

DOES MAN HAVE FREE WILL?
BEACON, APRIL 4/25/25

I. LIBERTARIAN FREE WILL

Definition of Libertarian Free Will:

“Libertarian free will is the ability to make choices without any prior prejudice, inclination or disposition. For the will to be free it must act from a posture of neutrality with absolutely no bias.” (R.C. Sproul)

- a. Central Beliefs of Libertarian Free Will
 - i. For an act to be free, it must be uncaused and spontaneous
 - ii. One always has the “power of contrary choice”
 - iii. The will is the final determiner and is independent from all other faculties
 - iv. An unbeliever always has the ability to overcome his sinfulness and choose the gospel
- b. Problems with Libertarian Free Will
 - i. A Rational Problem
 - ii. A Moral Problem
 - iii. A Theological Problem

II. FREEDOM OF INCLINATION

Definition of the Will:

“The will is the faculty of choice, the immediate cause of all action. In every act of the will there is preference—the desiring of one thing rather than another. To will is to choose, and to choose is to decide between alternatives.” (A.W. Pink)

- a. Central Beliefs of Freedom of Inclination
 - i. The will is not the final determiner and is subject to other higher faculties (i.e. the desire, the conscience, the mind, the character of a person)
 - ii. The will always chooses according to what you most desire

1. **Jonathan Edwards:** “The will always chooses according to its strongest inclination at the moment.”

Freedom of Inclination:

A person’s will always acts freely and is never externally forced, but it always acts consistently with his or her own nature.

- iii. The will always acts consistently with one’s own nature (Matthew 7:15-20)

b. The Bondage of the Will

- i. As an unbeliever the will is in bondage to the sinful nature
- ii. The will is free to choose according to what it desires, but the unbeliever only desires sin
- iii. Example: Natural Ability vs. Moral Ability
 1. Our choices are limited by our natural ability, which is determined by our physical nature
 2. Our spiritual choices are limited by our moral ability, which is determined by our sinful nature
 3. A bad tree cannot bear good fruit

c. The Freedom of the Will

- i. To be able to choose righteousness, we need a new nature—we need to be born again
- ii. When God saves us, we are born again and given a new nature
- iii. The fourfold state of man:

	Pre-Fall Man	Post-Fall Man	Reborn Man	Glorified Man
Able to sin				
Able to not sin				
Unable to not sin				
Unable to sin				

- iv. Only born-again Christians truly have free will
- v. Only Christ can set us free