

# *The Myth of Free Will*

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**I** was raised in the “free will” doctrine and taught it myself diligently for many years as a pastor. We all do have a will: the “problem” is that it isn’t free. “Free will” is simply a myth.

We did not choose our race, our nationality, our sex, our eye or hair color, our birth date, or even who our parents were. No “free will” there at all, and that is just for “starters.”

“Free-will” is “influenced” by our culture, our society, our peers, our sex, our upbringing, our parents, by our spouses, etc. “Free will” is simply an illusion. Everything about us is a composite of influences around us, in circumstances over which we have no control or choice whatsoever. We did not even choose to be here.

Something as basic as weather conditions restrain our so-called “free will.” For instance, we use our “free will” to “choose” to go hiking – then a strong thunderstorm settles in and changes our “free will” plans.

My mother had no “free will” in getting cancer. My father had no “free will” in dying from it. Jenny had no “free will” in her husband abandoning her and her children. Bob had no “free will” in the loss of his job. Jerry had no “free will” in the drunk driver that paralyzed him and killed his son.

Aashish had no “free will” being born, and then living and dying without ever even having heard of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ – not even once, let alone the gospel of what He had done for him.

We all have a “will,” but whatever are its characteristics, “free” is definitely not one of them. Even our belief in “free will” is not of our own “choosing” – it was thrust upon mankind by the religious system. It makes for good theology, but it just isn’t true. Paul warned us of religion’s “*will worship*” (Colossians 2:23); and if we listen closely we can hear this worship of human “free will” in the language of its believers:

“**I** believed in the gospel.”

“**I** came to Christ.”

“**I** chose to place my faith in Christ.”

“**I** decided to live for God.”

The disciples may have thought that they chose to follow the Lord, but Jesus set the record straight:

*You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you* (John 15:16).

This is why John wrote that the work in Israel was not “*of the will of man, but of God*” (John 1:13).

We all make choices every day, none of which are “free” from some kind of influence. For every effect there is a cause. Ultimately God is behind them all, in them all, and through them all. He *alone* is the great Cause. We, as the clay, cannot also be the Potter. From the human viewpoint man appears to have “free will,” but from the divine viewpoint, God,

*Works all things after the counsel of His Own will* (Ephesians 1:11).

Therefore God’s will is free, and man’s will is not – it is limited.

Currently all creation is subjected to a temporary “vanity” as a part of God’s operation to be All in all.

*For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who has subjected the same in hope* (Romans 8:20).

Those who do not now believe, just as Paul spoke of Israel, are temporarily *locked up* in unbelief.

*God did **SHUT UP** together the whole to unbelief* (Romans 11:32, Young’s).

*God **LOCKS UP** all together in stubbornness* (Romans 11:32, CLNT).

One day this will all change. For now, God is working in those whom He has chosen; and even His work in us is His Own will and doing.

*For it is God Who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure* (Philippians 2:13).

If God works in the believer to “will,” then our will is hardly “free.”

As parents we love our children, and they love us “back.” They respond to our unconditional love of them. They do not love us out of “free will” – they did not pick us out and “choose” to love us – they were influenced in their “decision” to love us only because we loved them first. They were “set-up!” So it is with God in His relationship with us. We learn this from John’s simple words.

*We love Him, because He first loved us (I John 4:19).*

There is no “free will.” The reason that we love Him is completely *OUTSIDE* of ourselves. His love is the *first cause* from which our love springs. Paul wrote of this love being manifested through the Lord Jesus Christ to us:

*For the love of Christ constrains us (II Corinthians 5:14).*

His love is not just available, or a potential love, nor an offer of love; but it is a *constraining* love. “Constrain” is a strong word. The Greek word from which it is translated is *sunecho*. James Strong defines it as “to arrest (a prisoner).” The word is so strong that it is used in the Scriptures of being *overtaken* by a disease (Matthew 4:24; Luke 4:38; Acts 28:8).

It is interesting that Paul used this word, for he knew firsthand of Christ’s constraining love. It arrested him on the road to Damascus. Paul (Saul) was not seeking Christ. He did not “choose” Him. Paul met the resurrected Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, and there called Him “Lord” (Acts 9:6). This was all the grand, abrupt, course-altering, sovereign work of God in reaching Paul.

Paul was on his way to Damascus to do harm to the saints there. He did not change his mind by his own “free will.” Rather, it was the dramatic “Damascus Road experience” that transformed his will. Paul met with spectacular interference to his “free will.” He met the resurrected Christ! One day, those who have not trusted Christ during this life will be resurrected and brought into the presence of the Son of God, and will with Paul call Him “Lord.”

*That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:10).*

Oh, the extent to which God will go to reach man! Isn’t it odd how Christendom limits God’s ability, and yet makes man’s will free. God is not limited at all, and in due course He will pull out all the stops in reaching mankind with His love.

Paul did not choose to be an Apostle by his “free will,” he was “*an Apostle by the WILL OF GOD*” (I Corinthians 1:1; II Corinthians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; II Timothy 1:1).

There are two “wills” in the universe: the Creator’s and the creatures. God’s will is FREE, the creatures’ is not. God “*will have all men to be saved*” (I Timothy 2:4), and He Who “*works all things after the counsel of His Own will*” (Ephesians 1:11) will “*reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven*” (Colossians 1:20), making Him “*the Savior of all men*” (I Timothy 4:10).

When my children were young we lived on a busy street with no fence around our house. I would not allow them to play in or near the street. They had no “free will.” I constrained them with my love.

We are not the masters of our own fate. We are not the lords of our own lives. We are the creatures, not the Creator. “*He is Lord of ALL*” (Acts 10:36), “*in Him we live, and move, and have our being*” (Acts 17:28), and our response to His love is all a matter of timing, “*but every man in his own order*” (I Corinthians 15:23).

None of us had any “free will” in being included in the disobedience of Adam. It was forced upon us. Neither do any of us have any “free will” about the undoing of Adam in the obedience of Christ.

*Therefore as by the offence of one [Adam] judgment came upon ALL MEN to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One [Christ] the free gift came UPON ALL men unto justification of life (Romans 5:18).*

Not even our faith to believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior is a matter of our own choosing.

*For by grace are you saved, through faith, and that **not of yourselves**: it is **the gift of God** ... (Ephesians 2:8-9).*

THIS is the good news, believe it or not.

*If we believe not, yet He abides faithful: He cannot deny Himself (II Timothy 2:13).*

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