

Does Man Have Free Will?

One of the consequences of the false doctrine of Calvinism is that man is declared incapable of choosing spiritual good over evil. It is argued that when Adam sinned, he plunged the entire human race into spiritual ruin and thus he lost for himself and his descendants the ability to choose in the spiritual realm.

It is true that Adam brought sin, and its consequences, upon mankind (Romans 5:12). However, the Bible says nothing of man's losing his free will as a result of this. The Bible was written to a race capable of choosing to serve God. Jesus said in Matthew 11:28, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The Bible also says that man is held responsible for choosing not to come unto God and not to receive His salvation: "Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord" (Proverbs 1:29). The invitation of God is for "whosoever will" (Revelation 22:17).

In Luke 13:34, the inhabitants of Jerusalem's destruction were not blamed for their inability to choose, but for their refusal to accept the Lord. There is a difference between the two. If man has no free will, in what sense can he be held accountable for his sin, and worthy of eternal damnation? Would God acknowledge man's inability to choose, yet hold him responsible for his actions? This is not a God of love (1 Timothy 2:3-4). A theology that denies man's ability to choose does not offer freedom from sin, but from responsibility. Herein lies both the attraction and the deception of the false doctrine of Calvinism.

Adapted from Heath Rogers