

# The Arminian Indictment: Eleven-Point Logical Collapse

"I, I am the LORD, and besides me there is no saviour." - Isaiah 43:11

"I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other." - Isaiah 42:8

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## 1. It Is Not Finished

Unlimited Atonement: Christ said "It is finished" (*τετέλεσται - tetelestai*), but in Arminian theology, it's reduced to "the way is made possible." The cross is mere potential, not actual—like a redemption coupon. Christ died for everyone, but it only works if you cash in the voucher. Redemption isn't accomplished—it's merely available.

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## 2. Divine Entrapment

God gives prevenient grace as a partial regenerating gift, enabling humans to respond to the gospel. However:

- **God foreknows the outcome** – He knows before giving prevenient grace who will accept and who will reject it
- **God could make it effectual** – If God is omnipotent, He could give grace that guarantees salvation rather than merely enabling response
- **God gives insufficient grace anyway** – Despite foreknowing rejection and having power to prevent it, God gives prevenient grace He knows will be rejected by specific individuals
- **God punishes the foreknown failure** – After giving grace He knew would be insufficient, God punishes those individuals for failing to accept what He foreknew they wouldn't accept

This makes God morally culpable because He had foreknowledge of the failure, power to prevent the failure, chose to allow the failure, then punishes the failure He foreknew and could have prevented. God becomes the cosmic entrappor who sets people up for failure.

**The inescapable trilemma:**

- **If God didn't foreknow:** Denies omniscience (heresy)
- **If God couldn't make grace effectual:** Denies omnipotence (heresy)
- **If God foreknew and could have prevented but chose not to:** Makes God cruel—giving grace He knows is insufficient, then punishing for the failure He foreknew and could have prevented (denies divine goodness - heresy)

**Arminianism forces you to deny either God's omniscience, omnipotence, or goodness. Pick your heresy.**

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### 3. Trinitarian Schism

The Father wills all to be saved (1 Tim 2:4), the Spirit cannot regenerate unless man permits, and the Son's atonement is ineffectual without human consent. This creates functional tri-theism where the three persons of the Trinity have conflicting wills and abilities:

**The Father's will is frustrated:** He desires all to be saved, but most perish. His will is subject to human will.

**The Son's work is incomplete:** His atonement makes salvation possible but doesn't actually save anyone. "It is finished" becomes "It could be finished if you cooperate."

**The Spirit's power is constrained:** He cannot regenerate, cannot grant faith, cannot overcome resistance. He offers, invites, woos—but cannot accomplish. He's waiting on human permission.

**The human will becomes the tiebreaker** that determines which divine person "wins." This isn't the Trinity working in perfect unity to accomplish salvation—it's three divine persons with conflicting desires where human choice determines the outcome. That's not orthodox Trinitarianism—it's functional tri-theism with a fourth entity (human will) acting as arbiter.

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### 4. Double Jeopardy Paradox

If Christ actually paid for all sins of all people (unlimited atonement), then either:

**Option 1: Universalism is true** – All are saved because payment was made. Christ's blood accomplished what it was shed for.

**Option 2: God punishes twice** – Christ bore the penalty for all sins, yet unbelievers are punished in hell for those same sins. God extracts payment from Christ on the cross, then extracts payment again from the unbeliever in hell.

Arminians reject universalism, which means they accept double jeopardy. But this makes God unjust—demanding payment twice for the same debt.

**The attempted escape:** "Christ's payment is only applied to believers."

**The problem:** Then the atonement didn't actually pay for anyone's sins—it made payment *possible* contingent on human response. But Scripture doesn't say Christ made salvation possible; it says He "made purification for sins" (Heb 1:3), He "gave himself for our sins to deliver us" (Gal 1:4), He "secured eternal redemption" (Heb 9:12). These are accomplished facts, not contingent possibilities.

Arminian atonement isn't actual—it's potential. But potential atonement means no one was actually atoned for on the cross. The work is incomplete until human cooperation activates it. That contradicts Christ's declaration: "It is finished."

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## 5. The Preventive Grace Contradiction: Semi-Pelagianism Exposed

If preventive grace is universal, then total depravity is only theoretical—no one ever actually experiences it. This reveals Arminianism as semi-Pelagianism, not historic Protestantism.

### **The Core Contradiction:**

- Arminians claim: "We affirm total depravity (dead in sin, unable to respond)"
- Arminians also claim: "Universal preventive grace enables all to respond"
- **Result:** No one is ever actually dead—everyone is enabled

### **The Unanswerable Question: WHEN is preventive grace applied?**

- At birth? Then total depravity never exists
- At "age of accountability"? No biblical support; who determines it?
- At gospel hearing? Then it's not universal
- Always present post-Fall? Then the Fall didn't make us spiritually dead

### **What This Reveals:**

The ACTUAL human condition isn't what Scripture describes (dead, enslaved, blind, unable - Eph 2:1, Rom 8:7-8, 2 Cor 4:4, John 6:44). It's "universally enabled to choose if they want."

**That's semi-Pelagianism**—the exact position condemned by the Second Council of Orange (529 AD). You don't share the "T" with Reformed theology. You share it with Pelagius. The human condition isn't "dead needing resurrection" but "enabled needing cooperation."

Stop claiming to affirm total depravity. You've redefined it out of existence.

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## 6. The Prayer Incoherence: Functional Monergists Who Profess Synergism

Arminians pray as if God sovereignly saves, while their theology says He cannot.

### **What Arminian Theology Requires:**

If preventive grace is already given, God won't override free will, and God is waiting on human choice—then prayer for salvation becomes incoherent. You cannot logically pray:

- ✗ "God, save them" (He's done all He will do)
- ✗ "Change their heart" (violates free will)
- ✗ "Grant them faith" (must originate from them)
- ✗ "Overcome their resistance" (that's irresistible grace)

**The only consistent Arminian prayer:** "I hope they choose you, God." Not petition—spectator hope.

### **What Arminians Actually Pray:**

When the stakes are real (dying parent, wayward child), they pray: "God, **save** them, **change** their heart, **grant** them faith, **overcome** their resistance."

**Monergistic prayers. Reformed prayers. Prayers asking God to do what their theology says He won't do.**

### **Why the Hypocrisy?**

Because deep down, they know humans are dead and need God to make them alive, wills are enslaved and need God to free them. Their prayers reveal they don't believe their own theology.

### **The Foreknowledge Problem:**

If God foreknows who will choose Him, prayer can't change it. You're either asking God to do what He already foreknew (redundant) or change what He foreknows (impossible).

**Verdict:** Arminians are functional monergists who profess synergism. Their prayers prove they don't believe what they teach.

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## **7. Moral vs. Metaphysical Freedom**

Scripture presents the will as enslaved, not autonomous (Rom. 8:7–8; John 6:44). Humans have moral freedom (real choices) but not metaphysical freedom (ability to choose contrary to their nature). The unregenerate will is enslaved to sin and cannot choose God (Rom 6:17, 8:7-8). Arminianism requires metaphysical freedom that Scripture never grants.

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## **8. Glory Theft: The Decisive Factor Problem**

**Isaiah 43:11:** "I, I am the LORD, and besides me there is no saviour."

**Isaiah 42:8:** "My glory I give to no other."

### **The Core Problem:**

If two people hear the gospel with equal prevenient grace, and one believes while the other doesn't—**what made the difference?**

**Arminian Answer:** "Human will. One cooperated with grace; the other resisted."

### **This Creates Two Violations:**

#### **Violation 1: Co-Savior Status (Isaiah 43:11)**

- God provides possibility
- Humans provide actuality
- The human will is the decisive factor

But God says: "**Besides me there is NO saviour.**"

### **Violation 2: Glory Theft (Isaiah 42:8)**

If you believed while your neighbour (with equal grace) didn't, **you did something he didn't do.**

**Question:** "Why are you saved and your neighbour isn't?"

**Arminian answer:** "God gave us both grace, but I chose to believe and he didn't."

**Translation:** "I made the right choice; he made the wrong one."

**That's boasting. That's glory theft.**

But God says: "**My glory I give to no other.**"

### **The Only Escape: Monergism**

"Because God chose to save me (Eph 1:4-5), gave me faith (Eph 2:8), regenerated me (John 3:3-8), and drew me effectually (John 6:44). I contributed nothing. All glory to God alone."

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## **9. The Pastoral Crisis: The Spirit Seals You Until You Unseal Yourself**

Arminian theology creates perpetual uncertainty about ultimate salvation, breaks explicit biblical promises, and reduces Christians to anxious performers.

### **The Unbreakable Chain That Arminianism Breaks**

**Romans 8:29-30:** "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined... called... justified... **glorified.**"

**The Golden Chain:** Foreknew → Predestined → Called → Justified → Glorified

**All past tense—even glorification.** Everyone foreknown IS glorified. No one drops out.

**Arminian Problem:** They must insert breakable links—"justified (if you persevere) → glorified (might not happen)."

**The Devastating Question:** "Can someone be justified but not glorified?"

- **Arminian answer:** "Yes, if they apostatize"
- **Paul's answer:** "Those whom he justified he also glorified" (no exceptions)

**Romans 8:38-39:** "Nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God."

**Arminian caveat:** "...except yourself."

**But you are part of creation. Paul's promise is comprehensive.**

### **The Shepherd Who Can't Keep His Sheep**

**John 10:28-29:** "I give them eternal life, and **they will never perish**, and **no one** will snatch them out of my hand."

**Arminian interpretation:** "They won't perish unless they choose to leave."

**But Jesus said they will NEVER perish—no conditions, no qualifications.**

Sheep are stupid, prone to wander, helpless—that's why they need a shepherd. The shepherd's job is to **keep** the sheep, not merely offer them the opportunity to stay.

Arminian sheep are autonomous agents who keep themselves. That's not a sheep needing a shepherd—that's self-sufficiency.

### The Pastoral Devastation

**Perpetual Uncertainty:** You can know you're saved **today**, but not tomorrow. If you apostatize in 15 years, it proves you weren't actually saved today—you just thought you were.

**Performance-Based Assurance:** Your assurance rises and falls with your performance. Functional Roman Catholicism—assurance based on works, not Christ's finished work.

**The Irony:** Even Arminians can't be certain their faith is the kind that will last. They live with the same uncertainty they accuse Calvinists of creating.

### Reformed Assurance:

Assurance isn't based on your grip on God—it's based on **God's grip on you**.

- Christ's finished work: "It is finished"
- God's promise: "He who began a good work will complete it" (Phil 1:6)
- The Spirit's seal: "The guarantee of our inheritance" (Eph 1:13-14)

**The Spirit doesn't seal you until you unseal yourself. When God seals, it stays sealed. When the Shepherd keeps His sheep, they never perish—not because they're strong enough to stay, but because He's strong enough to keep them.**

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## 10. The Corporate Election Evasion

When confronted with the personal nature of election and accountability, Arminians retreat to "corporate election"—the claim that God elected "the church" as a category, not specific individuals. This facade collapses the moment Scripture's universal language meets its unavoidable demand for personal response.

### The Biblical Pattern:

The New Testament repeatedly pairs the word *πᾶν* ("all") with a **singular addressee**:

- **John 3:16:** "whoever believes" (singular)
- **1 Timothy 2:6:** Christ "gave Himself as a ransom for all people"
- **Acts 17:30:** "all men everywhere to repent" (personal command)
- **Mark 1:15:** "repent and believe" (addressed to each hearer)

Even if the scope is corporate (all types—Jew and Gentile), the **invitation is personal** and the **accountability is individual**.

### The Gospel's Own Parables Prove This:

- **The prodigal son** (Luke 15:11-32): A father's love toward a single wayward child
- **The lost sheep** (Matt 18:12-14): A shepherd leaving ninety-nine to seek one
- **The unforgiving servant** (Matt 18:21-35): Forgiveness measured against a single debtor's attitude
- **The vineyard workers** (Matt 20:1-16): Each labourer rewarded according to his own response

Each story treats the recipient as a **distinct person** whose fate is decided by his own heart, not by membership in a corporate class.

#### **Why Corporate Election Cannot Escape Entrapment:**

Even if God elected "the church" corporately:

- Individual persons still face the gospel call (Acts 17:30, 2 Cor 5:20)
- Individual persons are commanded to repent and believe (Mark 1:15)
- Individual persons are held accountable for their response (John 3:18, 36)

**If the grace given to that individual is non-effectual (prevenient grace), the entrapment problem remains.** God still commands a response the person cannot give without grace that actually overcomes inability.

Corporate election doesn't solve the problem—it just relocates it. The individual still needs effectual grace, or he's being held accountable for what he cannot do.

#### **The Only Resolution:**

John 6:44, 65 describes divine drawing as **intrinsically effectual**—all whom the Father draws come, and all whom He gives are raised. The dichotomy is stark: either grace is sovereign and effectual (Reformed theology), or God condemns on the basis of an inadequate gift (entrainment).

**Verdict:** Corporate election is a category mistake. The gospel is proclaimed to every person (scope), but only effectual grace enables the response. Hiding behind "corporate language" doesn't remove individual accountability or solve the moral problem of insufficient grace.

## 11. Anticipating a Pivot to Provisionism

When confronted with the Entrapment Problem and the incoherence of prevenient grace, some retreat from classical Arminianism to **Provisionism** (also called "Traditionalism")—a position popularized by Leighton Flowers. This pivot doesn't solve the contradictions; it multiplies them by explicitly denying what the text says.

#### **The Provisionist Claim:**

Provisionism denies the need for prevenient grace altogether by rejecting the classical doctrine of total depravity:

"The gospel is a sufficient work of supernatural grace to enable whosoever hears it to believe... Nothing in all of scripture clearly teaches that fallen humanity has lost the innate moral capacity to respond positively to God's own gracious appeals." — Leighton Flowers, *Soteriology 101*

In this view:

- Man retains **innate moral capacity** to respond to the gospel
- No regeneration is needed **prior to** faith
- Total depravity/inability is a "Calvinistic invention"
- The gospel message itself is the only "supernatural grace" required

### Why This Pivot Fails Even Harder:

The Greek texts Provisionism must deny use **standard constructions for categorical inability**:

**Romans 8:7-8:** "Those in the flesh **cannot** (οὐ δύναται) submit to God's law... **cannot** please God."

**1 Corinthians 2:14:** "The natural person **is not able** (οὐ δύναται) to understand the things of the Spirit."

**John 6:44, 65:** "No one is **able** (οὐδεὶς δύναται) to come to me unless the Father draws him... unless it is **granted** (δεδομένον, perfect passive) by the Father."

**Ephesians 2:1, 5:** "And you, **being dead** (νεκροὺς) in your trespasses... God **made us alive** (συνεζωοποίησεν)."

**If Paul meant "unwilling," he had available:** οὐθέλω (not willing), ἀρνέομαι (refuse), ἀπειθέω (disobey).

**Paul chose οὐ δύναμαι—the standard construction for expressing inability.**

### Provisionism Doesn't Solve the Four Fatal Problems:

1. **Tetelestai Still Emptied:** If Christ died for all individuals and many perish, either universalism is true or God punishes twice. Denying total depravity doesn't solve the atonement problem.
2. **Divine Culpability Remains:** If God knows who will freely reject, could provide additional persuasive revelation, withholds it, then punishes—God is still the architect of the system producing failure. Calling it "free" doesn't absolve culpability.
3. **Trinitarian Incoherence Persists:** If salvation depends on libertarian choice, the Father's will is thwarted, the Son's work secures only possibility, and the Spirit's drawing fails. The three persons still have different power levels.
4. **Isaiah 43:11/42:8 Violated:** If salvation depends on human choice as the decisive factor, man shares the saving work and deserves some glory.

### The Verdict:

Classical Arminianism at least affirmed total depravity (aligning with Rom 8:7-8, 1 Cor 2:14, Eph 2:1). Provisionism **denies** what the Greek explicitly says. The retreat from Arminianism to

Provisionism doesn't solve contradictions—it moves further from Scripture by explicitly denying categorical inability where the text uses **οὐ δύναμαι** (not able) and **νεκρός** (dead).

All roads lead to monergism. The only coherent position that honours the Greek text, resolves logical contradictions, and preserves Trinitarian unity is **effectual grace**—salvation accomplished by God alone, from first to last.

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## 12. The Retreat to Molinism: God as Cosmic Counterfactual Calculator

When classical Arminianism collapses under scrutiny and Provisionism proves even worse, some retreat to **Molinism**—the idea that God has "middle knowledge" of what every possible free creature *would* choose in every possible circumstance, and uses this knowledge to actualize the "best feasible world."

### The Molinist Claim:

God possesses three types of knowledge:

- **Natural knowledge:** All possibilities (what *could* happen)
- **Middle knowledge:** All counterfactuals (what free creatures *would* do in any circumstance)
- **Free knowledge:** What will actually happen (given God's decree to actualize a specific world)

Using middle knowledge, God "navigates" around libertarian free choices to actualize a world where His purposes are accomplished while preserving creaturely autonomy. God doesn't cause choices; He knows what you *would* choose, then actualizes circumstances accordingly.

### Why This Fails to Solve Anything:

#### Problem 1: The Entrapment Remains—Now Pre-Creation

If God knows via middle knowledge that actualizing world X will result in person Y rejecting grace and perishing:

- God could actualize a different world where Y accepts grace
- God chooses to actualize world X anyway
- God then punishes Y for rejecting grace in the world God chose to actualize

**This is still entrapment**—just relocated to God's pre-creation decree. God is still the architect of the system that produces Y's failure, knowing it would produce that failure, having power to choose differently, and then punishing for the outcome He actualized.

#### Problem 2: God Becomes Hostage to Creaturely Counterfactuals

Molinism makes God's sovereignty **subordinate to creaturely freedom**. God cannot simply decree what will happen—He must work *around* what creatures *would freely choose* in various circumstances.

This means:

- God's will is constrained by creaturely counterfactuals

- God can only actualize "feasible worlds" (those consistent with libertarian freedom)
- Some worlds God *wants* may be impossible because of what creatures *would* choose
- God becomes a cosmic chess player reacting to moves He didn't determine

**But Scripture presents God as determining the moves themselves:**

**Isaiah 46:10:** "My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose."

- Not "I will navigate to the best outcome given creaturely counterfactuals"
- Not "I will accomplish what libertarian freedom permits"
- But "**I will accomplish** all my purpose"

**Ephesians 1:11:** "He works all things according to the counsel of **His will**."

- Not "according to the constraints of middle knowledge"
- Not "according to what creatures would freely choose"
- But according to **His will**—God's decree determines reality, not creaturely counterfactuals

**Daniel 4:35:** "He does according to his will... and none can stay his hand or say to him, 'What have you done?'"

- In Molinism, creaturely counterfactuals "stay His hand"—they limit what worlds are feasible
- God is answerable to libertarian freedom, which constrains His options

### **Problem 3: Romans 9:16 Explicitly Excludes This**

**Romans 9:16:** "So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who has mercy."

Molinism makes salvation ultimately depend on what creatures *would* will—that's the basis of middle knowledge. God actualizes a world knowing who *would* believe and who *would* reject. The counterfactual human willing becomes the decisive factor in which world gets actualized.

But Paul says salvation depends **not** on human willing (even counterfactual willing), but on **God's mercy alone**.

### **Problem 4: The Absurd Implications**

If Molinism is true:

- There might be people who *would* believe if born in different circumstances, but God actualized this world anyway, consigning them to hell
- God is doing His best given the constraints of libertarian freedom—His hands are tied
- The reason some are saved and others aren't is ultimately because of what they *would* choose, not because of God's sovereign election
- Prayer becomes even more incoherent—you're asking God to do something He may not be able to do because the person's counterfactual choices constrain His options

### **Problem 5: Glory Still Stolen**

The decisive factor is still **what you would choose**. God chose to actualize *this world* based on middle knowledge of what you *would* do. So the reason you're saved is because of your counterfactual free choice, which God saw via middle knowledge and actualized accordingly.

**That still makes you the decisive factor.** God provided the circumstances, but **you** provided the choice that made the difference. That's still glory theft (Isaiah 42:8) and co-saviour status (Isaiah 43:11).

#### **The Biblical Alternative:**

God doesn't navigate around free choices—**He ordains them**:

- **Acts 2:23:** Jesus delivered up "according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God"—God decreed the act, not merely foresaw what Judas *would* do
- **Genesis 50:20:** "You meant evil... God meant it for good"—same act, dual agency, God's decree
- **Proverbs 16:9:** "The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps"—God directs the willing, not just reacts to it
- **Philippians 2:13:** "God works in you both to will and to work"—God causes the willing itself

#### **The Verdict:**

Molinism is sophisticated Arminianism—it uses philosophical categories to obscure the same problems. It still makes God culpable (He actualizes the world knowing its outcomes), still subordinates God's will (to creaturely counterfactuals), still steals glory (your counterfactual choice is decisive), and still contradicts Romans 9:16 (salvation depends on what humans *would* will).

The retreat to middle knowledge doesn't solve the problem—it just adds a layer of complexity while keeping God hostage to libertarian outcomes He supposedly cannot control. That's not the God of Scripture.

**Scripture doesn't present God navigating around libertarian choices. It presents God ordaining those choices for His purposes, ensuring His will is accomplished in and through creaturely decisions—not despite them.**

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#### **Final Charge:**

Arminianism collapses under its own contradictions. It offers a God who intends but cannot achieve, a Christ who dies but cannot save, a Spirit who calls but cannot regenerate, and a gospel that provides anxiety instead of assurance. The system reveals itself as semi-Pelagian, steals glory from God, makes human will co-saviour, and leaves believers in perpetual uncertainty about their ultimate salvation.

The attempted retreats only prove the point: whether you flee to corporate election, Provisionism, or Molinism, you cannot escape the fundamental problem. **Either God sovereignly accomplishes salvation, or human will becomes ultimate.** Scripture permits only the first. Every alternative system requires the second. "**My sheep hear my voice... and they will never perish.**" No conditions. No exceptions. That's the gospel.