

## **God's Gifts of Free Will**

### **Bible Study – Pastor Charles A. Hall – May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

- **Free Will** means: Is a belief that God has granted human beings the power to make their own ethical decisions, whether good or evil, right or wrong. In the end, it is up to each human being to decide for themselves which path they will pursue as we travel through this journey called life.
- **Harden of the Heart** means: Is a heart that is like stone in that it is unmoved, unfeeling, and unresponsive by human suffering, but worst of all, unmoved, unresponsive, unfeeling toward God's Word and God's mercies, and all that God's gospel offers. No act of God's grace and mercy moves them toward Him.

Over the past couple of months we have discussed how God communicates with humanity, how humanity communicates with God, how the Word of God is God, and the divine power of the Word of God. As a reminder God communicates to humanity today through His Son Jesus Christ (***Hebrews 1:2***), we communicate to God the Father through His son Jesus Christ through the unison of the Holy Spirit (***1Corinthians 12:3***). We learned that the Word of God represents both divine and spiritual power, and that it is through the power of the Word of God that humanity is saved from the penalty of death (***1Corinthians 1:18***). As a result the Word of God brings humanity into fellowship with God, this is known as salvation. We also learned how to discern for ourselves the spiritual voice of God from the spiritual voice of this world (***1John 4:1-3***).

Today we will discuss the topic of free will. Freewill is an important and essential part of our relationship with God. Since God created human beings, it was His decision, and by His power that He granted and gifted human beings with the freedom to make their own individual decisions and choices in this life. The scripture tells us the human beings have the ability to make their own decisions without being persuaded by external forces. However, the scripture also notes the limitations or influence that are placed upon humanity through the enslaving power and influence of sin and the prince of darkness.

- **Deuteronomy 11:26-28** Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; (27) A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day: (28) And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.
- **Jeremiah 26:3** If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings.

As a result of the gift of free will every human being has the freedom of will to seek and find God. For this reason there is no excuse for anyone who refuses to accept God's free gift of salvation, which comes with the gift of eternal life in heaven with the Lord.

- **Isaiah 55:6-7** Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: (7) Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

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- **Act 2:21** AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS, THAT WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED.

Although human beings possess free will, they are still greatly influenced and sometimes held captive by the evil influential powers of the prince of darkness. As a result, human beings sin, and this sin prevents them from breaking free from the bondage of sin, and the persuasive ways and tactics of the devil.

- **Romans 7:14-20** For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. (15) For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. (16) If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. (17) Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. (18) For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. (19) For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. (20) Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

As human beings we are sometimes affected by the harden of the heart, this occurs when we allow the influence of the prince of darkness to turn our hearts away from God. This normally starts with a little lie or what we refer to as a little sin, and over time our hearts become saturated with sin, and harden toward God and the things of God. Our hearts become totally worldly, whatever makes us feel good become right in our hearts, even if it is totally contrary to the Word of God. Based on the Word of God the actions and behavior of this nation appears to be the result of harden hearts!

- **Psalms 95:6-8** O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. (7) For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, (8) Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: