

The Basics of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom

Handout for Lecture 5

Figure 1:



Criticisms

The incompatibility of God's timeless knowledge with human freedom

- (1) God timelessly knows x .
- (2) If God timelessly knows x , then x is *now*-necessary.
- (3) x is *now*-necessary. (from 1,2)
- (4) If x is *now*-necessary, then I cannot do otherwise than x .
- (5) I cannot do otherwise than x . (from 3,4)
- (6) If I cannot do otherwise than x , then I am not free with respect to x .
- (7) I am not free with respect to x . (from 5,6)

Simple "foreknowledge" is useless for divine providence

Even God could not use simple foreknowledge of an actual future event to determine his own prior actions in the providential governance of the world.

God would lack knowledge of tensed facts

fact – a state of affairs described by a true declarative sentence
tensed fact – facts about how far away from the present something is.

Knowledge of all and only tenseless facts would lack knowledge of tensed facts.

Anyone who had knowledge of tensed facts would have to be in time since knowledge in reference to what is true *now* would constantly change.