

Do We Really Value and Rightly Use the Freedom We Have?

Genesis 1:26 [NIV] *“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’”*

Humans are made in the image of God who is completely free, so humans enjoy a measure of freedom.

This freedom enables us to select our companions in this world and the next.

This freedom enables us to yield our life to whom we will.

Romans 6:16 [NIV] *“Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey, whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?”*

We give allegiance to God or otherwise automatically to Satan.

We choose to remain an un-redeemed sinner or become a saint.

God respects this freedom.

Genesis 1:31 [NIV] *“God saw all that He had made [including human beings], and it was very good.”*

Sin excepted, there is nothing in human nature as God created it, including this freedom to choose, to apologise for.

This is confirmed forever by the eternal Son of God when He became permanently incarnated in human flesh.

For God to override human freedom and force humans to act contrary to their own will, would be to make a mockery of the image of God in human beings.

This He will never do.

Mark 10:17-22 [NIV] *“As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. ‘Good teacher,’ he asked, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ ‘Why do you call me good?’ Jesus answered. ‘No-one is good, except God alone. You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honour your father and mother.’” ‘Teacher,’ he declared, ‘all these I have kept since I was a boy.’ Jesus looked at him and loved him. ‘One thing you lack,’ he said. ‘Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.’ At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.”*

Jesus looked longingly after this rich young man as he walked away but did **not** follow him or attempt to coerce him.

To remain human we make our own moral choices.

If a human’s choice takes them in the end into hell and eternal death, at least they go there still as a human with freedom of choice.

It is better for the future Kingdom [created family of God] that a person chooses eternal death rather than be coerced into a future they do **not** choose.

God will take nine steps towards us but He will **not** take the tenth, in bringing us to repentance.

God will encourage us to repent of sin, but He cannot do our repenting for us.

It is of the essence of repentance that it can only be done by the person who committed the sinful act that needs to be repented of.

God will wait patiently on the sinning human being.

God will withhold judgement to the point that He appears to be “*lax*” in His judicial administration.

But God cannot force a person to repent.

To do this would be to violate the person’s freedom and make void the gift originally bestowed on them.

Where there is no freedom of choice there can be neither sin or righteousness, because it is the nature of both that they are voluntary.

However good an act may be, it is **not** good if it is imposed from without.

The act of imposition destroys the moral content of the act and renders it null and void.

1 John 3:4 [NIV] *“Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.”*

Sin is the voluntary act of breaking a known law.

Romans 6:8 [NIV] *“... for apart from the law, sin is dead.”*

Where there is **no** moral knowledge or where there is **no** voluntary choice, the act is **not** sinful.

Luke 23:33-34 [NIV] *“When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals, one on his right, the other on his left. **Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”** And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.”*

Those Roman soldiers did **not** know what they were doing, so it was **not** a sinful act for them.

Isaiah 14:14 [NIV] *“I [Satan] will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.”*

Lucifer became Satan when he knowingly rebelled against his Creator.

Luke 22:42 [NIV] *“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; [Jesus Christ praying] **yet not my will, but yours be done.**”*

Conversely, Jesus the Son of Man revealed His holiness when He made the deliberate choice to obey God the Father, knowing full well the consequences.

Some may ask, *“when we pray, not my will, but yours God be done, are we not voiding our power to choose, which is part of the image of God in us.”*

The answer is **no**, because we have voluntarily chosen the Will of God, exercising our right of choice.

A true Christian is a person who knows they have this freedom, but chooses to submit to God’s Will, fully convinced that such a choice is one that will bring with it many blessings from our Creator God.