

INTRODUCTION: “MAN’S FREE WILL”

I. DEFINITION: THE WILL

- A. THE ABILITY TO MAKE DECISIONS, COMMITMENTS, PLANS** (Col.1:27; Lk.23:25,51; see 9/6/09 sermon, *Devote Yourself!*)
- B. THE ABILITY TO TURN DESIRE INTO ACTION** (Ps.135:6; Phil.2:13; Jms.1:18; 2Pt.1:21)
- C. MORE THAN MERE INSTINCT** (Jn.1:13; 2Pt.2:12; see Ex.6:12)

II. NATURE: MAN MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD (Gen.1:26f; see Eph.4:24)

- A. THE FREE WILL OF GOD: INFINITE, ETERNAL, UNCHANGEABLE** (Job 11:7; Ps.90:2; Jms.1:17; Creator: absolute; original, independent; Eph.1:1-12; see Ex.3:14; Ps.148:6; Jms.1:17; also 1Jn.4:19)
- B. THE FREE WILL OF MAN: FINITE, TEMPORAL, CHANGEABLE** (creature: relative; derived, dependent; Prov.20:24; Jn.1:13; Acts 18:21; Rom.9:16; Jms.4:15)
- C. SUMMARY: FREE ACCORDING TO NATURE** (Ps.135:6; 2Tim.2:13; Jer.13:23)
- D. IMPORTANCE: DEPENDENT ON & ACCOUNTABLE TO** (Mt25:19f; Ro.11:33; Acts2:23; Heb4:12)

III. STATE: MAN’S WILL IN ITS FOURFOLD STATE

INTRODUCTION: WILL ACCORDING TO STATE OF NATURE

- A. CREATED: ABLE TO WILL GOOD OR EVIL** (innocence; Gen.2:17f; Eccl.7:29; Eph.4:24; see Heb.5:8)
- B. FALLEN: NOT ABLE TO WILL WHAT IS PLEASING TO GOD** (Eph.2:1f; Rom.8:7; Jn.6:44,65; Heb.11:6; 1Cor.10:31)
- C. REDEEMED: ABLE TO WILL WHAT IS PLEASING TO GOD** (Heb.11:6; Eph.2:5f,10; Phil.2:13; Rom.6:18; but Rom.7:21f(8:7); Gal.5:17)
- D. GLORIFIED: ABLE TO WILL GOOD ONLY** (Heb.12:23; Jude 24; 2Pt.3:13; Rev.22:15)

IV. WILL FREE!

- A. WILLINGLY ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR DEPENDENCE ON THE WILL OF GOD!** (Gen.1:26f; Jms.4:15)
- B. ASK GOD TO MAKE YOUR WILL FREE FROM BONDAGE TO SIN!** (Jn.8:34,36; Rom.6:22; Phil.2:13; see Lk.11:13)
- C. FREELY SUBMIT YOUR HUMAN WILL TO HIS DIVINE WILL!** (Mt.6:10; 26:39,42,44(Jn.15:5); see Ps.110:3; Lev.7:16)
- D. BE COMFORMED TO HIS WILL AND WILL FREELY!** (1Jn.5:14; Rom.12:2(7:12); 1Th.4:3(Ex.20:1f); 2Tm.3:17; yet Rom.7:21f; Gal.5:17)
- E. PERSEVERE IN THE PROMISE OF A PERFECTLY FREE WILL!** (Heb.12:23; Rom.8:23-25)

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven,

Hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

- Matthew 6:9-13

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR PRIVATE, FAMILY AND SMALL GROUP FELLOWSHIP

Suggestions: Don't feel obliged to use every question or every part of every question. Go through and discuss those that are of greatest interest to you. Then consider going back and discussing those that may also be useful, including those that may have seemed a bit difficult. In all questions, keep the outline before to identify entries relevant to the question and to look up appropriate verses listed.

1. Pray the Lord's Prayer, as is, in your private and family worship.
2. Also use the Lord's Prayer as an outline for prayer (see "in this way", Mt.6:9). That is, pray each line, expanding upon the meaning and purpose. For example, adoration (*Father, hallowed*), confession (*forgive us*), thanksgiving (all elements in the prayer) and petition (*hallowed, kingdom come, etc.*).
3. What is the "will"?
4. What are the similarities and differences between the will of God and the will of man?
5. Is there any inherent conflict between God's will and man's?
6. What is the relationship of man's will to God's will?
7. What are the four states of man and his will?
 - a. Can fallen man will what is rightly pleasing to other people?
 - b. What can he not will and why?
 - c. What is the problem with the will for the Christian?
 - d. What will be one of the great joys at death, at the resurrection & throughout eternity?
8. Do you acknowledge the dependence of your will on God's?
9. Have you asked God to free your will from its bondage to sin through faith in Christ?
10. Do you submit your will to the will of God in Christ?
11. Do you conform your will to the will of God as revealed in the Scriptures?
12. Do you look forward to a will made perfect in Christ in the new creation?

To talk with someone about seeking the emancipation of your will, contact The Reformed Presbyterian Church in Oswego at 315-343-7112 or oswegorpc@hotmail.com