

FREE WILL IS NOT A GIFT FROM GOD

"It is in the essence of a benefactor to refrain from giving any gift which he knows would be the ruin of the recipient.....free agency is not a good gift after all, for it has caused the ruin of the human race in Adam's sin, the eternal damnation for the greater part of his descendants, and created a world of a dreadful deluge of moral and physical evils."
Pierre Bayle

Free will, according to many, refers to the God-given ability for human beings to make decisions and act without human or divine or any interference. It is your choice and even you cannot interfere with that!

The evidence is that far from being a gift is that it is a fact that if we all have free will we choose not to use it for we have religious and cultural restraints that override it. Those forces and inhibitions of any kind keep us from doing what we really want so so we just go with the flow.

Freedom means belong to no one. But religion says that if you act freely this is only a metaphor for God has more to do with you and your action than you do. Free will cannot be gift from God but only a curse. It will invite rebellion and aggression and idolatry - where your image of God is what matters to you not God.

The faculty we call free will does a lot more harm than good for it only gets it right after loads of harm has been done in the process.

The doctrine that God in his mercy and goodness give us free will so that he is not to blame for our sins and the evil we do and cause puts the will before happiness. It is even put before life! The person who murders others is treated as if his free will to kill matters and theirs to live does not. But in any case it is put before life.

If it were not for people wilfully hurting each other we would not be interested in the idea of free will. Is the assumption man does bad therefore man is free? Yes - that cynical guess is what roots religion. It is not even logical and just a way of trying to avoid having to blame God. If it were not for the pleasure of thinking that there is part of me that is all mine to control there would be no interest in free will either. That is cynical too and self-serving. You are saying that if there is a God then he gives the gift of free will with the attendant risk of suffering and immorality just so people can feel there is part of them that is all theirs - and which is theirs to manage. Another self serving issue is how free will can't really have very much to do with the bad in the world. Most of it is out of our control. All free will is really good for is giving a rationale for paying back evil for evil to criminals.

GIFT OR "GIFT" - ITS A JOYLESS GIFT

Free will belief does not spring from happiness or give happiness.

If free will is a gift then it is a gift the way giving somebody toilet roll for Christmas is a gift. It is not a gift the way taking somebody for a lavish meal is a gift.

Free will fans don't like the thought that they are programmed or determined meaning that there is no true free will. So it is not much of a gift as it is a headache pill. It is a reaction to the pain of feeling programmed and fearing you may be programmed. Thus there is a danger of hating anybody who challenges free will.

If believers have a choice between saying free will is true for the consequences of believing in determinism are terrible or it is true for we seem to sense it none of that is honest. It is not honest to use a belief to avoid bad things. It is not honest to think that feeling you have free will means you have it. There is no free will to believe in it sensibly or without selfish or arrogant motives.

Its a bad doctrine. If it does not actually hurt another it stops some good from being given to them. An added benefit is not given to them.

Life is more important than free will and life is a curse if it is unhappy. It is better to be insane (that is to have no free will) or a puppet who thinks she is free and feels it but who has no free will at all but happy than to be sane and miserable. Funny how God sends insanity to make life a misery for its victims. To believe in God and to love him is to evilly put the will above happiness and that is sick. Free will, supposing it should be given, should be given to make us happy so that if we abuse it, it is our problem. This means that happiness is more important. Having a good time is incompatible with loving God.

Even if we accept that the will matters more than happiness, it should take the joy out of religion and worship. Religion and prayer would be necessary evils and nothing to revel in. The joy would in fact be a warning sign! Do the believers delight because they want to denigrate the happiness of others?

THE HOBSON'S CHOICE

Religion claims, "Unless we have free will we will be less than what we are." That presumes that if you don't have it then you are dirt. But free will or not, we do not think of ourselves as dirt. Free will is no gift from God if it comes at the price of us becoming dirt without it. Do you think if some blackout happened that removed your free will for a day that you would be any less important? We see the hidden pride and supremacist side of the doctrine.

Suppose we are dirt without free will. Is it us who judges that or is it God? It is us. You cannot reason that there is a God who gives you free will. No you start with thinking you have free will and THEN reasoning that there is a God who gives it to you. It is not man's place to say that you are dirt without free will. That is just arrogant and malignant.

CASE FOR FREE WILL BEING A GIFT IN ITSELF

Christians say that if God gives you free will to do massive good he must also proportionally give you free will to do massive evil. If I can do loving things for millions I must be able to kill millions as well. Free will then is no more a gift than the doomsday codes to start a nuclear conflagration if you feel like it. What kind of gift is that? What does it say about me if I see it as a gift? Nothing good!

Do you have free will for the sake of free will or for your sake? This question presupposes that some being, a maker, a creator, gave you free will. It denies that we just have free will and that is all there is to it. If free will is given for the sake of free will then it is hardly a gift is it? Free will needs to be given for your own sake in order to be a gift.

The case for free will being a gift is: "Freedom is the majesty of humanity. If I did not have free will, I would be a lower being than what I am now. Better to become good of my own volition than to be made good like a robot might be. Then I would be a being to which absolute respect is due, but nature would not respect me much if I was a consciousness trapped in a universe in which I have no free will. Even if I FEEL FREE AND FEEL HAPPY I AM STILL TRAPPED. I AM STILL A VICTIM. If I am not, then we should condone kidnappers who steal children as long as they delude the children into a sense of wellbeing. You have free will therefore you are the creator of your actions, this celebrates your dignity."

Suppose it is true that this trap is bad and it is true that you really have free will. This would mean we have free will through luck and not through divine agency.

CASE FOR FREE WILL BEING A GIFT FOR ITS ROLE IN GOD'S PLAN

Creation means that God did not use anything at all to make the universe from. Religion insists that God does not create in the past and let things go on by themselves. If things just need to be started off, that comes pretty close to the notion that the universe does not really need a creator. God creates now - he stops all that exists in the present moment from going back to nothing.

So God is more in control of everything than it is in control of itself. Why do plagues and earthquakes happen with huge suffering and loss of life? Religion says God lets them happen as part of his plan for making us better and more moral people. Making us more moral matters more than making us happy.

Religion is clear that you abuse your free will because of God's assistance and not in spite of him. God must let us abuse our free will because it has a role to play in the plan too.

It would be hideous to argue that God can use earthquakes and plagues etc to bring a plan to fruit and to say he cannot use say adultery that way. Adultery cannot be as bad as suffering and death. To say adultery is useless in terms of good coming out of it and plagues are useful shows a really twisted hypocritical and vicious and sanctimonious mindset.

Some define free will only in spiritual or unspiritual terms - it is just about pleasing or displeasing God. That is not the kind of free will we want and it will bear no importance to most people. And often it is held to come from your soul or spirit meaning that as far as your body and brain are concerned anything resembling a will is programmed. That appalling idea infers that even if it is proven you are programmed to murder somebody it still blames you for your soul somehow was still freely choosing to murder!

We are the ones who have free will. If it is a gift from God or just appeared by itself it is still ours. If nothing is really ours then there is a sense that if something is part of what we are even if it was never given to us is more ours than a gift. So

what questions would come with it if we are the ones with free will and if it is ours as in possession? Thus seeing how free will and having it so that you can torment several people to death is necessary and how God cannot do anything about it should be feasible. But it is not. Believers resort to mystery. They cannot do anything else because they have to recognise the sheer danger and horror both direct and indirect that comes from the will of humankind. They insult the the human race with their mystery cop-out. If free will were really given to us by God we would be told explicitly why evil is allowed to happen and what precisely it is for. With serious stuff like that you need to see the plan in enough detail.

FINALLY

Free will is not a gift from God. And it is bad to say it is. The implications and what is tacitly endorsed are horrendous. Plantinga argues that free will is inherently good. But what if we tell him that most of us only love it up to a point? We detest the amount of error and suffering that this free will has brought and what about the even would be worse evil than it asked for but which fortunately never took place? Hitler for example willed the total savage destruction of the Jews. The evil and suffering is inherently evil to nearly everybody. What about that? Free will as the Christian God gives is given at a massive cost – too massive. God himself never tells you why your free will is so important. He should. But he cannot.

Free will is a function for deciding what you will do. It is about deciding first. It is not about morality first. Giving it a religious role is vile for it suggests, “If you do x then you have done wrong in the eyes of God and that is what matters.” God based forgiving and seeking his pardon is inherently degrading. It involves denial of what free will is all about.

It is a boast to think that your free will is so precious that you should have it even if you would kill everybody on earth with it. You are really saying that you are so special that your autonomy is worth that. Even worse, you are not truly autonomous [eg you can't drink a litre of gin daily and stay healthy] but have the autonomy to do that! You are saying the little good you do is worth the risk of you doing unbelievable evil instead.

Free will is not a gift from God and it is degrading to tell you that a non-gift is a gift and plus the gift is degrading in other ways too.

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