

Who am I
I am a person with a free Will

God said, "Let US make man in OUR image". God.....Eloheem... Plural. A triune God. The trinity. Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Three and yet one. We have been made in the image of God. We are a tripartite being. Three and yet one. Body , soul and spirit as seen in the verse below.

1 Thessalonians 5 : 23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ

Introduction:

The most precious gift that God has ever given mankind (apart from His own Son Jesus) is FREE WILL. The ability to make our own decisions, our own choices. When God created mankind, He gave Adam an instruction in the garden. "Do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or you will surely die". At no point did God stop Adam from choosing to eat from that tree. God only told Adam what would happen if he did. God gave Adam the freedom to choose.

Satan told Adam that he wouldn't die if he ate the fruit. Adam still had the freedom to choose. Adam made a decision and by an act of his own free will, he chose to believe Satan and eat the fruit. The result was Adam became infected with sin. What God said would happen, happened. Sin came into his life and he began to die.

Should Adam have chosen to believe and obey God, he would have continued to live a fantastic, fruitful life. A fear free, joy filled, peaceful, prosperous life. Free to enjoy all of God's best for him. He was free to do anything he wanted without any consequences, apart from eat from that tree. He was free to choose anything else. Everything else he could have ever wanted, he could have in abundance. (I have focused on Adam and not Eve, as it was to him that the command was given)

But after disbelieving and disobeying God, he became a slave to Satan's power. Unable to resist the sinful nature that was now flowing through his veins. Fear gripped him, guilt condemned him and shame overcame him. All that he could have ever wanted was now out of reach and lost. Now all the things that he would NEVER HAVE WANTED, are the only things he can have.

The battle of the wills.

Romans 7. For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. **15** For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. **16** If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good. **17** But now, *it is* no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. **18** For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is good I do not find. **19** For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do*, that I practice. **20** Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. **21** I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. **22** For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. **23** But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. **24** O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? **25** I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.



I used to think that I was in control of my life at one point before I was saved. That I was free because I could do what I wanted to do, when I wanted to do it. Girlfriends, drinking, being foul mouthed, partying, taking drugs etc. I saw religion as a death to that freedom. But, I began to change. I started to see things about me that I didn't like. So I thought I would try and change. It was then that I realised that I couldn't change, and that I wasn't in control of my life.

God will never violate a persons free will. It is a gift from God and He will not remove it from us. Salvation is about God setting us free from the power of sin and satan, so that we may once again have the freedom to choose wether or not to eat from that tree. True christianity is about our wills, being brought into harmony with Gods will. Yielding our desires and wants to the will of God.

Gods WILL and Gods WAYS are inseparable. They are one and the same. His way of doing things is His will, His will is His way of doing things.

This is why Jesus told us to measure a persons authenticity as to weather or not they were followers of Him, by taking notice of their fruit, their lifestyle. **"You will know them by their fruit"**. Because a person who lives by Gods ways, has in fact had their own will surrendered and united with the will of God.

John 6 : 38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

This doesn't mean that God wills instead of Jesus, but that Jesus wilfully chooses to do what He knew to be the will of the Father. Jesus, by an act of His own free will, chose to do what He knew to be the will of His heavenly Father.

The big Question. Do I want what God wants? Is my will in harmony with Gods will?

Very often Christianity can be mistakenly thought of as a religion with a God who doesn't want us to do bad or sinful things. This is partially correct. Moreover, Christianity is not all about what I can't do, it's more about what I can do with a liberated will.

Three wills to be acknowledged and understood.

Gods will ; is made known to me through His word revealed by His Spirit.

Satans will ; is forced upon me through my emotions, my mind (my intellect, through lies and deception) and the desires of my body, strengthened by the power of sin.

My will ; which has now been set free from the power of sin and satan, has the freedom to choose between gratifying the demands of my emotional, intellectual or physical needs. Or, acting upon the knowledge of Gods will through His word and by the power of my spirit, in union with the Holy Spirit, I am free to choose and do the will of God.

Philippians 2:12-13. Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

QUESTION: Are we in danger of raising a global church of Christianity that is based upon how we feel? Is our Christianity important to us because of how it makes us feel or what we get out of it. How God is going to meet OUR needs or satisfies OUR desires?



There has to come a point in all our lives where we realise that it's not all about us and our will. But it's about Jesus and His will.

Satan is still trying to gain control over our wills.

2 Timothy 2:24-26 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, 25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, 26 and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

Most of us would say that we would not willingly give our selves over to doing the will of satan. So satan uses error and deception to take Christians captive. Under this snare, we ignorantly end up serving satan and thinking we are serving God.

The stance we must take in the face of known evil will require an act of a strengthened and submissive will.

Look at these three in Daniel.

Daniel 3: 16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. 17If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. 18But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego found themselves in a very difficult position. Confronted by satan through king Nebuchadnezzar with a demand to go against God and bow down to satans WILL, which is to worship his image or be thrown into a furnace.

Note. When you refuse to bow down to satan, you will almost always have to go through a furnace experience. Persecution is around the corner.

They understood the situation. Satans will....to bow to him, or Gods will....to not bow down to satan. At this point it is worth mentioning that they didn't know if it was Gods will to save them from the fire, but they still chose to submit to God rather than submit to satan. What strength of will. "Even if we perish, we will not bow down to you". It WAS the WILL OF GOD for them to be saved, but they didn't know that and yet still honoured God. Today we understand Gods will, as Jesus said, "He has come to give us life, and life in abundance".

Question: Would we like to be that type of person that has that harmony of will with God? If we say no, then our will is not in harmony with Gods.If we say yes, its because we see ourselves lacking in this area and our will is still not in harmony with God. Either way, God has committed Himself to getting us there.

Psalm 7 : 9 amplified: Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish the [uncompromisingly] righteous [those upright and in harmony with You]; for You, Who try the hearts and emotions and thinking powers, are a righteous God.



Pauls thorn in the flesh.

Paul pleaded with God three times, not just once, to take the messenger from satan away. But God said “NO” (not literally of course). As God had other plans for Paul.

What was God doing? God knew Paul would have felt victim to pride if he didn't have these trials to go through. Jesus did not promise us a life free from persecution. In fact He promised us a life that would include persecution if we desired to make a stand for Him.

Question: So what did God give Paul in order to strengthen him and keep him?

GRACE.

Question: What was the GRACE for? Was it to give him peace, happiness, Joy, freedom from physical pain and discomfort during the trials?

NO. It was Strength to do the will of God. It was this Grace that gave Paul. The strength of will to carry on, to keep going.

Let's look at Jesus and His will.

Matthew 26:36-46 Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, “Sit here while I go and pray over there.” 37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. 38 Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.” 39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.” 40 Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” 42 Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.” 43 And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. 44 So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. 45 Then He came to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”

As horrible as it seems, the tests we find ourselves in, are nothing more than a prelude to a miracle. God is wanting to show us His power. His strength. His supremacy over all of our circumstances. Very often when we find ourselves going through painful situations, times of trial or testing. What we really want God to do is to alleviate the pain, take away the discomfort, give us peace and joy again. But the truth is that very often, God is waiting for us to say those historically famous words, “Nevertheless, not my will, but your will be done”.

In James we are instructed to Submit to God, resist the devil and he (the devil) will flee from you. It is here, in the place of humble submission to His will, that we will find the GRACE of God to keep us strong in will to carry on.

