

WHY CHRISTIANS SHOULD NOT BE LIBERTARIANS:
AN AUGUSTINIAN CHALLENGE

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The prevailing view of Christian philosophers today seems to be that Christianity requires a libertarian conception of free will. Focusing on Augustine's mature anti-Pelagian works, I try to show that the prevailing view is in error. Specifically, I want to show that—on Augustine's view of grace—a libertarian account of free will is irrelevant to salvation. On Augustine's view, the grace of God through Christ is sufficient as well as necessary for salvation. Salvation is *entirely* in the hands of God, totally independent of anything that any human being might do. And faith, the human response to salvation, is best understood in terms of a compatibilist account of freedom.

I. The Philosophical Consensus Today

A surprising number of Christian philosophers today take it to be obvious that human beings have free will as libertarians construe it. Not only do they take us to have free will, but they also take a libertarian conception of free will to be important for Christian practice and theology. For example, Linda Zagzebski has spoken of the belief “that human beings have free will in a sense of ‘free’ that is incompatible with determinism” as “central to Christian practice.”¹ And Alvin Plantinga has appealed to a libertarian conception of free will in his treatment of the theological problem of evil. He defends his use of the view that we have libertarian free will by saying, “It seems to me altogether paradoxical to say of anyone all of whose actions are causally determined that on some occasions he acts freely.”²

Let us say that an account of free will is libertarian if and only if it entails that a condition of a person S's having free will with respect to an action (or choice) A is that A is not ultimately caused by factors outside of S's control. Let us say that an account of free will is compatibilist if and only if it entails that a person S's having free will with respect to an action (or choice) A is compatible with the A's being caused ultimately by factors outside of S's control. Although compatibilist accounts of free will are compatible with the truth of determinism, and libertarian

accounts of free will are not, the deeper difference between compatibilist and libertarian accounts is the kind of control attributed to an agent who acts (or chooses) freely.

On a compatibilist conception of free will, a will can be caused and still be free in the sense required for moral responsibility. Some kinds of causes (e.g., coercion, physical manipulation) block exercise of a compatibilist free will, but others (e.g., having one's will caused by a desire that one wants to have) do not. Proponents of compatibilist accounts of free will allow that a will may be free even if it is caused by God or by natural events to choose or decide what it does.³ The important point of difference between libertarian and compatibilist accounts of free will is this: Can a will be free if it is caused to choose or do what it does by factors beyond the agent's control? Compatibilists say yes, such a will can be free; libertarians say no, such a will cannot be free. The Augustinian challenge is to free will as the libertarians construe it, not to free will as the compatibilists construe it.

In the Christian tradition, the debates have tended to focus on what constitutes free will. For example, in his The Freedom of the Will, Jonathan Edwards argued (convincingly, to me) that our wills are free in what today would be called a compatibilist way. On the other hand, in his On the Bondage of the Will, Martin Luther understood the term 'free will' in what today we would call a libertarian way, and he argued vociferously that we do not have such free will. By and large, however, the debate has been framed in terms of what free will is, on the assumption that human beings—unlike, e.g., the wind—have free will.

One further complication: The topic of causation is vexed. Although I cannot give a philosophically worthy account of causation, I want to appeal to the idea of 'producing' or 'bringing about.' A cause produces or brings about its effect in the given circumstances. "In the given circumstances" is intended to cover background conditions—conditions necessary for the occurrence of the caused event that are already in place before the cause comes along. (E.g., the assassin is at the same location as the victim right before the assassination.)

The fact that some Christians believe in libertarian accounts of free will is not surprising: Molinists, Arminians, and Free-Will Baptists, explicitly endorse doctrines of libertarian free will. What is astonishing is that almost all contemporary Christian philosophers, even those who see themselves in the Protestant and Reformed traditions of Luther and Calvin, also affirm free will

as libertarians construe it (hereafter ‘libertarian free will’). They consider it an *advantage* that their Christian views entail that a libertarian account of free will is true.

What is surprising is the apparent Christian consensus on free will. The apparent consensus is surprising for two reasons. First, rejection of libertarian accounts of free will would make the solutions to certain philosophical problems for Christians very easy. We could understand the doctrine of divine providence in the traditional way: Everything in the universe, including our free actions and choices, is under God’s sovereignty. Also, we could almost effortlessly solve the problem of the compatibility of freedom and foreknowledge: If there is a causal nexus that governs all events (including human free actions), there is no mystery how God, who both knows and sustains the causal nexus, has foreknowledge of all events.⁴ God knows what everyone will do in every possible situation. Nevertheless: “Virtually all discussants of the foreknowledge issue agree that the problem [of the compatibility of divine foreknowledge and human freedom] is not solved unless the solution preserves free will in a sense that is incompatible with determinism.”⁵ Since the truth of compatibilism would render these philosophical problems vastly more tractable, it is surprising that Christians do not try to avail themselves of these obvious solutions by arguing for compatibilism (i.e., a compatibilist account of free will).

The second reason that the apparent Christian consensus on free will is surprising is that there is a lot of room for the denial of libertarian accounts in the Christian tradition, Roman Catholic as well as Protestant. Indeed, I shall try to show that recent theories of free-will libertarianism conflict with central Christian doctrines. In any case, large stretches of the writings of St. Augustine, the most influential Christian theologian in the West, are congenial to a compatibilist interpretation of free will. This is especially so in Augustine’s late anti-Pelagian works.⁶ Specifically, I want to show that—on Augustine’s view of grace—a libertarian account of free will is irrelevant to salvation. On Augustine’s view, the grace of God through Christ is sufficient as well as necessary for salvation. Salvation is *entirely* in the hands of God, totally independent of anything that any human being might do. According to Augustine, we all deserve damnation, but God, in His mercy, has selected some for salvation. God does not choose which people to save on the basis of foreseeing any future merit on their part. He simply predestines those He wants to save. There is no role for libertarian construals of free will in the

scheme of salvation. By contrast, Augustine's opponent, Pelagius, at least as represented in Augustine's On Nature and Grace, holds what today we would call a libertarian view of free will.

II. Three Christian Positions

Let me distinguish three Christian positions on free will and salvation.

- (1) The grace of God through Christ is necessary and sufficient for salvation. No act of will (construed in a libertarian way or not) is needed for salvation.
- (2) The grace of God through Christ is necessary for salvation, but not sufficient. In addition, an act of free will, construed in a libertarian way, is also necessary for salvation.⁷
- (3) The grace of God through Christ is neither necessary nor sufficient for righteousness needed for salvation. We must use our free will (construed in a libertarian way) to take at least the first steps toward salvation.

Augustine, in his later anti-Pelagian writings, and the Protestant reformers endorsed (1). Indeed, Luther and Calvin made this position a centerpiece of the Reformation. As Luther vividly put it, "As for myself, I frankly confess, that I should not want free will [as libertarians construe it] to be given me, even if it could be, nor anything else be left in my own hands to enable me to strive after my salvation."⁸ Even Thomas Aquinas can be interpreted as holding something like (1). According to Thomas Flint, the "core Thomist contention is that every contingent event and proposition, including those involving free agents, is completely determined by God; my action, even if free, is still determined by God's action."⁹

By contrast, Molina and his followers endorse (2). Molina tried to show how free will, on a libertarian construal, was compatible with divine providence. According to Molinism, predestination is achieved by grace that is "intrinsically sufficient" but only "extrinsically efficacious." If grace is only extrinsically efficacious, then (though "intrinsically sufficient"), it is not sufficient in the logical sense. In order to be sufficient in the logical sense, on the Molinist account, grace must be met with consent in a libertarian sense. I think that the distinction

between “sufficient” and “efficacious” grace is captured in our parlance by saying that grace is necessary but not sufficient for salvation.¹⁰

Finally, Pelagius (as represented by Augustine)¹¹ may be seen as endorsing (3). Sin can be avoided by human effort. Our God-given human nature (which Pelagius calls ‘grace’) plus free will, as construed by libertarians, suffices for righteousness.¹² The grace of Christ is needed only “after sin”—which is in our power to avoid.¹³ The possibility of not sinning is in our natures; but whether we actually sin or not depends on our free wills, construed in a libertarian way.¹⁴ On the contrary, “defending nature as if it were sufficient to itself, provided only that the will be present, for the attainment of righteousness, he [Pelagius] quite openly opposes the grace of Christ, by which we are justified.”¹⁵

Position (3), which seems to be Pelagius’s, is not orthodox. Pelagius’s writings were condemned by various councils, and Pelagius himself was finally excommunicated by Pope Zosimus in 418. I include the Pelagian position, even though heretical, for two reasons. First, Pelagius *wanted* to be an orthodox Christian. He was a moral reformer, who wanted to bring Christians to higher levels of moral purity. He appealed to libertarian understanding of free choice, which is not under the necessity of the rest of nature, to emphasize our responsibility for our sins. Second, this position is commonly endorsed in sermons and other forms of popular Christianity. The Pelagian idea often takes a form like this: Using our own powers of free will, we have the ability to choose to be righteous; and if we do so choose, God will reward us. God’s role is thought to be one of responding to us when we turn to him on our own. So, despite the fact that (3) is officially a Christian heresy, it should be considered since many Christians today seem to find it congenial.

III. The Human Condition

One does not have to have a literal interpretation of the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, approached by a serpent who offers a fatal temptation, in order to take the doctrine of Original Sin seriously. Although there are a number of versions of the doctrine of Original Sin,¹⁶ I shall focus on the characterization presented by Augustine in On Nature and Grace. “[M]an was created sound and faultless, endowed with a free will and a free ability to live a just life,” but Adam’s disobedience resulted in a catastrophe for the human race. Adam’s

sin fatally weakened human nature. Perhaps at creation, Adam had free will as libertarians construe it, but the Fall destroyed it for Adam and his descendants. Augustine's view is that we are born into a state of sinfulness and sickness, which only the grace of God through Christ can heal.

A main difference between Pelagius and Augustine is that Pelagius believed that free will as libertarians construe it is required for sin, and Augustine did not. Consider first Pelagius: "[H]ow can a man be answerable to God for the guilt of a sin which he knows is not his own? For if it is necessary, it is not his own. Or if it is his own, it is voluntary, and if it is voluntary, it can be avoided."¹⁷ Here (and elsewhere) Pelagius endorses the view that we are responsible for an action only if we could have done otherwise.

According to Augustine in On Nature and Grace, natural necessity is compatible with will. Augustine takes issue with Pelagius, who declared, "whatever is bound by natural necessity is not subject to the choice and deliberation of the will." Augustine responds that "it is absurd to say that it does not belong to our will that we want to be happy, simply because by some good constraint in our nature, we are incapable of not wanting to be happy." He adds: "Nor do we dare to say that God does not possess the will but the necessity to be just, because he cannot want to sin."¹⁸

Moreover, not all sin is willed anyway. Sinful actions may be done in ignorance.¹⁹ And one is responsible for the content of one's dreams. In particular, a dream is sinful if (i) the dreamer is recipient of an evil suggestion, and (ii) one takes pleasure in contemplating the evil act or thought suggested, and (iii) one consents to it.²⁰ Furthermore, the sinful state into which one is born is independent of one's will altogether. Augustine had a harsh doctrine of the unbaptized. An infant who died without the "bath of regeneration" is "not admitted into the kingdom of heaven, even though he not only was not a Christian but could not have been one."²¹ Similarly, a man "who died in a place where he could not have heard the name of Christ...[could not] have become just by his own nature and free will." To say otherwise, "amounts to rendering the cross of Christ void."²²

As I shall point out later, we can hold onto Augustine's view that not all sin is a matter of will (libertarian or not), without supposing that the unbaptized will be "justly condemned."²³ On

Augustine's view, we all deserve eternal damnation, but some (the elect) are predestined by God for salvation. I shall suggest that we retain the content of Augustine's doctrine of grace and increase its scope.

Whereas Pelagius thought that Original Sin had no effect on our natures,²⁴ Augustine taught otherwise: Original Sin damaged, corrupted our nature, and has left us with "the defect which darkens and weakens all those natural goods."²⁵ This corruption can be remedied only by means of the grace of Christ, which "is given gratuitously and not for our merits, and for this reason it is called 'grace.'"²⁶ As a result of the Fall, on Augustine's view, we do not have free will as libertarians construe it with respect to being righteous. As Paul said in Romans 7:19: "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." As Luther argued in his debates with Erasmus, we do not have the power to do good on our own.²⁷

After arguing for the irrelevance of free will for salvation, and even for faith, I want to raise questions about the viability of belief in a libertarian conception of free will in two ways. First, I want to undermine some motivations for belief in a libertarian conception of free will; then, I want to examine a recent libertarian view of free will and show that it conflicts with traditional theism. I shall conclude with a comment about how to use (part of) Augustine's view today.

IV. Grace as Gratuitous

According to traditional Christian belief in the West, no one is saved without having been predestined to be saved. Not only is this Augustine's view, but it is also Thomas Aquinas's. Moreover, predestination became a central theme of the Reformation. The great reformers—Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Bucer, Beza, and later, Jonathan Edwards—believed that salvation was gratuitous. Salvation was not a prize offered to those who lived a good life. Nor does God predestine people for redemption on the basis of His foreknowledge of their faith. (In his responses to Simplician, Augustine explicitly repudiated this view, which he had held early on.) As one writer vividly put it, by his later writings, Augustine "has come to think that no one has a desire for God—not a scintilla of it—who has not been predestined by God to have it."²⁸

This view is grounded in Paul's letter to the Romans. To take a sample passage: "For he [God] says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.' So it depends not upon man's will or exertion, but upon God's mercy."²⁹ By the end of Romans 11, Paul has affirmed a doctrine of inscrutable election.³⁰

There is no room for free will as libertarians construe it in our salvation, not even in the first step. In Predestination of the Saints,³¹ Augustine says: God "brings it about that we begin to believe." Or again: "[I]n the elect, the will is prepared by God."³² God's grace is gratuitous and is prior to our faith. Augustine quotes over and over: "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."³³ As one scholar put it, according to Augustine, "salvation is independent of man's fallen will; it is a matter of God's omnipotence....If God wishes a man's salvation, salvation follows of *necessity*."³⁴ Or again: "The effectiveness of God's mercy cannot be subject to any power of man."³⁵ Free will as construed by libertarians is thus excluded from the process of salvation.

Indeed, God's action alone is necessary and sufficient for salvation. This is a doctrine of objective atonement, according to which no (finite) will, libertarian or not, is required for salvation. Nevertheless, in this life, God blesses some with faith, and faith involves one's will; but it still does not involve free will as construed by libertarians.³⁶ (Although some are granted faith in this life, others may be granted faith only eschatologically: "No one cometh to the Father but by me" does not entail that all who come to the Father know beforehand that they are coming through Christ, nor that they even know that they are coming to the Father.) The desire to do God's will and the desire to will what is good are effects, not causes, of God's grace. Turning to God is indeed a matter of will, but the will is caused by God to make the turn.³⁷

In On the Predestination of the Saints, Augustine discusses John 6. He asks, "What does 'Everyone that has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to me,' mean except that there is no one who hears from the Father, and learns, and does not come to me [him]?"³⁸ Not only is faith caused by God, but also God's action is irresistible. "Therefore, this grace, which out of the divine generosity is bestowed secretly in human hearts, is rejected by no one, no matter how hard-hearted he may be."³⁹ If this grace is "rejected by no one," then free will as libertarians construe it makes no difference to whether or not a person has faith. On the one hand, anyone on

whom God so acts does come to have faith. On the other hand, without God's causal action, no one comes to have faith. So, the will needed for faith is free will as compatibilists construe it.

I have been relying on Augustine's late, anti-Pelagian writings. In his early works—for example, On the Free Choice of the Will—Augustine offers what sounds like a libertarian view of free will.⁴⁰ Stump says that Augustine “does not repudiate his basic view of the freedom of the will in [On Free Choice] even during the Pelagian controversy.”⁴¹ But in Retractations, Augustine does say this: In On Free Choice, “concerning the grace of God,...He has predestined His chosen ones in such a manner that He Himself has even made ready the volitions of those whom He has already endowed with free choice.”⁴² It is difficult to see how God's making ready volitions can be reconciled with free will as libertarians construe it.

In The City of God, moreover, Augustine implies a compatibilist construal of free choices of the will: “Now if there is for God a fixed order of all causes, it does not follow that nothing depends on our free choice. Our wills themselves are in the order of causes, which is, for God, fixed and is contained in his foreknowledge, since human acts of will are the causes of human activities. Therefore, he who had prescience of the causes of all events certainly could not be ignorant of our decisions, which he foreknows as the causes of our actions.”⁴³ So, our wills are contained in the order of causes. The human acts of will that are our free choices cause our actions and are themselves in the order of causes.

Augustine continues: “Thus our wills have only as much power as God has willed and foreknown; God, whose foreknowledge is infallible, has foreknown the strength of our wills and their achievements, and it is for this reason that their future strength is completely determined and their future achievements utterly assured.”⁴⁴ Nevertheless, free will is a matter of the will's willing what it does without coercion. This is clearly a nonlibertarian understanding of the will.

To sum up: No finite will, on either a compatibilist or a libertarian conception, has a causal role in bringing about salvation. However, the will does play a role in one's coming to faith. But the will cannot come to faith without God's causal action on it. Since God causes faith, the will involved in faith is only a compatibilist will. Therefore, on Augustine's mature view, free will as libertarians construe it is entirely irrelevant to salvation.

V. Free Will and Divine Causality

Not only is free will irrelevant to salvation from an Augustinian point of view, but belief in a libertarian conception of free will directly conflicts with Christian doctrine, nonAugustinian as well as Augustinian. Suppose that we divide exercises of the free will into three categories:

- (A) Willing what is good—e.g., to love God;
- (B) Willing what is evil—e.g., to hate God or to harm one's neighbor;
- (C) Willing what is morally neutral—e.g., to accept an offer of a job that is not immoral.

According to orthodox Christian doctrine, every act of will in category (A) requires that God cause the disposition of the will. In order for someone to will what is good, God must move the will: God must cause the will to will what is good; the will cannot will what is good on its own. This is Augustine's view, and it is also Thomas Aquinas's: God directly causes a person to will what is good.⁴⁵ Martin Luther also insists that only God can cause us to will what is good.⁴⁶ These writers may differ in how they understand God's causal powers, but they all agree that God causes a good will. Both premises of the following simple valid argument are matters of orthodox Christian doctrine:

- (1) No human being wills what is good unless God causes her to will what is good.
- (2) Some human beings will what is good.
- ∴(3) God causes some human beings to will what is good.

The hallmark of free will as libertarians construe it is that its exercise is uncaused by anything over which the agent has no control. Therefore, a will whose exercise is caused by God is, by definition, not a free will as libertarians construe it. Given premise (1), a human being makes a contribution to willing what is good, but not a contribution independent of God. Not only does premise (1) conflict with Pelagianism, but it also conflicts with Molinism, with "synergism,"⁴⁷ and with any other view that requires free will as libertarians construe it. If God causes a person to will what is good, it is not within her power to refrain from willing (in the libertarian way) what is good. So, category (A) excludes libertarian free will.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, category (A) does not exclude free will as compatibilists construe it.

Consider a compatibilist conception free will. Say that to will X is to have an effective desire to choose or do X, a desire that moves one to choose or to do X.⁴⁹ If one has the will that she wants to have (if, that is, one is moved by the desire that she wants to move one), then one has free will as a compatibilist may construe it. In detail:

(CFW) A person S has compatibilist free will for a choice or action if:

- (i) S wills X,
- (ii) S wants to will X,
- (iii) S wills X because she wants to will X, and
- (iv) S would still have willed X even if she (herself) had known the provenance of her wanting to will X.

Thus, according to (CFW), a person freely wills what is good—to love God, say—if (i) she wills to love God; (ii) she wants to will to love God; (iii) she wills to love God because she wants to will to love God; and (iv) even she knew the provenance of her wanting to will to love God—namely, that her wanting to will to love God was caused by God Himself—she would still want to will to love God. There is no conflict between free will on a compatibilist conception and the doctrine that God causes a good will.

So, orthodox Christians should be committed to free will as compatibilists construe it in instances of category (A). Now either God plays the same causal role with respect to all three categories or He does not. If He does, then it immediately follows that compatibilism holds throughout.⁵⁰ If He does not, we should still affirm compatibilism. Consider this possibility more closely: Some theologians (Thomas Aquinas, for example) hold that, whereas God causes good acts, He only permits evil acts. (Such theologians want to avoid saying that God causes some people to will what is evil.) Let us put aside qualms that, for an omnipotent and omniscient Being, the distinction between causing (or intending) and permitting (or allowing) is a distinction without a difference. To say that God's causal role in category-(B) cases differs from His causal role in category-(A) cases is not to deny Him a causal role in category-(B) cases altogether. Indeed, since orthodox Christians are already committed to compatibilist free will for category (A), it is reasonable to suppose that all free will is of the compatibilist variety.

The theologically important distinction between category (A) and category (B) can be made within the realms of causality—that is, internal to free will as compatibilists construe it: Category-(A) exercises of the will are caused by God; category-(B) exercises of the will and category-(C) exercises of the will (if any) are not caused by God in the same way as category-(A) exercises of the will. But category-(B) and category-(C) exercises of the will still have natural causes, and God, who sustains natural causes, will still have some causal role. (The person with free will as compatibilists construe it is morally responsible for the exercises of her will in all three categories, as I shall indicate in the next section.) Given that the will must be understood as compatibilist in category-(A) exercises, it seems of dubious coherence to suppose that the will is not to be understood as compatibilist in category-(B) and category-(C) exercises. Compatibilism (in the relevant sense) is the view that the will can be free and caused; it is not a view that distinguishes between natural and supernatural causes.

The challenge to libertarians from divine causality can be seen from another angle. The basic intuition of libertarianism is that the free agent is the ultimate source or originator of her choices and/or actions. Every exercise of libertarian free will requires an initiation of a new causal chain, with no causal antecedents beyond the agent’s control. Either the agent causes an event that has no antecedent event as a cause (agent-causation), or there is an event in the agent’s mind or brain that itself has no antecedent cause at all (event-causation).⁵¹

Until recently, there have not been detailed accounts of how libertarianism is supposed to work. (Many libertarians have been content to state the view in general terms of power to choose and to refrain from choosing, and then to argue against compatibilism.) But now we have some deeper accounts of libertarianism. One of the most sophisticated is Robert Kane’s, which I shall use as an exemplary libertarian view. Free will, in the sense that concerns Kane, is “the power of agents to be the ultimate creators (or originators) and sustainers of their own ends or purposes.”⁵² The notion of ‘ultimacy’ is extremely strong:

[W]hen we trace the causal or explanatory chains of action back to their sources in the purposes of free agents, these causal chains must come to an end or terminate in the willings (choices, decisions, or efforts) of the agents, which cause or bring about their purposes. If these willings were in turn caused by something else, so that the explanatory

chains could be traced back further to heredity or environment, to God, or fate, then the ultimacy would not lie with the agents but with something else.⁵³

So a libertarian construal of free will, along with moral responsibility, requires that the agent be the ultimate source of the choice or action in an extremely strong way. All the factors that produce the choice or action must be within the agent's control. Otherwise, according to Robert Kane, "the action, or the agent's will to perform it, would have its source in something the agent played no role in producing. Then the arche [sufficient ground or cause or explanation] of the action, or of the agent's will to perform it, would not be 'in the agent,' but in something else."⁵⁴

"[T]o will freely, in this traditional sense," Kane says, "is to be the ultimate creator (prime mover, so to speak) of your own purposes."⁵⁵ Roderick Chisholm, a proponent of agent-causation, put it this way:

If we are responsible, and if what I have been trying to say is true, then we have a prerogative which some would attribute only to God: each of us, when we act, is a prime mover unmoved. In doing what we do, we cause certain events to happen, and nothing—or no one—causes us to cause those events to happen.⁵⁶

If we are prime movers unmoved, then it is difficult to see how God (or anything else beyond our control) could have any influence over our free acts.

In her discussion of Augustine on free will, Eleonore Stump gives a similar necessary condition: "[A]n agent acts with free will, or is morally responsible for an act, only if her own intellect and will are the sole ultimate source or first cause of her act."⁵⁷ Stump appends several notes to clarify this necessary condition, one of which seems to indicate that she sees the tension between libertarian free will and Christian doctrine. She says, "Insofar as God is the creator of every created thing and insofar as any created cause is always dependent on the operation of divine causality, no created thing can ever be the sole cause of anything, or the ultimate first cause of anything."⁵⁸ From this remark, together with the condition that one has free will "only if her own intellect and will are the sole ultimate source or first cause of her act," the obvious inference is that no created thing has free will (as libertarians construe it). But Stump does not

draw that inference. Why not? She continues: “What is at issue for Augustine on free will and grace, however, is whether God is also the cause of the will in some stronger sense than this. And so for the sake of simplicity in this paper, I am simply bracketing the operations of God as first cause and creator.”⁵⁹

But if we are talking about general conditions for free will, we cannot bracket the operations of God as first cause and creator. (And I doubt that Augustine would permit such bracketing anyway.) No particularly strong sense in which God is the cause of the will is needed in order for there to be a conflict between a libertarian conception of free will and Christian doctrine. The conflict is a matter of deductive logic. If (i) “no created thing can ever be the sole cause of anything, or the ultimate first cause of anything,” as Stump says, and (ii) human persons are created things, then it follows that (iii) human persons are not the ultimate first causes of anything. In that case, human persons do not have free will as libertarians construe it. Period. This is a straightforward inference that depends only on the libertarian conception of our being the ultimate sources or first causes of our choices and actions. It does not require appeal to a notion of God as the cause of the will in some specially strong sense.⁶⁰ A will that is “always dependent on the operation of divine causality” can not be free in a libertarian way at all. Of course, a free will could be “always dependent on the operation of divine causality,” but such a conception of free will would be compatibilist, not libertarian.

Granted, Kane and Chisholm are not writing as Christian philosophers, and perhaps Christian libertarians can work out the details of an account that both captures the libertarian intuition and is compatible with divine causality.⁶¹ Simply to say that one has libertarian free will if one has the power to choose A and the power to refrain from choosing A at the moment of choosing (or not choosing) is just not enough. The challenge is to reconcile libertarian free will with divine causality.

VI. Motivations for Belief in Libertarian Free Will

As we saw at the beginning, there is a philosophical Christian consensus in favor of a libertarian conception of free will. Since, on nontheological grounds, I believe that the notion of libertarian free will is wholly untenable today,⁶² I believe that the Christian consensus is in error: Given what is known about the physical world today, I do not believe that we can make

sense of libertarian free will in any detail in a way that allows us to be the ultimate sources or originators in the intended sense of our actions. If there is no such thing as free will as libertarians construe it, Christians should join the mature Augustine and argue for Christianity without a libertarian view of free will. I admit that there are some strong motivations for defending free will as libertarians construe it. I shall consider, briefly, four of these motivations for defending a libertarian conception of free will, and at least gesture toward considerations that undermine them.

(1) Free will as libertarians construe it has been thought to be required for moral responsibility. There is a long tradition of philosophers who believe both that all events, even the exercises of free will, are caused and also that on some occasions, we are morally responsible for what we do. Augustine himself held human beings morally responsible for their sins, on the (compatibilist) grounds that they sin willingly. If sinning willingly suffices for moral responsibility for sin, then moral responsibility is compatible with being caused. This is well-turned soil. Let me just baldly restate the conditions for a compatibilist conception of free will, and offer them as sufficient conditions for moral responsibility: A person S is morally responsible for willing an action X if: (i) S wills X, (ii) S wants to will X, (iii) S wills X because she wants to will X, and (iv) S would still have willed X even if she had known the provenance of her wanting to will X.⁶³ Although I cannot defend the sufficiency of these conditions for moral responsibility here, let me just illustrate them:

A man named Bobby Frank Cherry was recently convicted in the bombing that killed four black Sunday-School girls in the church in Birmingham in 1963. Suppose that Cherry (i) willed to participate in the bombing. As a convinced white supremacist (who apparently bragged of his participation), he (ii) wanted to will to participate, and he (iii) willed to participate because he wanted to. He (iv) would still be proud of his participation, and would participate again, even if he knew that his willing to participate in the bombing had been caused by his racist upbringing. (“Damn right,” he might have said, “and I’m bringing up my boys the same way.”) It seems to me obvious that he was morally responsible for his participation in the bombing. He was moved by the desire (to bomb the black church) that he wanted to be moved by.

The conditions (i) – (iv) are clearly compatible with the will’s being caused. So, if, as I shall argue elsewhere, the four conditions are sufficient for moral responsibility, then libertarian free will is not needed for moral responsibility.⁶⁴

(2) A related motivation for libertarian free will is that without it, we may be just puppets. It seems obvious to me that a person who satisfies (i) – (iv) is not just a puppet. We would be puppets if our actions had causes that by-passed our deliberations and choices and decision-making processes. But if we act on the basis of choices made for reasons that we want to have—and we know how we came to have these reasons—we are not puppets. Such actions are expressions of the person that one is—of her character, whether the actions are caused by factors outside her control or not. If she is satisfied with being that kind of person, she is morally responsible for such actions. No free will as libertarians construe it is necessary.

(3) Another motivation for Christian belief in libertarian free will comes from its use in addressing the problem of evil. Thus, Plantinga (1974) has mounted a famous “Free Will Defense” against the logical problem of evil. There are reasons, however, not to follow this route: (i) The pay-off for appeal to libertarian free will is very slight. At most, appeal to free will as libertarians construe it shows that there is no logical inconsistency between the goodness of God and the (bare) existence of moral evil. This does not begin to allay worries about evil and suffering and the untoward vagaries of life. It does not even touch the problem of natural evil—earthquakes, birth defects and other sources of suffering.⁶⁵ (ii) With or without libertarian free will, evil is and remains inscrutable. On considering great and undeserved suffering, we have to fall back on our faith anyway.⁶⁶ We are already saddled with the mystery of the distribution and amount of both moral and physical evil; adding faith that there is no logical inconsistency between the existence of God and the (bare) existence of evil at all does not seem much of a stretch. So, we may as well not compromise the traditional Augustinian view of grace by appeal to a libertarian conception of free will.

(4) The principle of ‘ought’ implies ‘can’ appeals to many, and may be thought to entail a libertarian conception of free will. Gareth Matthews has pointed out that the principle—If x ought to do A, then x can do A—may mean either of two things:⁶⁷

(i) If x ought to do A, then x can do A independently of God’s grace.

(ii) If x ought to do A, then x can do A, though perhaps only with the grace of God.

If interpreted as (i), the “‘ought’ implies ‘can’” principle is the Pelagian heresy, and orthodox Christians ought to reject it. If interpreted as (ii), the principle is acceptable; but so interpreted, it does not require free will of a libertarian sort. So, the principle that ‘ought’ implies ‘can’ should be discarded as a motivation for orthodox Christians to accept a libertarian view of free will.

These motivations are the only ones that I know of for belief in free will as libertarians construe it. Although I have not been able to do justice here to the motivations for belief in a libertarian conception of free will, they all seem to me faulty in the ways that I have suggested.

VII. Augustine for Christians Today

Modern thinkers find Augustinian (and Thomistic) doctrines of Original Sin and Predestination unpalatable, and have largely abandoned the Augustinian doctrines of grace. I recommend a different strategy, one that avoids watering down the central tenets of the faith. First, distinguish two aspects of each doctrine: (a) its content, what it claims to be the case and (b) its scope of application, the group to whom it is to apply. For example, the content of the doctrine of Original Sin is that we have a moral flaw that cannot be mended by our own powers; the scope of the doctrine is universal: It applies to everyone, with the exception of Jesus, and, in the Roman Catholic tradition, of Mary—though in a different way.

With the distinction between content and scope, we can keep the Augustinian doctrines in their severity, but change their scope. Although Augustine himself believed that only a few are saved, we can consider the possibility of universal salvation, perhaps after periods of various lengths of purgation. This strategy would retain moral responsibility and Judgment, but deny that Judgment must issue in eternal damnation for anyone. We simply do not know, nor need we worry about, who is to be saved. The matter of salvation is totally under the control of God, who is essentially Good. But the possibility of universal salvation does render the difficult doctrines of Original Sin and Predestination more acceptable, without compromising the content of ancient Christian belief. We can even accept the Augustinian view that we all deserve eternal damnation, and that it is only by God’s grace that any of us is saved. My suggestion is not to dilute Augustinian doctrine of grace, but to embrace its content fully, while only expanding its scope.

Although Augustine and his followers clearly did not believe in universal salvation, there is Pauline support for it: “God wills that all men should be saved.”⁶⁸ Augustine himself interpreted this text—quite implausibly—as ‘all who are saved are saved through God’s will.’⁶⁹ But a face-value reading of the text, together with a premise that “God cannot will in vain anything that he has willed,”⁷⁰ implies universalism. In addition, there is a minority tradition of Christians who accept the possibility of universalism.⁷¹

Moreover, universalism allows us to retain the absolute truth of Christianity without its intolerance. We are equally sinners and equally dependent on God’s mercy—Christians and nonChristians alike. We know that most people who profess to speak for God do not speak for Him: They are mistaken or self-deceived. (We know this because they contradict each other, and God’s will does not contradict itself.) And for all that we know, many nonbelievers do speak for God. (God works through nonbelievers as well as through believers.) To say that all are ultimately saved through Christ is not to say that they do anything at all for their salvation, or even that they know that they are saved through Christ. (Perhaps it is revealed to everyone on the day of Judgment that they are saved through Christ.) Whether universalism is true or not, our salvation is in God’s hands, period. The doctrine of God’s sovereignty over the universe entails that He can save anyone whom He wants to save.

VIII. Conclusion

Despite the contemporary Christian consensus in favor of a libertarian view of free will, a compatibilist view of free will and moral responsibility is to be preferred. I have tried to make only the theological case against free-will libertarianism here. (The nontheological case against libertarian free will is ably made by Derk Pereboom in Living Without Free Will.)⁷² The distinctively philosophical issue that compatibilist views on free will raise is the same whether our choices and actions are caused by God or by natural causes, and I believe that the philosophical objections can be met by a compatibilist who endorses the four conditions in (CFW).

Relying primarily on Augustine’s anti-Pelagian writings, my aim has been to show that Christians should not believe in a libertarian conception of free will, for the following reasons: (i) Free will is irrelevant to salvation. (ii) The will needed for faith is not libertarian. (iii) Moral

responsibility does not require free will of a libertarian sort. (iv) On the assumption that any Christian view shared by Augustine, Aquinas and Luther is part of Christian orthodoxy, the most articulated libertarian views free will—the views that take people to be the sole first causes, or ultimate sources, of their choices and actions—conflict with Christian orthodoxy.⁷³

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NOTES

¹ Linda Zagzebski, , The Dilemma of Freedom and Foreknowledge (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991): p. 3.

² Alvin Plantinga, God and Other Minds, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press): p. 134. Also see Peter van Inwagen, “Free Will Remains a Mystery” in The Oxford Handbook of Free Will, Robert Kane, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002): 158-177; Peter van Inwagen, “When Is the Will Free?” Philosophical Perspectives 3, Philosophy of Mind and Action Theory, 1989, James E. Tomberlin, ed. (Atascadero, CA: Ridgewiew Publishing Co., 1989): 399-422. Reprinted in Agents, Causes and Events: Essays on Indeterminism and Free Will, Timothy O’Connor, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995): 219-238; William Hasker, The Emergent Self (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999); Eleonore Stump, “Augustine on Free Will” in The Cambridge Companion to Augustine, Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001): 124-147; Timothy O’Connor, “Agent Causation” in Agents, Causes, and Events: Essays on Indeterminism and Free Will, ed. Timothy O’Connor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995): 170-200; Thomas P. Flint, Divine Providence: The Molinist Account (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

³ John Martin Fischer (1994) has argued that God’s existence raises exactly the same problems with respect to moral responsibility as causal determinism. John Martin Fischer, The Metaphysics of Free Will (Cambridge MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1994).

⁴ If God is an atemporal Being, outside time altogether, ‘foreknowledge’ is not quite the right word. The point, however, is this: whether God is in Eternity, or has a past and future, He knows

exactly what events, including all human actions, occur at what times in our future. If God exists and determinism is true, it is easy to see how God can have this kind of knowledge.

⁵ Linda Zagzebski, “Recent Work on Divine Foreknowledge and Free Will” in The Oxford Handbook on Free Will, Robert Kane, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002): p. 48.

⁶ Augustine, On Nature and Grace, in Saint Augustine: Four Anti-Pelagian Writings: On Nature and Grace, On the Proceedings of Pelagius, On the Predestination of the Saints, On the Gift of Perseverance, John A. Mourant and William J. Collinge, trans. (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1992): pp. 3-90. Also, Augustine, On the Predestination of the Saints in Saint Augustine: Four Anti-Pelagian Writings: On Nature and Grace, On the Proceedings of Pelagius, On the Predestination of the Saints, On the Gift of Perseverance, John A. Mourant and William J. Collinge, trans. (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1992): pp. 218-270.

⁷ I’ll omit consideration of the case where a nonlibertarian act of free will is also necessary for salvation. Below, I’ll argue that nonlibertarian free will is needed for faith, but not for salvation.

⁸ Martin Luther, On the Bondage of the Will in Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation, trans. and ed. by E. Gordon Rupp (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1969): p. 328.

⁹ Thomas P. Flint, “Two Accounts of Providence” in Divine and Human Action, Thomas V. Morris, ed. (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1988): p. 165. The “Thomist God is an active sovereign who knowingly causes (directly or indirectly) all that occurs.” (p. 164)

¹⁰ A discussion of Molinism is beyond the scope of this project. Suffice it to say that if God is omnipotent and created the world ex nihilo, I do not see how there could be contingent propositions over the truth of which He had no control. It seems as if Molinism holds that, in creating the world, God had to play the with hand that He found Himself with; this raises the question of how one hand rather than another got dealt. For an impressive defense of this view of libertarian free will, however, see Flint, Divine Providence, op. cit..

¹¹ When I speak of Pelagius, I mean Pelagius-as-represented-in-On-Nature-and-Grace.

¹² Augustine, On the Predestination of the Saints, op. cit., 23(25).

¹³ *Ibid*, (8); 26.(29))

¹⁴ Ibid. 48.56. Pelagius used ‘nature’ and ‘grace’ as near synonyms. Since God is the Author of nature, grace comes from God. Augustine complains of the examples that Pelagius gives of grace: a man can dispute by means of his tongue, a bird can fly by means of its wings; a rabbit can run by means of its feet. Augustine comments that these things (tongue, wings, feet) are effective by nature; Pelagius has not “proposed anything that we would want to understand to be grace.” Augustine, On Nature and Grace, 11.(12).

¹⁵ Augustine, On Nature and Grace, 23.(25).

¹⁶ For a summary of interpretations of Original Sin, see “Original Sin,” in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone, eds.(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997): pp. 1195-1197. For an interesting discussion of the biblical basis for the doctrine, see Philip L. Quinn, “Disputing the Augustinian Legacy: John Locke and Jonathan Edwards on Romans 5:12-19,” in The Augustinian Tradition, edited by Gareth B. Matthews (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999): 233-250.

¹⁷ Augustine is quoting Pelagius, On Nature and Grace, 30.(34).

¹⁸ Ibid., 46.(54)

¹⁹ Ibid., 29.(33))

²⁰ Gareth B. Matthews, Thought’s Ego in Augustine and Descartes (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).

²¹ Augustine, On Nature and Grace, op cit., 8.(9).

²² Ibid., 9.(10).

²³ Ibid., 4.(4).

²⁴ Ibid., 19.(21).

²⁵ Ibid., 3.(3).

²⁶ Ibid., 4.(4).

²⁷ According to Thomas Flint (Divine Providence, op. cit., pp. 29-31), one reason to believe in libertarian freedom is that God has it, and we should have the same freedom as God. According to Augustine, after the Fall, we do not have libertarian free will. Moreover, insofar as libertarian

free will entails the ability to will both good and evil, it is doubtful that God has it. Being essentially good, He cannot will evil. For Augustine, true freedom is the inability to will evil (which perhaps human beings will have in eternal life), not libertarian freedom.

²⁸ James Wetzel, “Predestination, Pelagianism, and Foreknowledge,” in The Cambridge Companion to Augustine, Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001): p. 54.

²⁹ Romans 9:15-16

³⁰ “O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!” (Romans 11:33)

³¹ Augustine, On the Predestination of the Saints, op. cit., 19.(38))

³² Ibid., 5.(10)

³³ John 15:16.

³⁴ John M. Rist, “Augustine on Free Will and Predestination,” in Augustine: A Collection of Critical Essays, R.A. Markus, ed. (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books/Doubleday & Co., 1972): p. 238. Emphasis his.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 237. If God is Omnipotent Sovereign, how could it be otherwise?

³⁶ I have been using the term ‘salvation’ to refer to the work of atonement. Some use ‘salvation’ in a broader sense—as atonement together with our response (which may be eschatological). The important point is that neither involves free will as libertarians construe it.

³⁷ This point is explicitly affirmed by the Lutheran-Catholic Concordat, which is compatibilist throughout: “When Catholics say that persons ‘co-operate’ in preparing for and accepting justification by consenting to God’s justifying action, they see such personal consent as itself an effect of grace, not as an action arising from innate human abilities.” Joint Declaration on Doctrine of Justification by the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church (1998). 4.1.20.

³⁸ Augustine, On the Predestination of the Saints, op. cit., 8.(13).

³⁹ Ibid., 8.(13).

⁴⁰ See Eleonore Stump, “Augustine on Free Will” in The Cambridge Companion to Augustine, Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001): 124-147. . I find Augustine’s views in On the Free Choice of the Will confusing.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 130-1.

⁴² Augustine, The Essential Augustine, ed. Vernon J. Bourke (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co.).1981, p. 177. Emphasis mine.

⁴³ Quoted in Dennis Cresswell, Augustine’s Dilemma: Grace and Eternal Law in the Major Works of Augustine of Hippo (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Company).1997, p. 101. From City of God, Book V:9. Bettenson, 191-2.

⁴⁴ Quoted by Cresswell, p. 102.

⁴⁵ Thomas Aquinas, Aquinas, Summa Theologica, in Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas, vol. 2, Anton C. Pegis, ed. (New York: Random House, 1944). First Part of the Second Part, question 9, article 6, Reply Obj 3: “God moves man’s will, as the Universal Mover, to the universal object of the will, which is the good.” Also: “[T]he cause of the will can be none other than God.” In addition, see Thomas P. Flint, Divine Providence, op. cit., p. 87. Although Flint himself defends Molina’s view, Aquinas can be interpreted along compatibilist lines. See Thomas J. Loughran, “Aquinas, Compatibilist” in Divine and Human Agency: Anglican, Catholic, and Lutheran Perspectives, F. Michael McLain and W. Mark Richardson, eds. (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1999): 1-40; and Robert Passnau Pasnau, Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature: A Philosophical Study of Summa Theologiae 1a 75-89 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁴⁶ Martin Luther, On the Bondage of the Will in Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation, trans. and ed. by E. Gordon Rupp (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1969): passim.

⁴⁷ I am assuming that synergism—Melanchthon’s (Protestant) view that our wills co-operate with God’s—requires libertarian free will. As we would cast the debate today, Melanchthon’s defenders would take co-operating wills to be compatibilist, and his detractors would take co-operating wills to be libertarian. I don’t know whether views of co-operating wills (Protestant or

Roman Catholic) actually require libertarian free will or whether they can be interpreted in a compatibilist vein.

⁴⁸ I am struck by the fact that so many Christians want to be libertarians. See, for example, Peter van Inwagen, “Free Will Remains a Mystery” in The Oxford Handbook of Free Will, Robert Kane, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002): 158-177. Van Inwagen has said of an argument concluding that libertarian free will is incompatible with *indeterminism*, “I fervently hope that there is something wrong with it.”

⁴⁹ See Harry Frankfurt, “Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person,” Journal of Philosophy 68 (1971): 5-20. Conditions (i)-(iii) below are borrowed from Frankfurt.. I added condition (iv). The role of the first-person perspective in compatibilist conditions of free will has been overlooked. Conditions (ii) – (iv) require a first-person perspective. I shall give a fuller compatibilist account of moral responsibility in “On Being One’s Own Person” in Reasons of One’s Own, Maureen Sie, Bert van den Brink, Marc Slors, eds. (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, forthcoming).

⁵⁰ However, if God played the same causal role in evil acts as in good acts, then the problem of whether or not God is the author of evil would arise in an acute form. Given God’s essential goodness, He cannot be the author of evil; but showing rationally the coherence of this truth with the existence of sin and evil is a difficult matter. I personally would take it on faith.

⁵¹ For a defense of the agent-causal version of libertarianism, see Timothy O’Connor, O’Connor, Timothy (1995), “Agent Causation” in Agents, Causes, and Events: Essays on Indeterminism and Free Will, ed. Timothy O’Connor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995): 170-200; and Randolph Clarke, “Toward a Credible Agent-Causal Account of Free Will” in Agents, Causes, and Events: Essays on Indeterminism and Free Will, ed. Timothy O’Connor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995): 201-215. For a defense of the event-causal version of libertarianism see Robert Kane, The Significance of Free Will (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

⁵² Ibid., p. 4.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 4.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 35.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 4. Emphasis mine.

⁵⁶ Roderick Chisholm, “Freedom and Action,” in Freedom and Determinism, Keith Lehrer, ed. (New York: Random House, 1966): p. 23. Emphasis mine. Timothy O’Connor, another agent-causalist, mentions that some have used the term ‘unmoved movers,’ but he prefers ‘not wholly moved movers.’ (O’Connor, op. cit., p. 174). The latter is suggestive, but not sufficiently developed to know whether it would conflict with the doctrine of creation. O’Connor wants to allow causal relations between an agent’s reason and resulting behavior. On O’Connor’s view, agents have a property that can “*make possible* the direct, purposive bringing about of an effect *by the agent* who bears it.” (p. 177) Emphasis his.

⁵⁷ Eleonore Stump, “Augustine on Free Will,” op. cit., p. 126.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 143, note 7.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 143, note 7. Stump must be thinking of ‘cause’ only as ‘necessary condition.’

⁶⁰ I suspect that consensus Christian philosophers are so convinced of the truth of libertarianism and the falsity of compatibilism that they simply do not notice that there is a logical conflict between libertarianism and orthodox Christian doctrine—no matter how one understands God’s causal action.

⁶¹ I remain doubtful. Libertarians point out that if we have libertarian free will, God cannot cause us always to do good. (See Alvin Plantinga, “God, Evil and the Metaphysics of Freedom,” in The Nature of Necessity (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974): 164-195. Reprinted in The Problem of Evil, Marilyn McCord Adams and Robert Merrihew Adams, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992): 83-109.) But the logical point is that if our free will were libertarian, God could never be a cause of our freely doing good.

⁶² See Chapters 1-3 in Derk Pereboom, Living Without Free Will (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) for a new and thoroughgoing refutation of the view that we have libertarian free will. (On the other hand, I did not find persuasive his arguments against compatibilism.)

⁶³ The challenge for compatibilism has been to give sufficient conditions for moral responsibility. I believe that (CFW) does provide sufficient conditions. But (CFW) may not

provide necessary conditions. There may be other sets of sufficient conditions, as well. For example, I think that Paul would feel morally responsible for the evil that he does although he does not want to (Romans 7:19). Such acts would not satisfy (CFW), but there may be other compatibilist sufficient conditions for moral responsibility that they would satisfy. What is clear is that no libertarian view can accommodate our being morally responsible for such acts.

⁶⁴ One difference between the consensus philosophers and me is that they seem to take libertarianism to be a view that must be held fixed. By contrast, I take moral responsibility to be a fixed point of doctrine. Since I think that libertarianism is false anyway (on nontheological grounds), I think that it is no service to Christian thought to interpret moral responsibility in a way that entails libertarianism.

⁶⁵ Plantinga extends his free-will defense to natural evils like earthquakes by showing that it is logically possible that natural evils are caused by free nonhuman beings (devils). This is enough to show the logical consistency of the proposition that God is omnipotent, omniscient and wholly good with the existence of natural evil. But, as Plantinga (“God, Evil and the Metaphysics of Freedom,” *op. cit.*, pp. 192-3) says, this is only a logical point, not an explanation of natural evil.

⁶⁶ Many people agree with Albert Schweitzer who, in Out of My Life and Thought: An Autobiography, said: “Even while I was a boy at school it was clear to me that no explanation of the evil in the world could ever satisfy me; all explanations, I felt, ended in sophistries, and at bottom had no other object than to minimize our sensitivity to the world around us.” Quoted by Stanley N. Katz, “Choosing Justice over Excellence,” The Chronicle of Higher Education, May 17, 2002: B9.

⁶⁷ Matthews, Thought’s Ego, *op. cit.*, p. 99)

⁶⁸ I Timothy 2:4.

⁶⁹ Christopher Kirwan, Augustine (London: Routledge, 1989): p. 128. Sometimes Augustine interpreted the text to mean that representatives from all groups of men are saved.

⁷⁰ Augustine, Enchiridion 103.27. Quoted by Kirwan, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

⁷¹ See, e.g., Marilyn McCord Adams, Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999). Other recent proponents of (at least the possibility of)

universalism include Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. II, part 2, Ch. 7, section 35, #3, “The Determination of the Elect” (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1957): 421-423; Karl Barth, “The Humanity of God” (1956), in The Humanity of God, (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1974): 37-65; John Hick, Death and Eternal Life (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994).

⁷² As I mentioned, Pereboom argues that compatibilist free will is untenable as well. I intend to respond to Pereboom in “Moral Responsibility Without Libertarianism” (in preparation).

⁷³ I am grateful to Katherine A. Sonderegger, for criticisms, suggestions and many illuminating discussions of these issues. Also, thanks to Gareth Matthews for helpful comments.