

Accepting Responsibility

I. Introduction

A. Many false teachings concerning God's will for our lives could be summed up in the words, "neglecting personal responsibility." God's Word makes it clear that to be what He wants us to be, we must accept responsibility for fulfilling what He commands us. Consider some teachings of Scripture connected to this theme. **Philippians 2:12**

II. God Requires It

A. Some neglect responsibilities toward God and use the excuse, "I'm waiting on God to move in my life." Yet, Scripture teaches God has *already done* His part to make salvation possible and provide the guidance that leads to salvation. **James 1:21**

B. While God has the power to do whatever He pleases, His Word makes it clear that He's decided not to force us to obey Him. He's fulfilled His part in offering salvation, but He won't force us to fulfill our responsibilities to accept it. **Matthew 23:37**

III. Satan Can't Hinder It

A. While God *chooses* not to force us to obey, Satan *cannot* force us to sin. Satan is at fault for his evil, but that does not excuse us from fault when we choose to yield to temptation. Satan can and must be resisted. **James 4:7; 1 Corinthians 10:13**

B. This point is illustrated in Jesus' statement that no one is able to snatch His sheep out of the Father's hand. While this passage is often (ab)used to deny personal responsibility, it actually emphasizes the opposite. The passage shows that no matter what evil anyone else does to us, no one can cause us to leave the "fold of safety" against our will. **John 10:27-29**

IV. Past Good Doesn't Satisfy It

A. The particular way John 10:27-29 is often twisted to deny personal responsibility is by using it to promote the "once saved, always saved" false doctrine. While it might make many feel good to believe that one who has been saved can live however he or she pleases and never fall from grace, Scripture opposes this teaching. **Galatians 5:4; 1 Corinthians 10:12; Revelation 14:12**

V. Society Doesn't Negate It

A. The actions of society don't excuse us from the responsibility we each have to obey God either. Instead of joining the darkness, God expects His people to shine bright. **2 Peter 2:5-8; Philippians 2:15**

VI. Others Don't Void It

- A. A more specific application of seeking to deny personal responsibility based on the actions of others is seen when we consider how others *treat* us. The responsibility we have for treating others right is not voided when they don't treat us right. For instance, a husband must love his wife even if she's not submissive, and a wife must submit to her husband even if he's not loving. **Ephesians 5:24-25**
- B. The "Golden Rule" shows the need to treat others in the way God expects us to, regardless of whether they do the same. **Matthew 7:12**

VII. Tendencies Don't Change It

A. Another thing that cannot stop us from serving God faithfully if we are determined to do so is our tendencies. While one person may have a greater temptation to sin in one way and another person may have a greater temptation to sin in another way, such differences don't mean that either is *forced* to sin. **1 Corinthians 6:9-11**