

Free Will

I. Introduction

- A. When it comes to obeying God, mankind has “free will.” While God wants each of us to be saved, we must *choose* to accept the gift of salvation. **Revelation 22:17**

II. God’s Power and Free Will

- A. This principle does not negate God’s omnipotence. He has the *power* to do whatever He pleases. He has *used* His power to create us with free will. **Genesis 18:14; Matthew 23:37**
- B. Instead of neglecting obedience to God with the excuse “I’m waiting on God,” we should accept what God has *already done* to make our salvation possible, and receive the guidance He has *already given* us that leads to salvation. **James 1:21**

III. God’s Providence and Free Will

- A. The principle of free will also does not negate the work of God’s providence. Asking for God’s providential help is itself an exercise of free will. Moreover, God’s providential help does not involve Him forcing anyone to obey Him. **James 1:5-6; Colossians 4:2-4; 1 Corinthians 16:8-9**

IV. Satan’s Deceit and Free Will

- A. While God *chooses* not to intervene with our free will, Satan *cannot*. Though Satan deceitfully and viciously tempts us, we can and must *resist*. **1 Peter 5:8-9; 1 Corinthians 10:13**

V. Fiery Trials and Free Will

- A. One tactic Satan uses to tempt us is bringing fiery trials into our lives. As Jesus exemplified, hard times do not negate our free will or excuse us from serving God faithfully. **1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Peter 2:21-23**

VI. Immoral Society and Free Will

- A. The actions of society do not negate free will or excuse us from serving God either. Disobedience of the majority does not excuse *us* from doing what’s right. **2 Peter 2:5-8**
- B. No matter how corrupt the society or nation a Christian lives in becomes, the Christian can still choose to please God. **Revelation 2:10**

VII. Mistreatment and Free Will

- A. The ability we have to live faithfully in the midst of unrighteousness exemplifies the fact that free will is not negated by how others influence or treat us. The “golden rule,” for instance, shows the need to treat others right, regardless of whether they do the same. **Matthew 7:12**
- B. While others can *influence* us for bad (or good), no one can force us to sin (or do right). Each of us is personally responsible for submitting to God. **Matthew 10:35-37**

VIII. Our Influence and Free Will

- A. Just as others cannot force us to do right or wrong, *we* cannot force *others* to do right.
- B. This does not demean the power of our influence. Parents, for instance, have a great influence on their children. **Proverbs 22:6; 2 Timothy 1:5**
- C. Though our influence on others can be great, we cannot obey God for anyone else. We shouldn’t feel unnecessarily responsible for choices others make. **2 Corinthians 5:10**

IX. Change and Free Will

- A. Free will further implies that we have the ability to change in ways that God desires. God may require something that is *hard work*, but He does not require us to do something we are not able to do. **1 Corinthians 6:9-11**