

# Fatalism vs. activism in the religious world

Merriam Webster:Fatalism - a doctrine that events are fixed in advance so that human beings are powerless to change them; *also* : a belief in or attitude determined by this doctrine

“Inshallah” – Literally “if God wills,” used as “it’s the will of God.”

In the 1970's, a friend told me of the wild action of a Muslim who had been dancing around in a refinery with a 6 foot long pipe wrench. He accidentally hit a valve and put the entire refinery down for 6 weeks. The man yelled, "Inshallah" and no disciplinary action could be taken. His years in Iran were some of the most frustrating times of his life because Islam requires no personal responsibility.

Calvinism shares this doctrine of no personal responsibility as it teaches that the Sovereign Lord has predestined every action of every man and not a single thing can be changed from God's plan.

Of course, if you are one of the elect, you will follow God's plan and be saved.

If you do not follow God's plan, it's because God did not choose you to be saved and you will be eternally lost.

The Scriptures teach that you are responsible for your actions.

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

There is no sin passed on to you  
from your parents.

Ezek 18:20 "The person who sins will die.  
The son will not bear the punishment for the  
father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the  
punishment for the son's iniquity; the  
righteousness of the righteous will be upon  
himself, and the wickedness of the wicked  
will be upon himself.

God does not make you do anything but he does lay a plan before you that will lead you to eternal life if you are willing to follow it.



Matt 7:21 " Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. 22 " Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

If God has not planned every step  
of our lives, what are we to do?

God has a plan he wants you to  
follow, but it requires your active  
participation.

This free choice given by the God of the Bible is illustrated by Joshua's command to the Israelites, *choose you this day whom ye will serve* Josh 24:15.

Paul talks about the decisions we must make in choosing to follow the Lord, *However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.* Rom 10:16-17

The determination to follow Christ is something we have to decide! And do!

Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

How can we be reconciled to God?

2 Cor 5:18 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

We cannot be reconciled while still practicing sin.

1 John 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

We learn from the Scriptures that  
we must *walk in the Light*.

This calls for action on our part.  
Walking is exercise not simply  
sitting in a pew.

Matt 20:2 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2

"When he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard.



The parallels in this passage are easy to figure out. Since it is the “kingdom of heaven” Jesus speaks of the church on earth to be gathered up to heaven.

Those who are laborers are those who will follow Jesus.

The vineyard is the world in which the Saints work.

The work to be done in the vineyard is two fold.

1. Tending the old vines - by pastors, evangelists, teachers
2. Planting new vines - by evangelists

Eph 4:11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God,

1 Peter 5:1 The elders which are  
among you I exhort, ... 2 Feed the  
flock of God which is among you,  
(KJV)

The NASB says “Shepherd the flock.”

The NIV says, “Be shepherds of the  
flock.”

Who are the evangelists and teachers?

2 Tim 2:2 The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Anyone who is faithful and able to teach!

That describes virtually every Christian.

Directed to everyone.

Mark 16:15 " Go into all the world  
and preach the gospel to all creation.

You may say this was given to the  
apostles only.

Matt 28:19 " Go therefore and  
make disciples of all the nations,  
baptizing them in the name of the  
Father and the Son and the Holy  
Spirit, 20 teaching them to  
observe all that I commanded  
you; and lo, I am with you  
always, even to the end of the  
age."

What do we preach?

Rom 10:14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

... 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.



2 Thess 3:1 Finally, brethren,  
pray for us that the word of the  
Lord will spread rapidly and be  
glorified, just as it did also with  
you; 2 and that we will be rescued  
from perverse and evil men; for  
not all have faith.

3 But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. 4 We have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you are doing and will continue to do what we command. 5 May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ.

It's a way of life!

4 We have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you are doing and will continue to do what we command.

What is God's plan for us? How  
are our lives to be directed?

5 May the Lord direct your hearts  
into the love of God and into the  
steadfastness of Christ.

Matt 28:19 " Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Are you a follower of Christ?

Have you been baptized?

If your answer to both is, "yes", are you teaching others?