

# What Does the Bible Teach About the Freewill of Jesus?

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

## Introduction:

- A. Do we understand what free will is?
  - 1. "The power of self-determination; the ability to choose one's actions, or determine what reasons are acceptable motivation for actions; the doctrine that human beings are able to choose their actions without being caused to do so by external forces." (Wiki)
  - 2. We are given the power to decide what we are going to do and we are able to be aware of why we chose to do it; we are not caused to make choices and take actions by forces counter to our own will.
  - 3. We may make choices that we do not like by circumstances we like even less, but they are still our choices.
- B. Does the fact that God knows the future mean that our choices are pre-determined?
  - 1. God is not bound by time. He lives apart and outside of it. Past, present and future are all known to Him.
  - 2. Just because He has access to the future does not mean that He has foreordained that those things will be, any more than knowing the past does not mean He can return there and change it.
  - 3. Knowing a matter before it happens does not mandate that He makes it happen.
- C. Why did God give man free will?
  - 1. God is love. If God is love itself, then He must love things outside of Himself.
  - 2. If people do not have the freedom to choose good or evil, they are simply extensions of God, and He cannot love them as something outside of Himself.
  - 3. In addition, if a person does not have free will to choose goodness and faith, then all of the commandments in the Bible to love God and neighbor are worthless, since no one can choose to do them.
  - 4. It is impossible that a God who is love and infinite wisdom would give impossible commandments.

## I. THE FREEWILL OF HUMANKIND

- A. Freewill was given to humankind from the beginning.
  - 1. Gen. 4:7 Deut. 30:19; Joshua 24:15
- B. Rom. 6:16 - A choice is demanded, and therefore the exercise of free will is required. We choose to present ourselves before sin or obedience.
- C. Rev. 22:17 - The invitation is extended to "whoever desires." The Lord will not force any to be saved, and will not turn away any who desire to be saved.
- D. Acts 17:30 - God does not command what we are not able to do. Thus, "all men everywhere" may freely choose to repent.

- E. Acts 13:48 - Who is appointed to eternal life? Those who believe. It is not that those who are appointed will believe (which is Calvinism), but those who believe are appointed (exercise of free will).
- F. Rom. 8:29-30 - The word "predestined" is confusing at times.
  - 1. Many believe predestination involves God's choosing one but not choosing another.
  - 2. Bible tells us that God is not a respecter of persons - Acts 10:35
- G. Eph. 1:4-5 - How did God "choose" and "predestine" us? It is "in Him", that is, in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:27 reveals how we get "in Christ" - through obedient faith, and being baptized into Christ.
- H. 2Thes. 2:11-12 - Note that the initial occurrence here is that these folks in question "...did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." This being their desire, God sends delusion upon them, allowing them to believe the lie which they have loved. God does not violate their free will in this; they chose a lie over the truth.
- I. 2Tim. 1:9 - Verse 10 reveals that Christ has "...brought life and immortality to light through the gospel..." It is not by our own works that we have been saved, but through our subjection to the Lord's will, and obedience to the Gospel.
  - 1. Our salvation is dependent upon us forsaking our own will and purpose, and submitting to the will and purpose of God.
  - 2. This is not contrary to free will. We are free to choose whether we will serve God or ourselves.
- J. Jude 4 - Why were these men marked out for condemnation? Is it because God has simply rejected them and desires to destroy them? Or, is it because of their wicked works? They mark themselves for condemnation because they walk in an ungodly manner.

## **II. THE FREEWILL OF JESUS**

- A. Jesus became flesh - John 1:14; Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 10:5, 2:14-18
- B. The temptation of Jesus - Matt. 4:1-11
- C. Scripture states that Jesus willingly became human, willingly submitted to torture and crucifixion. Note, He stated He could call twelve legions of angels to fight for Him. He didn't. He did it all by choice. Choice means free will.
- D. What then, did Jesus choose by means of His free will?
  - 1. John 10:17-18, 12:32-33
  - 2. Luke 22:41-44
  - 3. Matt. 26:47-56
  - 4. Luke 23:20-46
  - 5. Heb. 1:1-3, 5:7-9

## **III. THE FREEWILL OF JESUS MANDATES THE USE OF OUR FREEWILL**

- A. Please understand free will. God has given humankind three gifts that have no equal: an eternal soul, the means of saving our souls, and the self-determination to choose to do so.
- B. The world speaks of free will often:

1. "You are free to the choice that you want, but you are not free from the consequences of that choice." (Itayi Garande, Broken Families)
2. "That's the thing about freewill: Every decision we make is a choice against something as much as it is for something else." (Rebecca Serle)
3. Even the father of Calvinism praised free will: "We do not run to Christ on our feet but by faith; not with the movement of the body, but with the freewill of the heart. Think not that thou art drawn against thy will: the mind can be drawn by love." (Augustine of Hippo)
4. "Part of any gift is the right to refuse the gift." (Craig Lounsbrough)
5. "Free will makes good or evil mean something; without it, good or evil is instinct and therefore beyond judgment. "Now there is discoverable in man, Freewill. His actions are of moral value to him if they are undertaken upon his own initiative; not if they are undertaken under compulsion. Therefore the use of choice is necessary to human dignity. A man deprived of choice is by that the less a man, and this we all show through the repugnance excited in us by unauthorized restraint and subjection, through coercion rather than authority, to another's will. We cannot do good, or even evil, unless we do it freely; and if we admit the idea of good at all in human society, freedom must be its accompaniment." (Hilaire Belloc)

C. God has made this eminently clear in His word:

1. James 1:13-16
2. John 7:17 - "If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority."