

*The free will myth
In becoming
A Christian*

Free will is not by faith alone

The free will myth

Am I free to make my own decisions? Certain assumptions about the nature of our freedom usually hide behind this question.

Most people in the West, including Christians, unconsciously accept what is usually called the “libertarian view” of free will. This understanding of human freedom says that we have the ability to make spontaneous choices contrary to our dispositions and inclinations. Nothing determines our choices. We are always able to choose good or evil. Our wills are wholly neutral.

There is a big problem with this definition of free will. Man is only free to choose according to the disposition of his heart. Human beings always choose according to their strongest desire, and so we make free choices. If our heart is committed to our declaration of independence from God then it is not possible to make a choice that goes against that ingrained disposition. A heart that opposes God will not choose to follow Jesus Christ.

The reality is man is only free to choose according to his hearts disposition. Human beings always choose according to their strongest desire, and so we make free choices according to that desire which we serve. Only in that case we do what we want to do.

If the disposition is fleshy according to the dictates of the world we will not be disposed to the spiritual life of God. So man is not really free to choose other than according to his deepest disposition.

No one can become a Christian by an act of their free will. Free will is a myth from Satan. This is why the free choice of people to become a Christian is invalid. They have believed a myth. “A myth is without a determinable basis of fact or a natural explanation, especially one that is concerned with deities or demigods and explains some practice, rite, or phenomenon of nature.”

The idea that God gave man a free will to choose his own destiny is to suggest that God lacks the love that would want to protect His children from harm. It infers that God’s sovereignty lacks the character to maintain the highest values for His creation.

Free will is a deceptive myth promoted by the devil to rob man of his heavenly inheritance and dominion. In the spiritual realm we either listen to and follow God as our Lord and Master, or we listen to and are mastered by Satan's influence. God didn't give Adam free will to please his self will, Adam disobeyed God. God's will was for Adam to do as he was told. Adam changed his allegiance from God to another who was not God. So we are either slaves to God who we obey, or we are slaves to the devil and under his control.

Apart from Christ, we are dead in sin and wholly disposed to hate God. (Eph. 2:1) Without Christ we only want darkness, and so we freely choose to reject Him. *'Because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.'* Rom 8:7-8

We can freely choose to love and to serve Jesus only if the Spirit changes our hearts. (John 3:1-8) Otherwise we remain lost. *"God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us,"* (Rom. 5:8) or as John says: *"In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

I John 4:10

Christians should credit their salvation entirely to the sovereign grace of God, who has miraculously raised them from the death of sin to the new life in Christ. This is their confession: *"God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ...For by grace we have been saved through faith; and this is not our own doing, it is the gift of God."*

Eph. 2:4, 8

If the power to save is in man's free will, if it truly lies in their unaided ability to save themselves, why would we implore God to "save," or "regenerate" the lost? The fact that we consistently thank God for the salvation of individuals means that belief in absolute free will is inconsistent. Dead lumps of clay cannot make plates. *"Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honourable use and another for dishonourable use?"*

Rom 9:21

To suggest that someone who *"once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience"* (Eph 2:2) has the freedom to

choose to believe in God while in the darkness and motivated by their hearts desire is a myth from the dark side.

Nobody can act outside of God's Sovereignty

The sovereignty of God is the free exercise of His supreme authority in executing and administrating His eternal purposes. God must be sovereign if He is to be truly God. A god who is not sovereign is not God at all. Such is an imposter, an idol, a mere idol formed in man's fallen imagination. A god who is less than fully sovereign is not worthy of our worship, much less our witness. But the Bible proclaims for all to hear that "the Lord reigns." (Psalm. 93:1) God is exactly who Scripture declares He is. He is the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, whose supreme authority is over all. This is the main premise of Scripture.

The idea that we have free will is a great deception and distortion of the truth that insists life is dependent on obeying the Sovereign God and no other. The Lord came to destroy that deception of Satan by securing the chosen children of God, so that the will of God the Father for His dependent children will result in them being transformed into the image of Christ.

God doesn't leave anyone to choose the cross of Christ for themselves according to their will. God applies the work of the cross of Christ through the Holy Spirit works in people who are dead in sin and trespasses, in order to bring them to faith and to prove the death of Christ is never in vain. *'As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.'*

Isa 53:11

The Scriptures speak of God the Father giving people to God the Son. *"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out."*

John 6:37

God has not guaranteed that everybody in the world will hear the gospel. God could have made sure everyone sees the gospel; but He doesn't. So we are left with the situation that God does not do everything conceivable to ensure the salvation of all the people in the world; but only those whom He calls and those He calls He keeps for Himself as His chosen people.

1 Pet 2:9

This choosing by God is called unconditional Election

'This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Saviour spoken by your apostles. Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the Day of Judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.'

2 Pet 3:1-9

Who is God not wishing to perish but to come to repentance?

Look back at 1 Peter. 'Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.'

1 Pet 1:4-5

It is God who calls us as special people, not everyone, and it is God who causes those He has chosen to be born again not us, and it is God who gives us a living hope, and He protects us by His power through the faith we have received, and God keeps us for a sure imperishable inheritance. Salvation is God's work from beginning to end.

In his second letter Peter is giving the church of the chosen children of God another a reminder to remember to focus on the words they have already received from the Prophets and the Apostles, which forms the foundation for the church; because scoffers will come, so they must remember their former teaching.

The world does indeed remain under the curse as it was from the fall of Adam; (2 Pet 3:4) and is reserved for fire according to the will of God. The world only continues because of God's mercy, and we read that He is not willing for any to perish. So who are the any? Is this passage to be taken to mean anyone on earth? That would be saying God's will is to save everyone, but does the Bible teach that no one will be lost? On the contrary, *'And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.'* Rev 20:15

The context of Peter's letters shows us that the "any" are the people he is writing to. *'The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*' The "any" here is us, the elect people of God as opposed to the scoffers and unbelievers. None of God's elect will perish, they will have faith and repentance until salvation is complete. So Peter encourages the Church to live out the hope and be assured of God's support.

The Bible is clear, the redemption of some specific sinners was an eternal plan of God, *'these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.'* (Rom 8:30) And this planned design was perfectly conceived and perfectly executed so that the will of God to save His people is accomplished by the atoning work of Christ.

Those who have an independent spirit and choose for themselves are still slaves of the devil and follow his leading and have forfeited any hope of life. Their declaration of independence resulted in spiritual death and the dead have no free will to choose to be alive. If a dead man thinks he can will himself to be saved by choosing Jesus, he believes the myth that he has control over his destiny while he remains in the clutches of the devil and blind to the light that salvation is in Christ alone by faith alone, and faith is not from self but from God.

The free will advocate who thinks he has a choice is spirituality dead concerning the knowledge of God's supernatural personal revelations. If God needs our help to choose if we are saved, then God is not Sovereign and His power is impotent. It cannot be God and us who decides, no one can have two masters so we can jump from following one to believe the other. *"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other."*

Matt 6:24

This is the judgment from the word of God

This is why the free choice of people to become a Christian is invalid, and choosing God to gain the benefits of heaven is a myth from the dark side. Those who live by their free will are called sinners. We either live to obey God or ourselves.

Sinners are lost in the darkness without the light and the knowledge of God.

Acts 26:18

They are spirituality dead concerning God.

Eph 2:1

They are enemies of God.

Rom 5:10

They live by the flesh that opposes the will of God and the Spirit.

Gal 5:17

They suppress the truth.

Rom 1:18

They are disobedient to God.

Eph 2:2

They are completely unable to please God.

Rom 8:8

They are deceived by the devil so that they cannot see the glory of God in Christ.

2 Cor 4:4

They have no eyes to see or ears to hear the truth from Christ.

Matt 13:15

They are slaves to sin.

Rom 6:20

The unbelieving person has no spiritual power to overcome sin. Those who are dead in sin cannot choose to initiate their rebirth in the image of Christ. Dead people are unable to breathe life into their dead bodies.

A sinner is someone who has declared their freedom to please themselves, which is really a declaration of independence from the need

to give obedience to God, and this results in separation from God which is known as death.

So how is it possible for a sinner to be saved by choosing God to go to heaven unless they are chosen by God and receive faith from God and come to use God's gift of repentance so they can be forgiven and be born again by the Spirit of God having laid down their life in the flesh?

The call of God is irresistible to a receptive heart

Since man is lost in the darkness of sin, how can he be saved?

God works His grace in us to bring about what God wants to bring about. Since the unbeliever is dead in sins and trespasses, and their wills are held captive by the lusts of our flesh, they need to be liberated from the disposition of the flesh in order to be saved.

Therefore salvation must be something that God does in us and for us, not something that we in any way do for ourselves. God alone does for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

The Holy Spirit creates in the person serious dissatisfaction with their life in the world so that they become desperate enough to be willing to give up everything because they hate their life in the world so that they can have the gift of life only Jesus gives.

John 14:26

"Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live."

John 5:25

Those who are dead in sin do not have ears to hear God and will hear nothing but what suits their disposition. But God will enable the dead to have ears to hear, and hearing they will believe. Then they have new life with new ears, and then they believe, life comes before faith and hearing. Only God can put flesh on dead bones and give them the breath of life.

Ezek 37:5-6

Salvation belongs to God who chooses His saints in Christ

'And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions,

made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)'
Eph 2:1-2, 4-5

'When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life."
Acts 11:18

God had to give the ability to repent if we are going to change our minds.

'For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;'
Eph 2:8

No one can save themselves by an act of their will. We are granted the ability to believe in Christ.

'For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,'
Phil 1:29

For Christ's sake we are given grace to believe and also suffer for His sake.

'fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.'
Heb 12:2

"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out."
John 6:37

"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day."
John 6:44

"Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances."
Ezek 36:26-27

The Salvation call means Jesus is Lord of those He calls

"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me."
John 6:37

We don't give ourselves to God, God gives us to Christ because He is the Lord and He chooses how we will live and we do what He commands. If Jesus Christ isn't our Lord to obey, then another imposter is having his say in how we should live.

Satan's free will agenda suggests that God gives you the right to be able to choose what you should do, so becoming a Christian isn't so bad after all because you decide how much you will be committed. You can choose to go to Church whenever you like, you can choose to follow its teaching, and you can enjoy yourself in the world because you are under the grace of God to be able to please yourself.

But if the undeserved love of God has touched your heart and bought you to humble yourself in admitting your disobedience so that you repent by turning to God for mercy and forgiveness, He will not turn you away but give you a new life in the image of Christ. This life of God reborn in the believer will be made known to all by your determined devotion to Christ in your obedience to God. The surest indicator that someone has received a new life from God is their devotion to obeying all that Jesus Christ has commanded for His disciples. Matt 28:20

Our deeds reveal our heart

If becoming a Christian has been simply the result of some free will decision to live a better life, then the desire and ability to obey that comes from heartfelt repentance will be lacking because the Spirit of God is not resident to lead the person into all righteousness. *'However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.'* Rom 8:9

Our belief determines our behaviour, if we don't really believe in Christ as our Lord and Master so we obey Him, we retain our free will, and our behaviour will lack the obedience He enables. If we have any idea we can freely choose how we live in the world and the level of our commitment to God, then we are deceived and Jesus Christ isn't our Lord and Master, and we are lost in the darkness of our own hearts.

Trying to be a good person is not the same as being devoted to Christ and walking as He walked in absolute obedience to God the Father. Without true belief that obeys we are still lost in sin. *"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."* John 3:36

Sinners are not really winners, choosers are losers, they might gain the whole world but they will lose their souls to the giver of the myth of free will. Having declared independence to decide for ourselves may get us

our way in the world, but it is very far away from God. If we think we are a Christian but we haven't given up living for ourselves so we live for Christ, then He isn't our Lord and Master and the deception remains.

Those who choose to be independent from the will of God will want what Jesus can do for them but they don't want to be compelled to His will. *Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled."*

John 6:26

The signs and miracles Jesus did were to bring men to repentance because they revealed the holy presence of God. Therefore God is the one who makes the first move; He is the one who choose His people. *"Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen."*

John 13:16-18

Disciples are chosen

The Lord Jesus chose His own followers for a purpose; He chose them so they would live for Him and not just please themselves but to do His fruitful work of making other disciples whose lives are changed from self seeking to seek God. *"You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you."*

John 15:16

The Lord calls those who believe in Him today to come out of the world where people live independently from God because they are influenced by Satan. *"If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you."*

John 15:19

The chosen belonged to the Father who gave them to the Son. *"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You; for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me. I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on*

behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours.”

John 17:6-9

Why is this important?

If someone has chosen God in order to be acceptable to God, they can have no assurance of salvation because true salvation is God's choosing. If they have chosen to become Christian on their own terms they are still in control, and God is their puppet, and they know they can also choose to walk away from Christ at any time.

If joining the Church has been solely because of a personal preference, the assurance of salvation isn't present by God's indwelling Spirit, because God isn't present in them, so they are sitting ducks who are easily targeted by the fiery darts of the devil.

Sitting ducks don't have the shield of salvation that God supplies for the protection of His chosen children. Ducks aren't indwelt by the Spirit so they have no spiritual power to withstand the darts of the enemy. They will not work diligently at putting to death the deeds of the flesh by giving themselves in obedient sacrificial service to Christ as they embrace their sanctification in holiness. Because the life of God has not replaced their life in the flesh, they are still dead in their sin. Choosers have a fake ticket for heaven with no bus to take them there, so they will not survive the spiritual war on their own. Unless they repent they will perish.

The flesh will always have a different opinion from God

The fact that there are other views of salvation apart from being entirely from the grace of God and the cross of Christ is to be expected, because sinful men will always want to make their way to heaven and be saved on their own terms. Many people desire heaven for when they die, but want to enjoy all the flesh of self interest has to offer in the world. But Jesus said: *“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it. Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.”* Matt 7:13-15

If sinful man has free will to act independently from the will of God, God is not the Sovereign Lord of all creation. However when people

insist on choosing their way, God is not mocked, they will certainly face a fiery judgment. The disobedience due to a lack of faith is self evident in the lives of ticket holders who refuse to deny themselves and take up their cross to walk as Jesus walked according to the Spirit. If Christ is not Lord we are condemned. If Jesus isn't Lord the reward is eternal damnation. Only the chosen of God are more than conquerors who will inherit the New Heaven and Earth.

Choosers are losers in the spiritual battle for souls, unless they respond to God's choosing through repentance. Therefore if a person is convicted of their sin and comes willingly to totally deny themselves and take up their cross, they can have every assurance that God has chosen them for eternal salvation and He will not fail because He is the Lord God Almighty.

Those called by God according to His word live by His word. The only authority we can have for any opinion has to be the Bible. Anything else is wishful thinking. If I cannot support a proposition biblically then it is of the flesh. Free will advocates distort the word of God to satisfy the flesh that will not yield to God's written authority. If self is sufficient for the independent thinker then they will not stand the scrutiny of the whole word of God. The Holy Spirit doesn't negotiate on the truth of God.

Believing we can choose God on our own terms doesn't come with the confidence we indeed have eternal life. The assurance God wants His children to have is that He can complete in us what He began when we are under the hammer of tribulations. Therefore if the pot can deny the Potter, there will be no confidence under pressure to resist the temptation to disobey God. (Phil 1:6) If free will is active then the pot has chosen to be the Potter.

Assurance of God's faithfulness and His awesome ability to keep us safe from the evil one is important if His chosen children are to be free of anxiety. Choosers will be anxious because they have to rely on themselves and experience the curse of the world as something that is beyond anyone's control. But the chosen know that God work all things together for their good, even in a fallen world. Rom 8:29

Constant and persistent instability in the life should be a warning that faith is unrealised and real repentance is needed so God can be believed. To hold to the teaching of free will is to deny the sovereignty of God so

that God is not believed. We are either alive in Christ or we are dead in sin.

We are either a slave to sin or a slave to God. Slaves don't get to decide what path they will take. Man's free will is a myth promoted by the devil as a slave master. The devil convinced Adam he had free will and he surely died. If the faith God gives can't be counted on then salvation also is a myth. If we can fall away from the salvation God gives, He is no better than the 33000 god's of Hinduism.

If you have chosen to become a Christian because it seemed like a good idea at the time, as the acceptable thing to do, you need to deny yourself in repentance and take up your cross otherwise you will not enter the kingdom of God. If you have been convicted of self indulgent independent living and repented to live for Christ alone, don't rest on your laurels, repentance is a lifelong duty because fleshly thinking will remain at least in a lesser degree until His stands in the presence of the Lord.

The one who perseveres to the end shows the proof of the wheat planted in the garden of God because God perseveres to fulfil His own plan.

God's assurance is to be believed

"This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day." John 6:39

"While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled." John 17:12

"Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one." John 18:9

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." John 5:24

"My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." John 10:29

'He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.'
1 John 5:12-13

'Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.'
Heb 7:25

'Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.'
Eph 4:30

'For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' Rom 8:38-39

'His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature.'
2 Pet 1:3-4

'Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,' Jude 1:24

Faith alone in the will of God brings us the blessing of God.

'Therefore IT WAS ALSO CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS. Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.' Rom 4:22-27

Free will has a lot to do with a weak Church

For much of the 20th century there has been worldly pressure for man to identify as Christian. Church membership was viewed as an advantage to one's business or professional career, as well as a source of community acceptance. This association with the Church would certainly have been comfortable for people who want a foot in the world and a foot in heaven. But we can't have two masters. Yet it is this optional attitude toward the church that surfaces in our individualistic, that insists I can decide for myself to have a foot in heaven while my heart is in the world.

Comprehensive Surveys of the activity of Church attenders reveals that the less active conservative Protestants were 20 percent more likely to divorce than the religiously unaffiliated. There's something about being

a Christian in name only that is linked to a lot of negative outcomes when it comes to family life.

It is possible to make some informed assessment of the level of commitment people exhibit. The Bible has definite requirements for Christ's followers as disciples. And it begins with obeying Jesus. *'And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it."*

Luke 9:23-24

Unfortunately many suffer under the false notion that the religious realm lies in a private place in our lives. That religion is a private affair that has little impact on the public arenas of our life. So there is state of amnesia for many Christians when it comes to seeing themselves as representatives of the kingdom of God. It is assumed that they can live by a completely different set of rules than the way they live for the kingdom of God as a contributing member of God's family in Christ.

One reason for this contradiction in many Christians in general are ignorant of the Bible's content so they hold convictions that are contrary to its clear and central teaching that the church of Jesus Christ is nothing less than His bodily replacement on earth.

When we look at the contemporary church, we see a relatively small percentage of people who go beyond Sunday worship into the life and ministry of a holy congregation. Inevitably 20 percent of the people give 80 percent of the income. Twenty percent are involved in the ministry positions serving the 80 percent who are consumers of their efforts as seat warmers.

It is only as we make an honest assessment of the way things are that we can have any hope of getting back to the way things were designed to be. We have the hope of renewal because Jesus as the Lord of the church seeks for His bride to be without spot and blemish. For it is through His church that His life will be revealed.

If free will has been the basis for us becoming a Christian because it was a good idea at the time, we will not have advanced ourselves in our relationship with God, we will not cherish His people as our brothers and sisters, and we will remain lost in the darkness of a world without God.

There's a cancer in the body of Christ's church, and it's called me, myself and my will to choose, my right to decide. And if there is going to be life at all, the cancer has to be put to death, it has to be cut out and disposed of in the fire of God's judgement by the power of the Spirit's sanctification, but we must do the cutting. Rom 8:13

It's time to repent from our obstinate demonstration of personal rights, because when we die with Christ He determines what we shall do. This is the time to awaken the sleeper who has neglected his calling to live for Christ as His representative.

Christians walk by faith and not by the will of sinful man

'He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.' John 1:11-13

No one has the right because they come from a religious family, not even by the works of the flesh or self determination, nor by the will of a man who thinks he can get God to agree with human decision. But only by God who is over all and Lord of all.

'For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.' Rom 8:29-30

The whole process of salvation is God's initiative and undertaking from start to finish. He knows His own, He predestines His children, He calls those whom He died for, He justifies and He glorifies His chosen to share in the inheritance of Christ. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning of salvation and the end of our salvation.

It is God working His new birth in us, bringing conviction of sin that causes us to cry out to Him in repentance so that we are saved because we acknowledge God is indeed Lord of our lives. Conviction, faith repentance and rebirth are all evidence of the calling of God that causes us to call on the name of the Lord. Faith comes by hearing but only the

called hear God because He heals their deafness by the presence of His Spirit.

The sovereignty of God is absolute

He is the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, whose supreme authority is over all creation according to His divine will. His sovereignty means no one can resist Him and the execution of His will. What He says, He will do, and it stands forever.

Those whom He calls to join Him come under the power of the Holy Spirit, and they are unable to do anything but surrender into faith and repentance to live a life of obedience and devotion to Christ.

To suggest that someone can become a Christian without the evidence of the Holy Spirit changing their lives through obedience and devoted service, is just a myth. No one is able to turn over a new leaf from a dead one in obedience to God, without God first giving the means to be alive in order to turn.

And because God predestined some to salvation and called them to be justified; there must be others who are not called and justified by the blood of Christ, because God passes over them, having handing them over to their chosen passions and desires, according to His divine knowledge and purpose. But God is always just. *"Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?"*

Gen 18:25

In order to understand God's sovereignty correctly, God's word is meant to challenge our prejudices, which are our preconceived ideas about life, and open them up for honest reassessment; but our prejudice says, no way. We can't stand the scrutiny of the critical observation and examination by God that exposes our distorted thinking. We look for agreement not error, especially when we have cultivated a hobby horse we have accepted without doing the hard work of analysis under the light of God's word. It's easier to put up the shutters and say in our hearts, "no way, I'm not going there."

Therefore, until we can clearly write down what we believe, and why, from the authority of the whole word of God, but only in its proper

context, without negating or dismissing any part that doesn't agree with us, we haven't understood His message the way He intended.

The sovereign Lord God is calling on His children to put down their shutters, and explain themselves consistently with His word. For if they can't do that, they don't understand what it means to represent Christ correctly, and as a result they can't effectively witness to Christ. In this regard all the children of God are to be intellectuals, for only then can they have the mind of Christ. The problem is many have become unintellectual or even anti-intellectual, thinking that God intends them to comprehend deeper spiritual things without the effort needed to correct fleshly thinking. The transformation of the mind cannot begin without first offering ourselves as a living sacrifice.

Don't put up the shutters, write down what you think and see what your thoughts have made of your witness, because every thought we have about God is our personal Theology, good or bad. Bible believing means nothing without Bible thinking and doing God's way. The word of God does not contradict itself as we are prone to do, we say we believe in God's sovereignty and then also think we can choose for ourselves how we can have life with God.

The question we need to ask is: how much of our own prejudiced distortions, or those we have received from others, that has weakened our effectiveness as a conveyer of God sovereignty and truth, because we have neglected to take the time to honestly listen to those God has given us as teachers of His word, so that we are compelled to examine for ourselves the truth proposed? And if we are faithful to God's word and discover some error, ours or the teachers, that enlightens our understanding by the grace of the Spirit, we have the responsibility to share that truth lovingly with others so we can all be blessed.

Therefore we speak to everyone because we don't know who will receive His call, or how many times they need to hear it, or how many ways we have to explain before they repent, having become the good soil that produces good fruit when they deny themselves to live for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. *'For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, so that we would walk in them.'* Eph 2:8-10

Living Water Resources

Come to the River

'For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, so that we would walk in them.'

Eph 2:8-10

Contents compiled by

Robert C May

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cometotheriver@optusnet.com.au

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