

let us say the ordinary wicked man, fairly good from the world's viewpoint. The man of the world has a goodness that comes up about five inches, a standard let us say five inches from the floor. Let us say the average church member would be about nine inches. Let us say that the person who is a very devout earnest and active Christian would be two feet, their standard level from the floor, but ~~teh=stan=~~ the standard that Christ demands, the standard that is necessary if anyone is to be saved by his own goodness would be the standard that would reach clear up to the ceiling, or perhaps a hundred times as high as that. It is our duty to strive to attain the highest level we can of real love to God, love to our fellowman, pouring ourselves out in activity to Him, putting Him first in everything, ~~brining=ourselfes~~ freeing ourselves from sin, from evil, from wickedness. But when we have done all we come nowhere near the standard that God requires. It is natural to see from all this there developed the idea of a purgatory. After all if a person cannot atone for his sins here should he not suffer for years, perhaps centuries in purgatory to cleanse him from them. Yet there is no Biblical basis whatever for belief in purgatory and the examination of the standard that God requires shows that it would be absolutely impossible to == for a person to be freed by human means of any kind from the effects of his sin or of his turning away from God. Is it then hopeless? No. It is offered to us as a free gift. Believe, trust, accept. We are all invited to receive Christ as saviour. True, God has ordained all things that come to pass. True, ~~True,~~ God has elected those who believe in Him from the very foundation of the world. But as the Westminster Confession clearly says, this does not in any way affect the freedom of second causes == the reality of second causes or the right and duty of making choices. Ourx sin consists in the wrong choices we have made. It is not the situation in which we have been born. It is not the environment in which we have lived. for which God condemns us. It is the actual choices that we make.