

To dialog on predestination, humans must grasp God's superior ways

In Question Corner (CR, Oct. 29), Father John Dietzen reviews the longstanding (500-year) controversy over predestination, which was mostly a fight between Calvin and Luther, with Catholics hardly involved at all.

Both Protestant positions on predestination stem from one very essential a priori assumption: that God sees time the same way we humans experience it. Seen that way, God exists within time, and indeed God is subordinate to time. I call that putting a false god before God; time itself is that false god.

St. Augustine wrote about year 400 A.D. that God created space and time together; this insight was forgotten 1,000 years later. It is nearly impossible for humans to think in any other way than constrained by the linear, one-way progression of time.

The notion that God is above and beyond time, the creator of time, and one who comprehends all time boggles the human mind. But that's a deficiency of human thinking, not a deficiency of God.

Interfaith dialog on the subject of predestination will get somewhere when the parties humbly acknowledge their inability to grasp God's superior ways. Omnipresence means that God is both everywhere and everywhen.