

To Glorify and Enjoy God

LESSON 14: GLORIFYING GOD IN THE WILL OF MAN

Intro:

BIG IDEA: God is glorified in _____ by freeing us from _____ to sin.

Perhaps the reason the Shorter Catechism skips over the subject is that it is so complex, too complex for children because it is “philosophical.” The Westminster Confession follows Augustine in examining this question. Thomas Boston also follows a redemptive-historical pattern in his classic *Human Nature in its Fourfold State*.

1. God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor, by any absolute necessity of nature, determined to good, or evil.

- Humanity was _____ by God. God has the power of _____.
- Made in God’s _____, we have the power of _____.
- God’s will is directed by His _____ so that He _____ chooses that which is good, right...
- He gave us a _____ natural liberty. Our choices are not _____ or coerced.
- This rules out moral _____ or the notion of fate/_____ where we MUST make certain choices.
- Moral determinism holds that we act out of _____ like that which governs the movement the movements of _____ objects.
- We are not forced to do anything, but make decisions based on our _____.
- We can have _____ desires, but choose the _____ desire.
- We are ultimately moved from _____, not from _____.

Jonathan Edwards: free will is the _____ to choose what we want or according to our own _____

“We are volitional creatures, and to be volitional means that we choose according to our will. We make choices according to what seems best or most pleasing to us at the moment of decision.”

R.C. Sproul¹²⁶

Man “is endowed with an inalienable faculty of self-determination, the power of acting or not acting, and of acting in the way which the man himself, upon the whole view of the case, desires at the time.” **A.A. Hodge**¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Sproul, Vol. 2, pp. 4.

¹²⁷ Hodge, pp. 159.

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Creation

2. Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom, and power to will and to do that which was good and well pleasing to God; but yet, mutably, so that he might fall from it.

- Adam could choose to do _____ & _____ God.
- But he was not perfect, meaning that he was also able to _____ God.
- **Augustine:** *posse non peccare et posse peccare*. Able _____ to sin & able to sin.
- Adam didn't have a _____ in either direction, but could fall from this state.

Inherited Nature

3. Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation: so as, a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.

- When Adam chose to sin, he _____ that state of _____.
- Pelagius: Adam's sin only affected _____ so freedom of the will is _____.
- Semi-pelagianism: affirms some _____ but God _____ that in Christ.
- The universal atonement restores the ability choose to _____ & _____.
- Reformed Theology: "any spiritual good accompanying salvation".
- Christ and true religion are _____ to sinners in their fallen state.
- People in this natural state are "averse from that good" or spiritual good.
- People can do _____ good, but not gain _____ from God.
- We still have free will, but suffer from a _____ inability that directs that will.
- This means that we _____ the evil that we do.

"The natural man's affections are wretchedly misplaced; he is a spiritual monster." **Thomas Boston**¹²⁸

For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, ¹⁰as it is written:

"None is righteous, no, not one;

¹¹ no one understands;

no one seeks for God.

¹²All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;

no one does good,

not even one."

¹³"Their throat is an open grave;

they use their tongues to deceive."

¹²⁸ Boston, pp. 127.

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“The venom of asps is under their lips.”

¹⁴ “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.”

¹⁵ “Their feet are swift to shed blood;

¹⁶ in their paths are ruin and misery,

¹⁷ and the way of peace they have not known.”

¹⁸ “There is no fear of God before their eyes.” **Romans 3**

- Paul speaks about both Jews & Greeks: same spiritual condition _____ of Christ.
- Sin is no _____ of _____!

⁴⁴No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. ...⁶⁵And he said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.” **John 6**

- “*No one can*” or a _____ negative condition. No one possesses the _____ to do this.
- This is “*come to me*” the key spiritual good accompanying salvation: _____!
- He provides the necessary _____ (sine qua non) for the necessary outcome.
- It must be “*granted him by the Father*.” “Him” is the _____ coming to Christ.
- Faith is a _____. But this is not a general gift, as _____ argued.
- The other condition is that “*the Father who sent me draws him*.” God actively _____.
- We do not incline _____ toward Christ, the Father inclines us toward Christ.
- Some argue this means something like “woo”. But classical Greek: _____ water.
- In NT it is used for drawing a _____ (John 18:10); _____ in a net full of fish (John 21:6, 11); someone being _____ before authorities (Acts 16:19; James 2:6) or out of the _____ (Acts 21:30).
- We are not compelled against our will, but we see that God _____ our will (effectual call).

“Your will is enslaved to your dispositions, to your desires, which, the Bible says, are continually wicked, prior to conversion.” **R.C. Sproul**¹²⁹

“Man has no power, direct or indirect, to fulfill the moral law, or to accept Christ, or to change his nature so as to increase his power; and so can neither do his duty without grace, nor prepare himself by himself for grace.” **A.A. Hodge**¹³⁰

¹²⁹ Sproul, Vol. 2, pp. 9.

¹³⁰ Hodge, pp. 164.

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“Every man naturally loves to be at full liberty himself; to have his own will for his law; and, if he were to follow his natural inclinations, he would vote himself out of the reach of all laws, divine and human.” **Thomas Boston**¹³¹

“Sin is the natural man’s element; he is as unwilling to part with it as fish are to come out of the water on to dry land.” **Thomas Boston**¹³²

Grace

4. When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin; and, by his grace alone, enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; yet so, as that by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly, nor only, will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.

- Regenerated people have been _____ from natural _____ under sin.
- Once again, we are *posse non peccare et posse peccare*. We can obey or disobey God.
- We have remaining _____ which means that our desires are in _____.

¹⁶But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. **Galatians 5**

- Here that conflict is seen as walking by the _____ vs. walking by the _____.
- We still _____ to do _____ things at times.
- We can have _____ desires: wrong person, gender etc. driven by pleasure, ...
- The Spirit produces love (desire to love your _____, love for God!), peace (not starting _____ w/spouse), patience (_____ until married or with my spouse), faithfulness (reflect God’s covenant faithfulness) & self-control (not at the mercy of my passions).
- The strongest desire(s) will _____ at that moment & the Spirit gives more grace (James 4).

¹³¹ Boston, pp. 70.

¹³² Boston, pp. 99.

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“In the act of regeneration the Holy Spirit has implanted a new spiritual principle, habit, or tendency in the affections of the soul, which, being subsequently nourished and directed by the indwelling Spirit, frees the man from his natural bondage under sin, and enables him prevailingly to will freely what which is spiritually good.” **A.A. Hodge**¹³³

“Regenerate men have two opposite moral tendencies contesting for empire in their hearts.” **A.A. Hodge**¹³⁴

Glory

5. The will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to good alone, in the state of glory only.

- The _____ state of saints is one that should make us very _____.
- **Augustine**: *non posse non peccare*. We will not be able to sin, but be _____ in righteousness.
- We will be like God. Our _____ is such that we won't _____ to sin.

“In the state of glory, the blessed freely choose what is good; and, being confirmed in a state of perfect holiness, they can only will what is good.” **Robert Shaw**¹³⁵

How does this help you to glorify and enjoy God?

Conclusion:

¹³³ Hodge, pp. 165.

¹³⁴ Hodge, pp. 166.

¹³⁵ Shaw, pp. 117.