

## Free Will

We are granted free will by our creator. Regardless of religious beliefs, most agree we must all succeed or fail on our own. We must follow our own moral judgment, Holy Spirit, divine inspiration, etc. to do what we believe is the correct course of action to benefit our souls, karma, or our own chances of spiritual rewards in the afterlife. For those who believe in an omnipotent, omniscient God, we are taught that, though God knows the correct choices we should make, and has the power to force us to follow that path, we are allowed to decide for ourselves. If we are forced to make the right decisions, our actions are pointless. There is no meaning in success without the possibility of failure. It is the process, the journey, the struggle that is important. Having a choice to do wrong and choosing to do right shows our character. It is through that process that character is built, people are tested and real rewards or punishments are earned.

In giving us free will, God trusts us with the most important thing of all, our very souls. We are left with the choice of what will happen to our souls. Will we corrupt it with hatred or cultivate it with love? Will we follow the example of those who give to others, or those who take? Will we go to Heaven or to Hell? The choice is ours. He can provide guidance to those who care to look for it, but to interfere would be to destroy us. Without free will, our lives are meaningless. We are reduced to puppets, no thought, just doing as we are told. Our lives are of no more importance than that of characters in a book or video game. As any parent knows, you never wish your child to come to harm or face serious problems, but though you can always provide moral support and guidance, at some point, you must allow your children to make their own choices, their own mistakes, follow their own judgment, and lead their own lives. This is the freedom granted to all mankind by our creator. This is the freedom granted to all Americans by our Constitution.

God is all knowing. He knows without a doubt which actions will benefit or harm us, and still he does not intervene. Although mankind does not share in this omniscience, we often fall into the trap of trying to spare others from suffering by taking away their choice to do things we “think” will cause them harm. Laws are passed to dictate morality, encourage safety and protect the helpless, but somewhere in all this, we forgot the most efficient means to accomplish all these things is **personal responsibility**. Generation after generation, parents are taught to relinquish more responsibility in child rearing. The state becomes responsible to teach children everything from drugs to sex education. Parents are deemed unable or unqualified to teach things they have been responsible for teaching for thousands of years. Parents are now told how to discipline their children, what beliefs they are allowed to pass down, and a host of other things they once determined for themselves. People are now taught to blame others for their own mistakes. If we eat too much, we blame the people who sold the food. If we burn ourselves, we blame whoever gave us the thing that was hot. We have become a society of whiners, unable to accept personal responsibility for anything we do or say. Instead of monitoring what our children watch, we complain that all shows must do away with “offensive” language and content. We ask “Who is to blame” instead of moving on and learning from our experiences. We look for someone to sue, or fire, a scapegoat, a bad guy. Because of this trend, we become ever willing to relinquish our control of our own lives, to let others make our choices for us.

But those who are so determined to fill that role, to play nurse maid and wipe our noses and tell us when to eat and exercise and what light bulbs to use are no better than us. They are not omniscient. They have no great insight that makes them any more competent to run our lives than we are. However easy it may be to give in, do as we are told and stop fighting, we must remain steadfast. For that would be no life at all. A life without pain and sorrow is a life without happiness. A life without the freedom to chose is meaningless, a life of slavery where we take no personal responsibility for our own actions. Nothing we do matters. Our lives are unimportant. Our comfort is unimportant. Our families, children, lovers may be taken from us, and we have no say in the matter because we do not matter.

We are granted free will by God. We are granted the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness by our forefathers and the blood of soldiers. What has been granted by God and paid for by generations of blood cannot be stolen away in the night by unworthy stewards of our constitution for our freedom is not an experiment. It is divinely inspired, a God given right, and it must survive all attacks against it. We must protect it, for it is a precious thing.