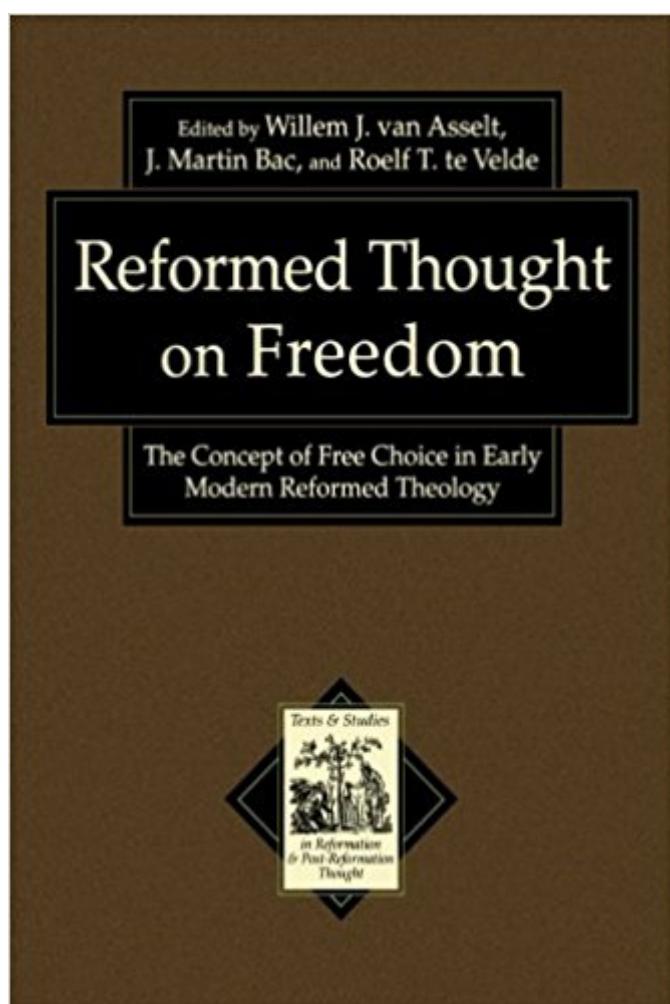


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# Reformed Thought On Freedom: The Concept Of Free Choice In Early Modern Reformed Theology (Texts And Studies In Reformation And Post-Reformation Thought)





## **Synopsis**

This book makes a major contribution to historical scholarship on the problem of free choice and to contemporary debates over determinism and divine foreknowledge of future events. It fills a significant gap in Reformed knowledge by presenting sources in translation and commentary on works of major importance to the Protestant tradition that have been neglected for centuries. The book begins with an introductory discussion of free choice and the Reformed tradition and then moves on to examine the concept of freedom in the work of six early modern Reformers: Girolamo Zanchi, Franciscus Junius, Franciscus Gomarus, Gisbertus Voetius, Francesco Turretini, and Bernardinus de Moor. It will be valued by all students of Reformed theology.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Reformed Thought on Freedom makes a major contribution to historical scholarship on the problem of free choice and to contemporary debates over determinism and divine foreknowledge of future events. It fills a significant gap in Reformed knowledge by presenting sources in translation and commentary on works of major importance to the Protestant tradition that have been neglected for centuries. "The issue of human freedom and agency was a vexed topic in Christian thought from the time of Augustine and Boethius in the early church, and debates continued apace throughout the Middle Ages. This excellent volume demonstrates how the Reformed Orthodox of the seventeenth century were part of this ongoing debate and how they appropriated the insights of the past as tools

in the present. An excellent contribution to the current remapping of the relationship of early modern Protestantism to late medieval theology."--Carl R. Trueman, Westminster Theological Seminary "The Reformed tradition is alleged, even by some Reformed scholars, not to have a place for genuine human freedom. This group of fine scholars from the University of Utrecht sets the record straight. Refusing to adopt the posture of the Reformed tradition's critics--Jesuits, Remonstrants, and Socinians--the authors use thorough historical scholarship and clear analysis of key texts by Zanchi, Junius, Voetius, Turretin, and de Moor to develop a persuasive case against the dominant stream of conventional scholarly wisdom. Since the implications are enormous for Reformed philosophical anthropology and the doctrines of predestination, total depravity, unconditional election, irresistible grace, and the preservation of the saints, the academy and the church alike owe the authors a large debt."--John Bolt, Calvin Theological Seminary

Willem J. van Asselt (PhD, University of Utrecht) is associate professor in the history of Reformed theology at Utrecht University in the Netherlands and also professor at the Evangelische Theologische Faculteit in Leuven. He has written numerous articles and books on Reformed history, including *The Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669)*. J. Martin Bac (PhD, Protestant Theological University) teaches classical languages in the Netherlands and is the author of several scholarly articles. Roelf T. te Velde (PhD candidate, Theological University of the Reformed Churches [Liberated] at Kampen) is the author of several scholarly articles and serves as a minister in the Reformed Church (Liberated) of Pijnacker-Nootdorp.

In both academic and pastoral circles, consideration of the subject of human "free" will or "free" choice in Reformation thought is often limited to considerations of the classic conflicts of Luther - vs. - Erasmus and Calvin - vs. - Pighius. The text of "Reformed Thought on Freedom" adds appreciably to the consideration of this topic by developing - as its subtitle states - "The Concept of Free Choice in Early Modern Theology." In this work, Willem J. van Asselt, J. Martin Bac, and Roelf T. te Velde (along with a host of contributors) provide considerable insight into the continued evolution of Christian scholarship in its understanding of the nature of human will. What is immediately refreshing is the authors' illumination of the contributions made in the works of "the guys you've never heard of": six early-modern scholars of philosophy and theology such as Girolamo Zanchi, Franciscus Gomarus, and Bernardinus de Moor. In doing so, this text provides an overview of the development of the Christian thought on the subject of "free" choice from the time of Luther and Calvin to the end of the 18th century. Of particular value is the contributors' consideration of the

backgrounds (personal and academic) and relationships that connect these six thinkers with one another. The editors of the text provide a thoughtful and careful perspective of how each of these six scholars' thoughts on "free" choice maintain continuity with those of Luther and Calvin and where each of them develops new or differing insights from earlier Reformist thought on this topic. This text is particularly helpful in bridging the development of Christian thought on the topic of human will from the time of the Reformation to the early stages of the Enlightenment in Western Europe. Thom BlackBiblical & Theological Studies Dept.Northwestern CollegeRoseville, MN

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