

What is Socinianism and Open Theism?

Socinianism: is the heretical teachings of Lelio Sozzini (Latinised as Socinus; 1525-1562) but particularly of his nephew Faustus (1539-1604) which were based upon rationalism and humanism. The main setting for his errors was Poland where a church was founded on his principles. These included:

- Denial of the doctrine of the trinity and teaching that Christ was just a man, but who became God's viceroy after his sinless life and resurrection.
- Socinus denied the atonement as penal substitution, teaching a form of *governmental theory* [Christ's death was merely an example of faith and obedience]. There is no punishment for sin; men repent from their own power.
- He denied the person of the Holy Spirit, predestination, original sin, total depravity, imputed righteousness and hell.
- He also denied God's sovereignty, making God subject to the free decisions of men, insisting that he neither foreordains nor foreknows anything.

In a way, he was the first liberal theologian. His beliefs were published in the Racovian Catechism (1605). Socinus was a forerunner of modern Unitarianism and influenced the English Latitudinarian and Arian movements as well as the Cambridge Platonists in the Anglican Church.

Open Theism: The modern error of Open Theism, accepted by many UK Charismatic leaders and founded by Clark Pinnock, is almost Socinian but with no denial of the Trinity. It is an extreme form of Arminianism with a strenuous denial of God's sovereignty, to the degree that it teaches that God cannot know the future or determine what happens to free agents (men with free will).

When errors appear that strenuously deny the sovereignty of God, the logical conclusion is a tendency towards Socinianism. Thus the Baptist Andrew Fuller's (1754-1815) errors, being an extreme form of Amyraldism, were condemned by his contemporaries for leading to Socinianism amongst his followers.

What is Socinianism and Open Theism?

Socinianism: is the heretical teachings of Lelio Sozzini (Latinised as Socinus; 1525-1562) but particularly of his nephew Faustus (1539-1604) which were based upon rationalism and humanism. The main setting for his errors was Poland where a church was founded on his principles. These included:

- Denial of the doctrine of the trinity and teaching that Christ was just a man, but who became God's viceroy after his sinless life and resurrection.
- Socinus denied the atonement as penal substitution, teaching a form of *governmental theory* [Christ's death was merely an example of faith and obedience]. There is no punishment for sin; men repent from their own power.
- He denied the person of the Holy Spirit, predestination, original sin, total depravity, imputed righteousness and hell.
- He also denied God's sovereignty, making God subject to the free decisions of men, insisting that he neither foreordains nor foreknows anything.

In a way, he was the first liberal theologian. His beliefs were published in the Racovian Catechism (1605). Socinus was a forerunner of modern Unitarianism and influenced the English Latitudinarian and Arian movements as well as the Cambridge Platonists in the Anglican Church.

Open Theism: The modern error of Open Theism, accepted by many UK Charismatic leaders and founded by Clark Pinnock, is almost Socinian but with no denial of the Trinity. It is an extreme form of Arminianism with a strenuous denial of God's sovereignty, to the degree that it teaches that God cannot know the future or determine what happens to free agents (men with free will).

When errors appear that strenuously deny the sovereignty of God, the logical conclusion is a tendency towards Socinianism. Thus the Baptist Andrew Fuller's (1754-1815) errors, being an extreme form of Amyraldism, were condemned by his contemporaries for leading to Socinianism amongst his followers.