

Paper # 1

Modifying the Christian View of Determinism

The concept of this paper is an interesting one, and while the thesis is clear, I think it would be a good idea to modify it to better fit the paper's message. Notice the difference between the title of the paper, and the thesis. Instead of talking about how determinism does not prevent someone from being a Christian, you instead talking about non-conventional interpretations of determinism that fit in with Christianity. For the last sentence in the opening paragraph maybe say "When it comes down to it, however, a Christian scientist does not have to suspend disbelief about determinism in order to properly do his or her job because a nonconventional view of determinism fits into Christian faith" or something to that effect.

The strength of your arguments varies at different points in the paper. Some of them are very good and are conveyed well to the reader. On the other hand, some of the arguments are confusing, such as in the third paragraph. The example for why some Christians do not need to suspend disbelief about the doctrine of determinism is that if determinism were proved as a fact, some would believe it. If determinism was proven as a fact, then there would be no argument in the first place, and people who didn't change their beliefs would be ignorant. If God was *proven* to exist, then former atheists may accept that belief. However, we would not say that belief in God does not prevent someone from being an atheist.

Due to the nature of this topic, many of the arguments have to be speculative rather than based on fact and the reader would understand this. However, a few speculative ideas were presented in a way that looks like purported fact. For example, you say that "One of the most widely held beliefs in Christianity is that of

fate.” While many Christians may believe in this, fate is certainly not one of the most widely held beliefs of Christianity in general. Another issue you may want to consider is your argument in your final paragraph. This is all speculative, but still very valid points. However, if you presented it in a more formal way, instead of saying “what if?” maybe say “it is definitely possible that...” or in some other way. Your arguments are very insightful, and will appear even more impressive if presented in a slightly more formal way.

The flow of the paper is good, and it is structured in a way to build up your evidence before making your main arguments. My main suggestion would be to add a concluding paragraph to really wrap up the paper. The current final paragraph gets the reader thinking, and before you know it, the paper is over. A concluding paragraph may be a nice way to re-summarize all your arguments and add to the paper.

Terms and concepts are defined excellently in the paper. For the main topic, determinism, you define the idea two separate times and your arguments are much easier to understand as a result.

Language and diction are for the most part very appropriate. I would advise however to, on some occasions, replace informal phrases with more formal ones. Instead of saying “to-the-Book” maybe say the “literal believer category” or something similar. Also, I would consider limiting your use of ellipses (...) again because sometimes it may appear informal.

On another note, unless I am mistaken, I believe Jesus predicted that Peter (also one of His apostles) not Judas would *deny* him three times. This is minor but

again, unless I am wrong, this change could only improve the credibility of your paper.

Overall, this is a very interesting paper with novel ideas and arguments and a few minor changes will make it even better.¹