

BC14 – 2– The Effect of the Fall on the Will of Man

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: It is pathetic (可悲的) when evolutionists (信奉进化论者) argue that they have free wills (自由意志), after all, evolution no basis for the evolving of non-tangible (无形的) things, such as a “will.” Amino acids (氨基酸) cannot make a moral component to humanity.

Equally inexplicable, but even more pathetic, is that some Christians argue this that we have purely free wills. By arguing that we have perfectly free wills they deny that our wills were tarnished (被玷污) by the fall (人类的堕落). They argue for free wills because their theology (神学) is wrong. They believe that man can, of his own accord, choose to do what is right and good. So “free wills” are absolutely necessary for this. Surely, this is not what the Bible teaches. Hear about this from God today.

Our headings are:

Corruption of man’s free will after the fall

Solution to the corruption of man’s free will after the fall

Reaction to the restored free will of man after the fall

Our goals are: **That you will see how severely corrupted your will was after the fall, how you lost the ability to “will” properly, and how Jesus graciously restored your corrupted will by living and dying for you.**

Therefore we reject everything taught to the contrary concerning human free will, since humans are nothing but the slaves of sin and **cannot do a thing unless** it is given them from heaven.

For who can **boast of being able to do anything good by oneself**, since Christ says, “No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me”?

Who can glory in one’s own will when they understand that “the **mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God**”? Who can speak of one’s own knowledge in view of the fact that “those who are **unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God’s Spirit**”? In short, who can produce a single thought, since we know that we are “**not able to think a thing**” about ourselves, by ourselves, but that “**our competence is from God**”

And therefore, what the apostle says ought rightly to stand fixed and firm: “For it is God who is at work in you **both to will and to work** for God’s good pleasure.”

For there is no understanding nor will conforming to God’s understanding and will apart from **Christ’s involvement**, as he teaches us when he says, “Apart from me you can do nothing.”

因此我们拒绝一切与圣经相违反的人的自由意志说，因为人已经成为罪的奴仆¹⁴，若不是从天上所赐的，他自己是毫无所有¹⁵。这样谁敢夸口，说他能行什么善事，因为基督说：“若不是差我来的父吸引人，就没有人能到我这里来¹⁶。”有谁能夸自己的意志，有谁知道凡体贴肉体的就是与神为敌呢¹⁷？人既知“不是我们自己能承担什么事，我们所能承担的，乃是出于神¹⁸”，有谁敢提出什么意见呢？简言之，有谁敢向神强嘴，因为他知道我们自己不能有任何的想法，我们之所以能思想是由神而来的¹⁹。因此使徒保罗说的对，“因为你们立志行事，都是神在你们心里运行，为要成就他的美意²⁰。”因为没有人的意志或人的了解，与神的旨意与了解相符合，乃是基督在人心中运行；正如他所教导我们说：“离了我，你们就不能作什么²¹”

(Translated by Rev. Charles Chao D.D.)

Corruption of Man’s free will after the Fall

1. When God made man he was perfect and inclined to do good. At the same time man was made with the freedom to choose evil. Man chose to do evil when he was tempted (被试探) by the Devil (魔鬼).

Ecclesiastes 7:29 Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, But they have sought out many schemes.” (传道书7: 29 我所找到的只有一件，就是神造人原是正直，但他们寻出许多巧计。)

2. As a result of his sin, man was separated him from God. With this separation:

a. Man lost the ability to keep God’s law. He could not keep a single law of God perfectly.

Romans 7:14 ...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.

Romans 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; **for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.** (原来体贴肉体的，就是与神为仇；因为不服神的律法，就是不能服。)

Man is now nothing more than an impotent (虚弱的) pauper (赤贫者)-a slave. A pauper cannot build a house. A pauper cannot help the poor. A pauper cannot even provide for his own needs. He lives by the mercy of others.

b. Man did not even have the desire to obey God.

1Corinthians 2:14 But the **natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God**, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are **spiritually discerned**. (然而属血气的人不领会神圣灵的事，反倒以为愚拙；并且不能知道，因为这些事惟有属灵的人才能看透。)

Man saw God as a hindrance to his life, not a help. God's demands conflicted with his desires so he ignored God.

c. Man became hostile to God and God's things as there was a perpetual 永久的, 不断的 conflict between the two.

Romans 3:10 As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; **There is none who seeks after God.** 12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one." 13 "Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit"; "The poison of asps is under their lips"; 14 "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." 15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood;

If God said: "Make no images (偶像)," man said, "I will make images." If God said "Keep the Sabbath (安息日) holy," man said that the Sabbath was for his personal pleasure. If God said, "Don't commit adultery (奸淫)," then man said I will not be faithful to my spouse. Even when a non-believer doesn't cheat on his spouse, it is usually because he is afraid of the human consequences: his wife might leave him, he might lose access to his kids, etc. Man is only free to choose to do wickedly. He could never choose come near God.

John 6:44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. (若不是差我来的父吸引人, 就没有能到我这里来的; 到我这里来的, 在末日我要叫他复活。)

3. So those who argue that man has a "free will" can only do so by playing with words. God's Word teaches that man **does not have the ability to make good choices.** No one can make a good choice without God changing his will. But even man's bad desires can be negated (取消, 使无效) by God, if God wills. Man is trapped by his will!

Solution to the Corruption of Man's Free Will After the Fall

1. God's Word: God must reveal what is right and good-the things you must will. You don't know what right things are.

Ephesians 1:7 In **Him we have redemption** through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace 8 which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, 9 having made **known to us the mystery of His will.**...

(7我们藉这爱子的血, 得蒙救赎, 过犯得以赦免, 乃是照他丰富的恩典; 8这恩典是神用诸般智慧聪明, 充充足足赏给我们的, 9都是照他自己所预定的美意, 叫我们知道他旨意的奥秘,)

This is why you must preach the Gospel (福音) to the lost. **There is only one true revelation.** The Koran (可兰经), the Gita (博伽梵歌), the Book of Mormons (摩门经), the writings of Eddy, and Russell (罗素) will leave men without hope. You are doing a terrible disservice (危害) to those who follow these writings if you don't tell them about Jesus. It doesn't matter how nice these people are—and many are. The Bible is necessary! All of these false religions tell people that they can please God by their own choice. To withhold the truth is to lie.

2. God's Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit (圣灵) must work in a man to change his will so he can "will" those things which are good. That change is purely the work of God's Spirit. Man has no ability to change himself. Man needs outside help to restore his ability to choose to please God. **Simply knowing the truth is not sufficient.**

John 6:65 And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."

"I sought the Lord and afterward I knew that he sought me first."

Jude 1:24 Now to Him **who is able to keep you from stumbling,** And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, 25 To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.

Romans 5:6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (因我们还软弱的时候, 基督就按所定的日期为罪人死。)

One of the Muslim men said in the discussion recently that Muslims were stumbling to heaven with their own works and Allah helps them. I appreciated his honesty. But none of them can make it to heaven that way. The Bible teaches that God wakes you up from the dead, God reveals truth to you, and then God holds your hand as you travel to heaven. And all of these things come to you because Jesus paid the price of your new life and renewed will!

John 8:34 Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever **commits sin is a slave** of sin. 35 "And a slave does not abide in the house forever, **but a son abides forever.** 36

"Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

2Corinthians 3:5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, **but our sufficiency is from God,**

3. God has to give you the will to do good even after you become a Christian.

Philippians 2:13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

John 15:5 "I am the vine (葡萄树), you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

This life sustaining sap (树液, 元气) comes from Jesus Christ. Every nourishing thing he provides: His Word, his Spirit, your church family, the sacraments (圣礼), preaching, discipline, and your Christian friends.

Even your ability to remain as a Christian comes from God. You need God's Holy Spirit to continue.

John 14:16 "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that **He may abide with you forever**—

John 17:17 "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

4. Only in heaven, man's "will" will be totally restored and confirmed as perfectly righteous (义).

Romans 8:30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, **these He also glorified.**

Reaction to the Restored will of man after the fall

1. Knowing that you lost the ability to will what is right, and knowing that it is totally the work of God to restore your ability to do what is right, **don't boast in your abilities; boast about God.**

- a. When your child grows up and leads a good life, praise God that he has worked in your child's heart. Yes, you may have taught your child God's Word, but it was God's Word that brought change in your child's behavior.
- b. When you are come to worship on the Sabbath, praise God for putting that desire in your heart, fully knowing that you would have chosen to go fishing or to the restaurant instead.
- c. When you are faithful to your husband, praise God that his Holy Spirit convicts you of sin (使你认罪) and helps you to keep your eyes on your own spouse and you are able to love him in spite of his sins.
- d. When you don't cheat on a test, boast that God put that honest desire in your heart.
- e. When you give of your tithes (什一奉献) or when you show compassion on the poor, thank God that he has given you satisfaction with what you have so you don't steal and hoard.

2. Knowing that you lost the ability to will what is right, and knowing that it is totally the work of God to restore your ability to do what is right, **constantly fight to choose what is right today.** And it is a battle!

Deuteronomy 30:19 "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; (我今日呼天唤地向你作见证, 我将生死、祸福陈明在你面前, 所以你要拣选生命, 使你和你的后裔都得存活;)

Romans 6:18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. **22** But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

3. Knowing that you lost the ability to do what is right, and knowing that it is totally the work of God to restore your ability to do what is right, **be patient those who do not yet believe.** They are enslaved to their wills. Wait for God to work. No one can move unless the Spirit draws him.

Conclusion:

Man's will became corrupted (败坏, 堕落) after the Fall, totally corrupt, and so he lost the ability to choose rightly. He is only free to choose wickedly...and even when he appears to choose well, it was always with the wrong motive (动机). God had to work in him through his Word and his Holy Spirit to renew his will.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Now that your will is being renewed, what is your assessment of your life? Do you struggle with accepting God's will sometimes? Don't be surprised. Rather, learn to use God's Word and his Spirit to continue to reject your natural desires and accept God's will (神的旨意). Let them draw your mind back to the cross (十字架) and see what Jesus did for you. This will remind you that you don't belong to yourself and you will desire to please him. And when you do what is right...don't pat yourself on the back. Rather, come to worship and give thanks. Tell a friend how God strengthened you to raise godly seed. Tell them how you would have ignored your duty, but God's Word and his Spirit did not leave you alone, but worked to renew your will.

Finally: If you are not a Christian and you feel God working in your heart today, pray. Pray that you will be saved from your sins, that you will believe that Jesus Christ paid for your sins and that you will learn to obey the Savior.