

Free Will and the Gift of Salvation are Different Matters

Saints Saved Perfect Holy



God is love and gives us Eternal Life

Gospel - Shows Our Savior

All born again by God's Spirit to eternal life
become righteous

Bad We are responsible **Free Will** for what we do **Good**

All born in the flesh die,
unable to live perfect and holy

Law - Shows Our Sin

Satan is malevolent and Hell is real



Sinners Lost Imperfect not Holy

We have Free Will between good and bad, what we do and do not do. We are responsible in our choices and actions.

BUT

There is no free will before God. All people are lost, helpless to sin, death and Satan. God alone has the power and loving will to Save. All praise and glory belongs to Him.

"Grace Alone". He gives Salvation, gives His perfection.

This is a mystery to our minds, a paradox, statements that seem contradictory yet are both true. The logical alternative: God is responsible for damning people to Hell or man has the credit for earning heaven. Human logic leads to illogical conclusions. What is faithful to Scripture brings

the inner peace of Truth. "Scripture Alone."

People called "bad" can have an easier time being penitent, calling for help, helping others, seeking God's mercy and accepting salvation. than -

Those who consider themselves "good", who can have a hard time being humble, admitting they need saving and surrendering to God.

There is no special advantage to the intelligent, rich, or those from a "good home". The retarded, the small child, the mentally ill, the oppressed can receive the gift of grace and faith. The poor and suffering are just as close to God as anyone else. God is eternally Good to all. "I am the way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father but by me" John 14:6. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." John 3:16ff

The ancient Church rejected the Pelagian Heresy: that we save ourselves by deeds of our free will and Semipelagian Heresy: that we save ourselves with God's help.

Why Believe? Reasons to Reject the Faith

There is no proof. True! From the beginning till now God has been consistent, He never left any proof. The 10 Plagues, the crossing of the Red Sea were "natural phenomenon", "A strong wind". We could have Pilate's report and other records, if God wanted. Joseph had to remember the dream.

God is "the God who hides Himself" Isaiah 45:15. All are on the same level in coming to Him or in rejecting Him. There is no proof He is not. No proof of His creation or of evolution, of Jesus' resurrection, of the Spirit that dwells within us. But still, we know, Truth, Beauty, Justice. We know there is more beyond. He is! All who seek Him in Truth, Find Him. Those who do not believe in Him do so also by "Faith Alone".

Triune, 3 in 1, Jesus both God and Man? Impossible!

God is mystery to our understanding. He is beyond time and space. The gods we make up are too small. Any god we could explain or understand would be too limited to be of ultimate help. Science shows how huge and complex the universe is. Any God, who is God, must be on a wholly other level, Transcendent. God is not limited by the 4 dimensions. How could a small god create, direct the universe - galaxies and stars, keep track of 6 Billion people or care? What is impossible to us, is easy in the 10+ dimensions of Physics. Science has many things that sound contradictory, paradoxes.

I am too small for God to notice. What difference does it make what I do or if I pray? A God who is beyond all, is big enough to be able to notice each one of us, know everything, and have use for our best, to our good and His glory. We are His hands, mouth, heart, to touch others in His Spirit. Warriors, Ambassadors, representing the Most High. If He would reveal Himself, instead of going through us, there would be no room for Faith. God sent His Son on our level, Immanent, in the flesh-Incarnate. He says our prayers change what happens!

Good & Evil, Justice & Mercy? We do not understand Spiritual warfare in high places between God and Satan. From the world around and our lives we know it is going on. The warfare is still intense. Whose side are you on? There are no "neutrals". All who look out for themselves are not on God's side. In God, Justice and Mercy "kiss". They are only the oppo-

site sides of the same coin.

Jesus did not come to start a Church. Wrong! He spent 3 years training men to lead something to last to the end of time. The New Testament is the "official" set of directions, building on the Old Testament foundation from God. Jesus used the word "Church". We can not use the failure of some religious leaders or our failures as an excuse to disobey God. He calls us to be united with all His people. His Spirit builds us up in truth and love. We praise, serve, teach, learn, forgive and display in our life together the power of His presence. The mark of the Spirit is sharing His Love for all. "By this all men will know you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" John 13:35. While worship styles and language vary, the central teachings are in Divine agreement in churches across all time and nations.

Christianity is just one of the religions. It is unique!. The rest were invented, show how people can get god's favors. They have leaders, the rest follow. Leaders set them up so they stay in front. The good, the intelligent, the able are promised blessings for keeping the program. Only in the True Faith, the Bible, are leaders flawed, while the poor, the weak, the despised are loved by God. Suffering is not a mark of God's rejection but transformed into a participation of the cross of His Only-begotten Son. Keeping the "rules" is no guarantee. His grace can only be rejected, never earned. The center of God, of the Christian Faith, is Love. God is love and He freely loves us even though we do not deserve it. All who receive His Love share the Spirit of His Love, return that Love to God with all heart, mind and soul, and demonstrate that by loving others as they have been loved.