

The Freedom of the Will

by Landon Jostes

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. – Genesis 3:6-7

The freedom of the will is one of those biblical concepts that is often misunderstood in our world. When someone asks you if there is 'free will,' how do you respond? Most often, the free will debate is focused on salvation. Do the 'frozen chosen' come kicking and screaming into the kingdom of God? Or do we have the freedom of choice to choose or deny Jesus when he is offered to us?

However, these caricatures miss the biblical mark. God did not create robots. God created Adam and Eve with the liberty and ability to choose according to their nature. In their state of innocence, our first parents had the freedom and power to will and to do that which was good or evil. Though inclined towards good, they freely chose to transgress the law of God. They were tempted by Satan, permitted by God, yet freely acting. In this way, God is neither the author of sin, nor does he coerce man to act against his will.

Now that all humanity has fallen into the state of sin, what happens to the will? Mankind maintains the freedom of the will, yet the will is bound by its nature. While in the state of sin, the will of man is still free, yet has lost all ability to do anything good (Gen 6:5). They are dead in sin and can do nothing to convert or prepare themselves for salvation (Eph 2:1).

If it wasn't for God's transforming love, all mankind would die in the state of sin with no hope of eternal life. Yet the effectual calling of God's Spirit powerfully changes the person's heart and transfers the elect of God into the state of grace (Ezek 36:25-27). "This we are sure of, it is done in a way agreeable to the rational nature; there is no force or compulsion in the case; but he that made the heart, makes it willing, and sweetly, yet powerfully conquers it" (Boston).

With this new heart, we can do nothing else but rejoice in the salvation of Jesus Christ. We freely love him who first loved us (1 John 4:10). We are enabled to freely choose good, though not perfectly in this life (Rom 7:23). Only when we enter our eternal rest, the state of glory, will our wills be made immutably perfect forevermore as we behold the face of Glory.

WSC Q. 13, Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?

A. Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.

July 2026

Sundays Weekly:
Prayer Meeting- 8:00
Sunday School- 9:00
AM Worship- 10:15
PM Worship- 5:30

Highlights for August:

- Vision Lunch 8/9
- Midweek Begins 8/19
- SS Breakfast 8/30

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 NextGen - 1-2PM	2 Carpenters Apprentices- 6-7AM	3 Food Ministry- 9AM	4 Independence Day
5	6	7	8 NextGen - 1-2PM	9 Carpenters Apprentices- 6-7AM	10 Food Ministry- 9AM Youth Pool Day 11-2PM	11
12 Lord's Supper- AM GA Lunch Update	13	14 Session Meeting 5:30PM Diaconate Meeting 6:30PM	15 NextGen - 1-2PM	16 Carpenters Apprentices- 6-7AM	17 Food Ministry- 9AM	18
19 Officer Nominations Open	20 Missions Meeting- 5:30-7:00PM	21	22 NextGen - 1-2PM	23 Carpenters Apprentices- 6-7AM	24 Food Ministry- 9AM Youth Blue Wahoos Baseball Game 4-10PM	25
26 Lord's Supper- PM	27	28	29	30 Carpenters Apprentices- 6-7AM	31 Food Ministry- 9AM	
VBS						

Key: BLUE- Church Wide Events | PURPLE- Bible Studies | ORANGE- NextGen | GREEN- Children's Events | BROWN- Food Ministry | RED- Meetings | BLACK- Holidays

Quarterly Communion Offering: One Hopeful Place-a shelter for men and women that provides transitional housing and emergency shelter services while guiding unhoused individuals towards stability, self-sufficiency, and independence.

Missionary Highlight:



Pastor Steve Lammers and Family



Chris and Savanna

Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) at UF, Pastor Steve Lammers

RUF is a ministry of our denomination, the PCA, that ministers to students on different college campuses. Pray that RUF at UF would have opportunities to reach students for Christ and equip them to serve. Pray for Steve and his interns as they walk with students through various life challenges. Pray that the unbelieving students at UF would see their need for Jesus.

Chris and Savanna, MTW (sensitive)

Pray for Chris and Savanna and their children as they serve displaced people in Europe. Pray that the Lord would raise up indigenous, Farsi-speaking church leaders within their church. Pray that the Lord would raise up more laborers of the harvest that would join them on the mission field. Pray for Savanna as she balances homeschooling their children while doing ministry. Pray for Chris as he continues in his seminary classes.

How can I support Missions?

PRAY for our Missionaries | **GIVE** to Missions | **GO** on a Missions Trip | **JOIN** the Missions Team

Local:

- Good News Jail & Prison Ministry, Chaplain Shane Hardesty

National:

- Presbyterian and Reformed Chaplain Corp (PRCC)
- Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) at UF, Pastor Steve Lammers
- Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) at FSU, Pastor Kelly Jackson

International:

- Middle East Reformed Fellowship, Pastor Victor Atallah
- Brenda Carter, MTW San Yi, Taiwan
- Chris and Savanna, MTW (sensitive)
- Franklin and Beth Beaver, MTW Worldwide
- David and Jill Martin, MTW Odessa, Ukraine/Brasov, Romania
- Ang Bahay Parola (The Lighthouse) Children's Home, MTW Manila, Philippines
- Evangelical Reformed Seminary of Kyiv, Ukraine
- Perry and Betty, MTW (sensitive)
- Robert and Lisa Stewart, MTW Nagoya, Japan
- Verne and Alina Marshall, MTW Santiago, Chile
- John and Lu Elliot, IXO Nicoya, Costa Rica
- Donny and Courtney Harwood, MTW Glasgow, Scotland