scripture involves God's pleadings with Israel to repent. I must either believe that He sincerely desires to bless them (in which case Calvinism is false)—or that He is mocking those whom He has predestined to eternal torment and from whom He withholds the very grace they need to repent. How can I study the Passover and deliverance from Egypt, the Levitical sacrifices, the passage through the Red Sea, water out of the Rock, daily manna etc., without recognizing that these provisions that picture Christ's sacrifice were for all of Israel, not for an elect among them—and thus that Calvinism can't be true? How can I read of the serpent lifted up in the wilderness for the healing of all who believed (not for an elect within Israel who had been predestined to believe) without recognizing that here also Calvinism opposes the plain teaching of Scripture?

And how can I overlook the fact that Christ used this incident to explain His sacrifice on the Cross, which therefore likewise must have been for all, not for an elect predestined to believe from eternity past? Moreover, how can I overlook the additional fact that in none of the Old Testament types of Christ and His Sacrifice for our sins was anyone first regenerated before they believed, as Calvinism claims must be the case.

I'm not trying to argue, only to share my dilemma. I can't ignore God's Word! Christ's exhortation to pray, "Thy will be done..." is cruel and misleading if Calvinism is true and thus rape, murder, war, lust, etc. are all exactly what God wants according to His sovereign will—and is a genuine and earnest appeal only if Calvinism is false and men by their own free will continually go against God's will. What do "choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15), "if ye be willing and obedient" (Isaiah 1:19), and a host of other similar scriptures mean? They are misleading if Calvinism is true, and honest appeals only if Calvinism is false. Is "whosoever will may come" a genuine invitation to all, or misleading because only the predestined elect can come? Paul earnestly tried to persuade all the lost he encountered to repent and believe. Was he wasting his time because Christ hadn't died for most of them and they had already been damned before they were born—or does salvation depend upon one's willingness to believe? The meaning of almost every page of Scripture hinges upon whether Calvinism is true or false. This is a fact which I cannot escape!

I agree, we don't want Calvinism to be "the focal point of our ministry." I don't think it ever has been. At the same time, however, we can't ignore the fact that the Bible repeatedly deals with these issues. In any study of the biblical teaching of redemption, the love of God and manifesting that love in our lives, we must either decide for Calvinism or against it. Surely, since I am to be merciful as my Heavenly "Father also is merciful" (Luke 6:36), it matters whether God is merciful to all or just to an elect.

I'm not trying to persuade you, but isn't it important whether God loves all and wants all to be saved, or damns multitudes he could save? How can I preach the gospel without deciding whether it is a genuine offer of salvation for all, or only for the elect?

Some of my best friends are Calvinists. We don't argue, much less break fellowship over our disagreement. But are not these issues of vital importance? How can I ignore them? I don't want to perpetuate a quarrel, but I must deal honestly with God's Word. I hope this helps you to understand my sincere dilemma and why I can't just drop these issues.

QUESTION: Why does Revelation 17:8 (and maybe Revelation 13:8, depending on the translation used) refer to those "whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world..."? Could that, coupled with Psalm 69:28, Revelation 3:5, and Revelation 22:19 mean that the names of all mankind are in the Book of Life, then later blotted out one by one as each Christ-rejecter crosses the line of final renunciation? I always thought that only after we believed the gospel were our names written in the Book of Life. If this were not the case, wouldn't Calvinists say, "See! He has already chosen those whom He will save; their names are already written down before the foundation of the earth!"?

ANSWER: Several verses speak of God blotting or not blotting names out of the book of life: "I will not blot out his name out of the book of life..." (Revelation 3:5); "God shall take away his part out of the book of life..." (Revelation 22:19); "...if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.... And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book" (Exodus 32:32-33).

These references to blotting out of the book of life allow only two possibilities: 1) everyone's name is written in the book of life from eternity past, indicating God's desire for all to be saved, until they have irrevocably rejected Christ, when their name is blotted out; or 2) when a person gets saved, his name is placed in the book of life for the first time, and when He later turns against Christ, his name is blotted out. Neither of these fits Calvinism. The first denies that God only intends to save a select elect, and the second denies the eternal security of the redeemed.

References to those "whose names are in the book of life" (Philippians 4:3; Revelation 21:27) and those "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8; 17:8; 20:15) offer no clue as to how or why names are written or are not written there. They only tell us that at the end of history, some names will be found, and some names will not be found written therein. But the fact that names can be and in fact are blotted out of the book of life is clear.

Of the two alternatives above, since the second one, which allows for some of the redeemed to lose their salvation, contradicts Christ's clear promise ("...shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life"—John 5:24), we must opt for the first. Comparing all of the verses, we can only conclude that, in keeping with God's desire that all be saved, from eternity past every person's name is written in the book of life of the Lamb, slain from before the foundation of the world. Whose names are blotted out? The names of those who refuse to yield to the wooing of the Holy Spirit. For this sin, there is no forgiveness (Mark 3:28; Luke 12:10).

Thus there is nothing in what Scripture says about the "book of life" to give any comfort to Calvinists, but only discomfort.

LETTERS

To connect with TBC, write: PO Box 7019 • Bend, OR 97708

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Dear TBC,

In 2017, I entered the darkest period of my life. Diagnosed with cancer, thinking my life was over, I became very depressed/suicidal. Doctors' only answer was depression meds, psyche sessions. Little did I know at the time, I was under God's discipline which through much prayer, Bible reading, I came through it so much closer to the Lord, with a deeper Holy hate for any sin in my life. One of the first things I did when in this affliction was call the Berean Call for prayer. Not sure who answered but they were so compassionate. Later I received the book, *When Christians Suffer* from you, which I feel was literally written for me. I have since ordered other copies to give to Christians going through the same thing. Thank you Berean Call for standing true to God's Word! No psychiatrist, no meds, just Jesus! LT (email)

Dear Mr. McMahan,

Your recent article on Bible study made reference to psychology that reminded me of a couple of incidents in a social setting many years ago. In conversation, I made the statement that "all psychology is wrong."

This caused quite a stir if for no other reason that such an absolute declarative statement is not often encountered in a world where years of true false tests have made people reflexively consider any absolute statement as likely wrong.

When asked to support such a statement I said that there was no psychological theory of human behavior that included the concept of sin. As a result, any therapeutic methods derived from such a flawed view of humans would at best have random efficacy.

In another social setting, a woman in her thirties was describing how she had just gotten her degree in psychology. She later used the phrase "inner child" to which I must have chortled as

she asked the reason for my reaction. I said that there was no such thing as an "inner child." The support for the idea that there exists a template of human perfection that can be appropriated remedially for therapeutic purposes exists solely in the wish it were true. If it were true we would have some idea of where it exists, how it is formed, and the mechanics of how it can be used. Her response was, "Well if that is true..."

Each day modern life seems to give us more reasons to consider the rarity, fragility, and importance of truth. T (email)

Dear TBC,

Growing up in a Christian home I was saved as a young child. In my teenage years I used alcohol and drugs. Later, I explored other spiritual paths but NOTHING brought me the peace I've found in Jesus. My mom passed in late 2017. Witnessing her death had a profound impact on me. It was then I started to question the path I was on. I called out to God in prayer and started reading my Bible. In early 2019, after years of exploring other spiritual beliefs, I became convinced Christianity is the ONLY way to God.

I continue to be in awe of God's immense love, grace and mercy.

"Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:6-7). Anon. (email)

Dear TBC,

Thank you for this ["The 'Jesus' the World Loves" article, see—<http://bit.ly/3HBpleo>]. As an artist I have always struggled with the idea of the visual portrayal of Bible stories and especially of Jesus himself. I see that the moment you commit your own imagination and interpretation to paper, canvas, film, etc; you have forced your interpretation into the viewer's minds and afterwards they will always have a hard time freeing themselves from it. Or getting past it. AM (email)

Hello Dear Brethren,

Thank you from a German listener! May The Most High bless you! This is so important—today more than ever—wickedness is grown so much, and I had to get nearly 50 years old to find Yeshua and Our Heavenly Creator, Abba, Our Father! Thank you so much, Father. Please bless this ministry! CB (email)

NOTE: Our purpose in this section is to simply show what kind of feedback we receive. We may respond to some of them in private whether or not we agree with their views.

QUOTABLE

"Put God first in trust. Our Lord trusted no man; yet He was never suspicious, never bitter, never in despair about any man because He put God first in trust; He trusted absolutely in what God's grace could do for any man. If I put my trust in human beings first, I will end in despairing of everyone; I will become bitter because I have insisted on man being what no man can ever be—absolutely right. Never trust anything but the grace of God in yourself or in anyone else."

—OSWALD CHAMBERS

TBC NOTES

"Christian" Horseshoes?

Biblical Christianity is not a form of entertainment, although some "play it" like a game. Horseshoes comes to mind. If you're familiar with the game, you know that as you pitch the horseshoe you can score points when the horseshoe encircles a stake when it lands. However, you can also score points by landing the horseshoe *close* to the stake.

Huge numbers of Christians are deceived by things that *seem close* to what the Bible teaches, or that even sound or seem Christian. Most cults draw people away from the truth by mimicking Christianity. The producers of *The Chosen* are a landmark example.

Yet God's Word warns us: "Therefore we ought to give *the more earnest heed* to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip" (Hebrews 2:1). Again, it warns, "See then that ye walk circumspectly [very carefully!], not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15-16).

T. A. McMAHON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

NEWSWATCH

News stories are selected for reader awareness and as an exercise
in discerning the times from a biblical perspective.

COMPLETE OVERHAUL OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

INTELLECTUALTAKEOUT.ORG, 2/1/23, "PARENTS WANT A COMPLETE OVERHAUL OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM" [EXCERPTS]: In the wake of COVID-19, people now overwhelmingly believe that the system's broader purpose needs to be rethought.

A new Purpose of Education Index survey released by the Massachusetts-based national think tank Populace found a radical shift in the way most of us view education and what our children should [gain].

Parents, often working in the same room where their children were being educated over Zoom, began to gain a more complete understanding of what and how their children were being taught—and they did not like what they saw.

An awakening took place as parents soon learned the power teachers unions had, not just over curriculum but also over whether schools would even open.

That disruption has been devastating. Test scores shared with the Associated Press showed that the average student lost over half a year of learning in math and a quarter of a school year in reading. But students in some public-school districts lost twice that in learning. The overall rate of parents choosing to home-school grew from 5.4% to 11.1%, according to data from the Census Bureau.

(<http://bit.ly/3HDxNtF>)

"OPEN HOSTILITY" TO RELIGIOUS FREEDOM CLUB

THECOLLEGEFIX.COM, 12/28/22, "UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE ACCUSED OF 'OPEN HOSTILITY' TOWARD RELIGIOUS FREEDOM CLUB" [EXCERPTS]: University of New Hampshire administrators need to step in and correct the "open hostility" toward Christian and conservative students by January 3, a demand letter from a legal nonprofit stated.

First Liberty Institute sent the demand letter to law school Dean Shane Cooper after UNH's Student Bar Association (SBA) refused to recognize the Free Exercise Coalition, a student organization...despite the club's adherence to all the school's criteria for official club membership.

First Liberty accused the SBA of acting as an "inquisitor" when examining the club's application, instead of providing its "routine, administrative approval." The Christian Legal Society, approved two months prior, faced similar issues in obtaining official recognition, First Liberty wrote, showing a pattern of bias.

The SBA "viewed with suspicion" the

Free Exercise Coalition's "mission." The SBA also "fomented public discussion that labeled the group as bigoted, subversive, oppressive, and a general 'problem' for UNH," First Liberty wrote in its letter.

"Further, this shocking, knives-out inquisition of the Free Exercise Coalition's religious beliefs by the SBA led the Free Exercise Coalition's faculty advisor to withdraw," according to the letter.

(<http://bit.ly/3wwLaGQ>)

YET ANOTHER LIVING FOSSIL FOUND

ICR.ORG, 12/12/22, "YET ANOTHER LIVING FOSSIL FOUND" [EXCERPTS]: Evolutionary philosophy states the fossil record is a record of the gradual and slow evolution of life forms that all came from a single common ancestor impossibly long ago. Yet, the fossils don't document this. It has long been known [that] strange life forms appear abruptly and undergo either stasis (no change) or extinction.

Living fossils are those living creatures—plant or animal—that are almost identical to those in the fossil record and were thought to be extinct. Sometimes called "Lazarus taxa," they appear alive in populations today. Examples are legion: the horseshoe crab, damselfly, coelacanth and gar fish, lobsters, Andean tapir, magnolia flowers, Wollemi pine, and many others. The living counterpart looks so much like its fossilized predecessors that identification down to the species level is often possible.

Recently, "a small clam, previously known only from fossils, has recently been found living at Naples Point, near Santa Barbara, [CA]."

Jeff Goddard, a research associate at UC Santa Barbara's Marine Science Institute said, "[Our clam species] doesn't go back anywhere near as far as the famous Coelacanth or the deep-water mollusk Neopilina galathea—representing an entire class of animals thought to have disappeared 400 million years ago—but it does go back to the time of all those wondrous animals captured by the La Brea Tar Pits." This is more proof that clams have always been clams.

If confirmed, this would mean that Goddard had found not a new species, but a sort of living fossil. It has been confirmed. This is yet one more example of a very long list of living fossils. Their very existence challenges Darwin's theory and the long ages associated with it.

(<http://bit.ly/3wv12fO>)

THE BEREAN CALL

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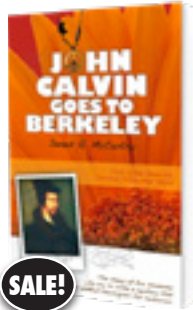
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