

Is Our 'Free Will' Really A Free Will?

By Gerry Watts

Let us consider some straightforward questions about life so that we may be able to answer the question posed by the above title "Is our so-called 'free will' *really* a FREE will?

- Did we have any choice in the important matter of our existence on this planet?

NO

- Did we choose our parents, our nationality, our inherent strengths and weaknesses, the era of our birth, our circumstances?

NO

- Do we have absolute control over our bodies, other people or our lives in general?

NO

- Do we have absolute control over nature or the universe?

NO

- Can we prevent death from occurring at all?

NO

- Although we have a will that can make 'decisions', is anyone all-knowing or wise enough to always make the perfect choice before God?

NO, for we are all born into moral and spiritual darkness and stubbornness, being influenced by invisible forces, and with a body of flesh that is totally controlled by sin and death (Romans 3:9-20, 23; 5:12; 7:5; 8:5-8; 11:30-32; Ephesians 2:1-3; 4:17-19)

- But for those who are believers in God and His Son's sacrifice for all humanity, whereby He has conquered sin and death, they have been set free from the influence of sin and death in their body of flesh, and they have received God's Holy Spirit to empower them and fill them. So surely believers are free to make the right choices, aren't they? They made the choice to believe in the first place, didn't they?

ABSOLUTELY SPEAKING - NO! Faith is solely a gift of God, so that no one can boast before Him (Ephesians 2:8-9). Believers have been chosen by God before they were even born (John 15:16; Romans 9:11; 2 Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 1:4). No one seeks out God of their own accord (Romans 3:11-12), so no one has chosen God or Christ. All were infirm sinners when Christ died for all (Romans 5:6-8).

And it is God who makes ready beforehand the good works that we should be walking in, so that believers are God's achievement, not their own (Ephesians 2:10). In our present bodies of sin and death, the flesh is still hostile to God's law and cannot submit to it (Romans 8:7-8), and we are all naturally slaves to Sin and Death (Romans 7:8-20).

Although the believer in Christ has been set free from sin and death, THIS IS WHOLLY OF GOD! All of it is accomplished by God's Spirit through Christ's Sacrifice. Anything that is of faith or of the Spirit, and is therefore righteous and good, is WHOLLY OF GOD! We can do nothing of ourselves (John 15:5). Believers have been rescued and transported out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, but this rescue mission and spiritual enlightenment is ALL OF GOD (Colossians 1:12-14).

Eonian life is a gracious gift (Romans 6:23). It is God Who is operating within the believer to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight (Philippians 2:13). So even the future rewards for walk and service will be wholly of God - as ALL IS OF GOD!

God is the Supreme One Who is operating all in accordance with the counsel of His will (Ephesians 1:11).

He is the Saviour of ALL mankind and He will therefore eventually save and justify every human by His grace in accordance with His glorious plan (1 Timothy 4:9; Romans 5:18-19; 1 Corinthians 15:22). He will also reconcile every creature in His universe to Himself through Christ's cross, so that God shall be truly ALL IN ALL (Colossians 1:20; 1 Corinthians 15:28).

So much for 'free will'! Humbling eh!

The only true 'free will' is that which is in complete subordination to God's will.
Therein lies real freedom.