

BC14 – 2– The Fall and Free Will

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Adam was perfectly made, but he sinned and fell from perfection. God then used the flicker of light to give man a little understanding of his guilt. This meant that man was without excuse.

But could this depraved man who chose to worship the creation and tried to have dominion over God then choose to do what is good? This is what you will hear about today.

Our headings are:

Corruption of man's will after the fall

Solution to the corruption of man's will after the fall

Reaction to the solution to the corruption of man's will after the fall

Our goals are: **That you will see how severely corrupted your will was, and how Jesus graciously restored your ability to choose to return to Paradise by 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."

Corruption of Man's will after the Fall

1. When God made man he was perfect and inclined to do good.

But man was not a robot. God made man with the freedom to choose evil and to reject evil. Man chose to do evil when he was tempted by the Devil.

Ecclesiastes 7:29 Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, But they have sought out many schemes.

2. As a result of his sin, man was separated 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.

Adam chose to make himself god – his belly became god – his power became god – and so he was enslaved. He became a spiritual pauper. He could not build God’s house. He could not worship God. He could only serve himself – his new god. His natural descendants were also impotent paupers. They lost the ability to have dominion on the earth and to worship God.

b. Man lost even 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.

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 because there was a perpetual 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," man said, "I will make images." If God said "Keep the Sabbath holy," man said that the Sabbath was for his personal pleasure. If God said, "Don't commit adultery," then man said I will do what I want with my own body.

You might argue: I've seen non-believers who haven't cheated on their wives. That may be true, but they are still sinning. In order to obey God every good work must be done according to the law of Christ, for the glory of Christ and through faith in Christ. So if something were not from faith in Jesus Christ, it is sin. And that is hostility toward God.

Further, when a man doesn't cheat on his wife it is because he is afraid of the human consequences: his wife might leave him, he might lose access to his kids, people might think less of him, etc. He might be faithful to his spouse, but it is not faithfulness to Christ.

The truth is this: Man is only free to choose to do wickedly. He could/would never choose to 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.

3. So does man have a free will?

If you say man has a free will, you have to qualify that by saying man has a limited free will and can only choose to do evil. The truth is, man lost the ability to choose to do good. Man has no free will when it comes to serving God. Man's will became corrupt.

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

1. God, and only God, can renew your will that became corrupt after the fall.

How does God change your will, renewing it so that you might desire what is good and true?

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

2. God's Word: God must reveal what is right and good-the things you must will.

You naturally don't know what right things are to will.

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...

This is why you must preach the Gospel to the lost.

There is only one true revelation. The Koran, the Gita, Joseph's Smith Book of Mormons, the writings of Mary Baker Eddy of the Christian Science cult, Ellen G. White of the SDA's, and Russell of the Jehovah's Witnesses will leave men without hope.

You are doing a terrible disservice 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.

3. God's Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit 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. Remember this how we sing this song! "I sought the Lord and afterward I knew that he sought me first."

One Muslim leader said to us in a Christian Muslim discussion: "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!

4. Then your will is liberated and you will have the desire and the ability to do what God requires.

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,**

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

John 15:5 "I am the vine, 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 comes from Jesus Christ. Every nourishing thing he provides: His Word, his Spirit, your church family, the sacraments, 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.

6. Only in heaven, man's "will" will be totally restored and confirmed as perfectly righteous.

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 Solution of the Corruption of man's 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 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 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** 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.
- f. **When you preach a good sermon...**thank God that you have his Word to preach and not yours!

2. Knowing that you lost the ability to will what is right, but knowing that God restores your ability to do what is right, constantly fight to choose what is right today.

And it is a battle! But the redeemed can fight. And the redeemed can win.

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;

Romans 6:18 And having been set free from sin, **you became slaves of righteousness**.

With God's help you can resist lusting, or watching pornography, or working on the Sabbath, or coveting your neighbor's car.

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 with those who do not yet believe.

They are enslaved to their wills. Wait for God to work. Wait for the Spirit to draw him.

Conclusion:

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

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Now that your will is being renewed, assess your life. Is God pleased with the choices you make, the choice of a job, the choice of a spouse or the choice of your daily activities? He should be. If he isn't, ask him to forgive you.

2. Praise God that he restored that ability for you to choose good, lest you face hell when you die!

3. When you do what is right don't pat yourself on the back. Out of thankfulness to God for your renewed wills, 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. Lead them to the cross so God might restore their wills.

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 paid for your sins and that you will learn to obey the Savior.