

Free Will - if I have it I have it for its own sake not God's or morality

Nietzsche saw free will in terms of having power and being able to use it and said this was our highest calling. He made it clear that the power to choose evil or good in itself is not. He was right for unless free will is only about power then you cannot have the power to choose evil or good. It is not possible.

Free will according to religion is about explaining how we are called to love. The believers say we cannot really love God and others unless we do it voluntarily. The hideous teaching that God gives us free will not for its own sake but so that we may use it to serve him and love him and others implies that it is not our wellbeing that matters. It implies that God's wish that we might love matters. In reality that means that we do not. It seems strange to say that when we need love that there is something wrong with us being given free will with the divine purpose that we might love.

Here is the answer. Free will cannot give us much dignity unless we assume that somehow we are creating it and not God. That way it is entirely ours and if we use it for good then great. We do that freely and not because free will is given so that we will hopefully be good. The good is pure spontaneous. The person who has free will that is not given for the sake of choosing God or sin or choosing good or evil but who uses it for good is a better person than the one who has it for the moral purpose and uses it for good. A person who is not made to be good but who becomes good is the person who deserves the most honour.

If you have a baby, do you look down on that baby because he hasn't got the power to make moral choices yet? Would you really care if the baby grows up to have no free will but behaves no different and feels no different to anybody else? In fact if there is a God who gives us free will to choose love or otherwise it would be a sin to feel that way about your baby. God and implicit judgement and moralising go together.

You love the child because of her innate goodness and value and it is not about any good accomplishments she may make. She does not have to prove her worth to you. If she does, then clearly you have made up your mind not to value her. Instead of making a good assumption about her when you could have done, you made a bad or wrong one. If God loves sinners and hates sins he simply cannot kill sinners for their sins or put them in Hell forever for the person matters more than their sins.

In life, we need to get into the habit of recognising what we cannot change and accepting it be it pleasant or not. This has to be perceived as entirely your act and has to be experienced as such. Why? Because to say God is giving you power to do it is really to say that the end result is not all down to you. The doctrine that God creates us and thus gives us the ability to accept things on our own but does not give us any miracle power to help us has its problems too.

God comes first by definition or more accurately as he is the ultimate good he has to be the only ultimate concern. Free will as the possible meeting point with God, would have to be your ultimate concern as much as he is. The two go together. But that is preposterous. Would you care about free will if you were about to be murdered and a meteorite fell and scared the psychopath off? You will not be wishing the meteorite had helped you freely. You will be only glad that it did.

Power is the priority in free will. It is about the power to choose a or b and not about the power to choose good and evil as such. If you can use free will to choose good or evil it does not follow that you have it only or mainly for that purpose. The power to pick a or b would mean free will is about giving us power for its own sake. It would be evil and dehumanising and deceptive to say free will is only about choosing between God's will and sin. In that context, to use free will as an excuse for saying there is an all-good and all-powerful God though there is innocent suffering in the world would be the lowest of the low. Other doctrines such as love the criminal and hate the crime would be exposed as the hypocrisy they are for they are based on the degrading doctrine that we have free will that is all about morality.

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Retribution is wrong for it is hurting a person for doing evil when in fact it is not right to define free will by the evil done through it when free will is about personal power. Having the power to choose evil or good does not mean you have free will for that purpose. Free will by definition implies that life is about you - even if you devote life to others it is about you because this devotion is your choice. Thus free will actually refutes God. It refutes the notion of a God who helps us be good by his grace for grace would imply that God has to meddle with our free will. Even if we ask him to we are asking him to meddle.

People only imagine they want to believe in the religious version of free will. Free will for them is not just about the power to pick a or b but to pick good or evil. The power to pick a or b would mean free will is about giving us power for its own sake and nobody else's not even God's. But religion says we are given free will because God lovingly wants us to freely choose to love or not to love. If free will is just about a or b then the religious should care little if we have it or not.

An objection to our free will being about power arises in the form of the argument that we all have a moral sense that could be explained by saying there is a God. Some say that we have a sense of things being right and wrong though we may err in the details of right and wrong. They say this moral sense was built into our free will by God. They say it is not a mere instinct like an animal's instinct for food. But an animal sees food as good. Our moral sense also sees some things as good. That part is definitely down to instinct. But what about the rest of it? The moral sense is evil in the sense that it wishes to see people suffer and be deprived of benefits for doing "evil". It is that what has to be explained. Why do we want to see people punished? This does not give a very nice image of God. The moral sense argument is always put forward by Christians in a superficial way. They don't tell the whole story about it. And the objection is a devious attempt to get people away from the fact that we know our will is about us whether it is free or not.

Elsewhere I have condemned belief in free will as bad and harmful.

All I have done here is examine the best version of it. The religious version of it is vile. Free will might give dignity if it is about my power, but it is still accusing people of evil without proof that they are really responsible for their actions and not programmed. So it gives dignity one way and takes it away in another.