

Reading Questions for September 14

These questions cover a book chapter by William Rowe called “Predestination, Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom.” The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

*Background:*

Now that we’ve examined the general free will debate, we’re looking at a couple of particular debates in the free will literature. On Friday we looked at one on free will and neuroscience, today’s is on free will and divine foreknowledge. For it, we are reading a book chapter by William Rowe in which he lays out an important argument, one of whose premises is that God knows before we are born everything we will do, and whose conclusion is that there is no human freedom. In addition to laying out the argument, Rowe considers various ways of objecting to it.

*Questions:*

1. On pages 163-4, starting with the section “Freedom of Will or Choice,” Rowe introduces two ways of understanding freedom of will. What are the connection between the two ways of understanding freedom of will and divine predestination. Which of the two ways do you find more attractive and why?
2. On page 166, Rowe lays out his argument. He then lays out three objections. The first one we’ve just discussed. The second one we discussed last Monday. But the third is new – it appears in the section titled “The Denial of Foreknowledge” (173-6). This objection has two forms. What are they? Is either form plausible? Why?