

#11 FORUM POST FREE WILL #2

Dear O____,

I do not believe that mankind is equal with God. He loved his creation of mankind so much that he gave us the ability to think for ourselves. Otherwise we would be robots. That does not make us equal to God.

Joshua said to Israel: "Now if it seems bad to you to serve Jehovah, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve...." (Joshua 24:15)

It is clear that people have the ability to choose. When they choose to serve Jehovah they can live.

As I clearly pointed out, having the ability to "choose" DOES NOT mean a person has a FREE WILL ability to choose. Why do you believe it does?

Here is the definition of FREE WILL: the power or capacity to choose among alternatives or to act in certain situations independently of natural, social, or divine restraints.

Scripture teaches that mankind has "divine restraints":

Prov 16:1 The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.

Prov 20:24 Man's goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?

Prov 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

Isa 26:12 O Jehovah, Thou appointest peace to us, For, all our works also Thou hast wrought for us.

Isa 64:8 But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

Jer 10:23 I know, Jehovah, that the way of man is not his own; it is not in a man that walketh to direct his steps.

Jer 18:4 And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.

Dan 4:35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of the heavens, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

These verses above ALL teach that there are "divine restraints" on mankind's "will" and ability to choose. There are NO VERSES that state differently. Evidently, you do not understand what having a Free Will ability to choose really is. ONLY GOD HAS THIS ABILITY, MANKIND DOES NOT. By claiming this ability for yourself, you are making yourself out to be equal with God:

2Thes 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

The MAN OF SIN is what Paul calls all Fallen Away believers. We all experience this portion of the path that leads to salvation. It happens to everyone because we ALL remain spiritually blind after we are called out from the world. Because we remain blind, Satan quickly and easily deceives us. After Satan's deceptions run their course, we Fall Away and return to a works based belief system (religion). This system is what our carnal nature prefers and therefore, accepts as truth. But this truth is leavened and comes from Satan and this world (sun/moon). It is not the true Bread from heaven.

If you won't apply the correct definition of Free Will to your beliefs, you are going to continue in a works based belief system.

Coming out from Mystery Babylon the Great is vitally important because we are saved by FAITH and not by Works. Our Faith should be solely in Christ and not mixed with our own works. The work that Christ does is spiritual work and it involves Him GIVING us (without our asking) a measure of Faith and the Holy Spirit so as to change us from within. Once He comes to us and gives us these free gifts, we will repent from our own works and will then follow Him. This is conversion and only happens when Christ gives us the LATTER RAIN. To be saved, we must enter into the rest of Christ who does all the work of saving us.

Dear O___,

The belief in Free Will (religion) must be destroyed from within a person before they can be saved. Mankind lives, breathes, makes choices and dies ALL by the WILL and WORK of God. Understanding and believing this truth requires FAITH (which He gives us) and it is this FAITH which will save us.

Joe

Dear M____,

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Deuteronomy 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

With the understanding you are coming away with on the verses you posted, you must believe that God's Word is very contradictory. I assure you it is not.

In your understanding of the verses, you made THREE false assumptions.

1). You assume that everyone will NOT believe. **They will.**

Phi 2:10-11 That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

2). You assume that salvation can only come to a person in this age. **That is not true.**

Salvation in this age is ONLY for those who have been chosen from the foundation of the world to be FIRST FRUITS of Christ's harvest of mankind. You should study the Jewish Feasts - they are physical types that teach the spiritual plan of salvation. The Feast of First Fruits types the early portion of the harvest. The early portion is NOT the only harvest. The Feast of Tabernacles is the main harvest which comes at the end of the growing season. This harvest is for everyone else. That is the reason why Christ said this when He went in to the Feast of Tabernacles:

John 7:37-38 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

Also of note, Christ went to the feast in secret:

John 7:10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

Christ is the Word of God, so not only the things that Christ said teach us His truths BUT also the things that He did. He purposefully went in secret to the feast to keep His work of salvation that comes at the end of the final age a mystery. It is part of the GREAT MYSTERY of Christ and His church. The true church (those who are called AND chosen) will be used in the final age to help bring in the full harvest of mankind:

Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Notice the similarities of this verse and the verse in John. They teach on the same event. It is at this time that the chief priests will be saved.

3). You assume that God will not force anyone to believe. **That is partially true.**

What you don't understand is that Christ is in the spiritual business of changing hearts and minds so that we willingly believe. That is how He accomplishes His "will" within mankind.

Prov 16:1 The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.

These verses below teach a truth which you are not including in your understanding:

Jer 18:4 And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.

Rom 8:20-22 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

1 Cor 12:3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit.

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Rom 3:10-11 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

Mankind was created spiritually marred and subject to vanity (sin). In other words, we quickly develop a carnal nature & mind after our physical birth which causes us to sin.

Christ came in the same physical body as mankind but He was spiritually perfect. Because He had the full measure of the Holy Spirit, He NEVER developed a carnal nature or carnal mind and as a result, He never sinned.

Eve is shown in scripture to already be carnally minded before she sinned. In fact, she sinned because she was carnally minded. She could make no other choice but to sin.

Gen 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food (LUST OF THE FLESH), and that it was pleasant to the eyes (LUST OF THE EYES), and a tree to be

desired to make one wise (PRIDE OF LIFE), she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

In our created state, NO ONE can believe or understand the truth of God. That is a foundational truth that is completely ignored by mainstream Christianity. Until Christ comes to each of us individually and gives us the gifts of Faith and the Holy Spirit, we can NOT believe on His name and accept Him as Lord. The only way we call Him Lord is by having the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1Cor 12:3). Conversely, after Christ comes to us and gives us His spiritual gifts, no one can then call Jesus accursed.

The spiritual work of Christ within mankind is the only way we can be saved. If Christ doesn't do His work within us, we cannot Free Will ourselves to believe on His name and call Him Lord. Scripture expressly says this is not possible.

Joe

Dear L____,

You said:

We all have this free will by believing and following what Gods' Word says.

I am baffled by your understanding. You seem to ignore the verses I posted that do teach mankind has no Free Will and then post a poorly translated verse that only seems to support your understanding.

Do you believe that God's Word contradicts itself?

Here is the correct translation of **Philemon 1:14**. It does not teach anything concerning Free Will:

Philemon 1:14 But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your good deed might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary.

The verse is speaking of Oneismus, who is a slave that was with Paul. Paul wanted to keep Oneismus with him because he was helpful in Paul's ministry. But Paul sent him back because Paul did not have the owner's consent to keep him. Paul could have compelled them to let Oneismus stay but Paul didn't. It was Paul's hope that they would willingly allow it.

This verse has nothing to do with Free Will as you contend. Mankind has a "will" and we do as our "will" desires. But God is the cause of what our "will" desires. He does not force our "will" to comply with His, He merely changes our "will" to match with His. God is spirit and He operates within mankind in this manner. From man's perspective, we are not aware of God's work within us:

Ecc 3:11 He (God) has made everything fitting in its season; However, He has put obscurity in their heart so that the man may NOT find out His work, that which God does, that which God does from the beginning to the end.

Let me ask you this, when it is God's "will" for a person to be saved, what does God do to make it happen?

If a person has Free Will as you believe, God can only hope they will respond and be saved. You say all that He can do is make the offer of salvation and then the rest is up to the person. I can assure you by the Word of God, that God does not operate in that manner. Look at these verses:

John 1:12–13 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Eph 1:4-5 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

As I have been saying, God is spirit and he changes our "will" to match with His "will". He does this work through Christ who comes to us and gives us the spiritual gifts necessary to change our "will". Once our "will" is changed to match with God's "will", we willingly do what God wants us to do.

Here are more verses:

John 12:40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

God wanted the Nation of Israel to reject Christ. That was God's "will" for them. The Nation of Israel had no Free Will ability to act differently. God "blinded their eyes and hardened their heart". This is spiritual work that God did within the Nation of Israel. God caused their "will" to match with His "will".

Rom 9:15-18 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

Prov 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

And the same is true with Pharaoh. God caused Pharaoh's "will" to conform to His "will".

God caused Pharaoh's "will" to resist letting the Israelites go so that God could show His power and declare His name throughout the earth. Pharaoh did not have a Free Will.

God operates spiritually within all mankind in this same manner and it makes no difference whether the person is a believer or an unbeliever:

Phil 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Prov 16:1 The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.

Prov 20:24 Man's goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?

Isa 64:8 But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

Jer 10:23 I know, Jehovah, that the way of man is not his own; it is not in a man that walketh to direct his steps.

Eph 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

God worketh all things to conform to His "will". Because of the certainty of His work, He foreknows us because He makes us into the exact person He wants us to be.

I have had some people say that people who are said to be predestinated by God are only predestinated because God foreknew who would accept His free offer of salvation beforehand. But that argument requires God to be a time traveler or a fortune teller which He is not. God knows the end from the beginning because His "will" accomplishes everything He pleases. God makes the end exactly as He chose for it to be.

For God, mankind's "will" is nothing for Him to overcome:

Dan 4:35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of the heavens, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

God's rule over His creation (includes Satan and the demons) is absolute and nothing happens within it that does not conform to His "will". That is how God is able to say:

2 Chron 20:6 and he said, Jehovah, God of our fathers, art not thou God in the heavens, and rulest thou not over all the kingdoms of the nations? And in thy hand there is power and might, and none can withstand thee.

Job 23:13 But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, that will he do.

Isa 46:10-11 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.

Isa 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Joe

Dear C____,

I still can't agree with you. If you were to say that we have a "will" and can make choices, I would certainly agree with you. But from the verses I posted, our "will" cannot be free. Our "will" is controlled by God so that it conforms to His "will". If a person has a controlled "will", then by definition, it cannot be free.

Scripture says that no man can call Jesus "Lord" unless they have the Holy Spirit. If man has a Free Will, how can this statement be true? Surely some would accept Christ because of their Free Will ability to do so. Scripture also says that if we have the Holy Spirit, no man can call Jesus accursed. Again, if we have a Free Will, surely this statement could not be true either.

Mankind has a "will" and the ability to choose. But God controls our "will" to the point that what we choose matches to His "will". When man rejects God, it is God's "will". When we commit evil, it is God's "will". When we sin, it is God's "will". Everything is of God, both good and evil.

I can see where you might believe that we have a "limited free will" but that cannot be true either. If something is limited, then it cannot be free.

Consider this verse closely:

Prov 16:1 The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.

If mankind has a Free Will that God only "steers" or "controls the framework of", then how can God say that our answers come from Him? Why doesn't He give us credit for the answers?

If mankind can take credit for the answer of their tongue, then our confession of faith becomes a Work. If that is true, then mankind does have something to boast about concerning their salvation. And if our confession is a Work, Christ would reject us for not approaching Him solely by faith. If it is a Work, how can we enter into the rest of Christ if we still need to do our own works to be saved?

For man's "will" to be free, it must be completely free. If it is controlled by God even a little bit, then it cannot be free.

Our salvation depends on Christ doing all the work necessary for our salvation. And His work is spiritual - within mankind. He is the One who prepares our hearts with His gifts and from those gifts, He gives us the answer of our tongue. Our salvation cannot happen any other way. And because our salvation is 100% the work of Christ, the salvation of all mankind is guaranteed because God never fails.

Why does God hold the Nation of Israel accountable for crucifying Christ when God caused them to do it?

John 12:40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

1Cor 2:7-8 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Even Paul was presented with this question:

Rom 9:19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will.

Here is Paul's answer:

Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?

Here are my thoughts on the matter: God holds mankind accountable because it suits His purposes to do so. God is teaching mankind the difference between good and evil. If God doesn't create evil, then there wouldn't be any evil. If He doesn't hold us accountable for willingly doing evil, how can mankind learn right from wrong?

Ultimately, God took the responsibility for making us evil by sending Christ to bring mankind out from the evil He created. By Christ's death on the cross and His ongoing work within mankind, all mankind will be born again and made righteous. In the end, God will wipe away all the tears from our eyes:

Rev 7:17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Joe