

FREE-WILL, 4 of 5

AN OPTION TO FREE-WILL

A belief system that does not advance personal choice in being born again, gives a foggy view of God, man, the God-man relationship, and the Church.

Yes, the Kingdom of God is an autocracy, where supreme power is in the hands of one. God, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, has the final word about everything, but He is also gracious and kind and has no insecurities that motivate Him to force anyone to serve Him.



And yes, He hates sin, but He loves sinners and that is the primary trait that shapes His attitude toward man. He does not push us away because of our sin but extends His hand to all. I revel in Jer. 9:24, “but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight.” niv

THE CHURCH

Rejecting free-will weakens the imperative of the ongoing choices that produce a transformed heart and life. After all, if one is among “the elect” he is eternally secure.

They will likely focus more on knowing the Bible than on obeying it, which easily leads to a more dogmatic, black-and-white faith that hinders the transformed and Spirit-empowered life that glorifies God and draws others to His goodness.

It easily becomes legalistic, utilizing a top-down leadership system to maintain a form of godliness. It’s laity-clergy distinctions hinder the Body of Christ in functioning as a priesthood of believers, and its rejection of the I Cor. 12 supernatural gifts of the Spirit is a handicap.

IN CONCLUSION

Free-will or otherwise are not simple theological issues. They shape the Christian life and relationships; create distinct church cultures; and impact how the mission of the church is carried out. This has historically been a divisive topic among Christians and wisdom dictates that a local body embrace one or the other as their declared belief. It is inappropriate for anyone to enter a congregation and try to convert it to their personal viewpoint.

I cherish my co-laborers in the otherwise camp. We have enjoyed friendship and served freely together in the missions setting but I suspect that the freedom and joy of embracing free-will would enrich them and glorify God even more - - and that’s been His plan from the beginning!

Ken Stoltzfus
Kidron, OH USA
May 3, 2021