

## TWO POSSIBLE UNDERSTANDINGS OF USING FREE WILL TO CHOOSE GOOD

Free will is the ability to will to do other than what you will to do without you being programmed by your past or anything to do what you do. It means you can kill a person as well as save them and that you are the cause or creator of the decision you make. You are not programmed to make the decision in which case you could have done different and in which case it was not a real decision. If you are programmed then you only think you have made a choice but you could not have done other than what you did. Free will implies that we are responsible for our actions. Free will is the doctrine that you can choose.

So free will is the ability to choose. This makes us think of two ways we might choose.

One, you might be able to choose only between different kinds of good.

Two, you might be able to choose good or bad for yourself or others.

We feel we can do these.

But what if free will was one or the other? What if we only had the freedom to choose between different kinds of good and couldn't choose evil?

It is said that only Two can confer moral responsibility for morality is doing the good in preference to the bad. It is said that if you can only choose good you deserve no reward for you are unable to do evil. It is said you are not responsible. But that is nonsense for we are not faced with good and evil "choices" all the time. If we can give our baby a cuddle or a rattle we have a choice between two good works. Are we to say that just because we have those two in our minds and do one of them that we are not responsible? If we are responsible then a reward is deserved. So you can have free will without having the power to do evil.

For most people, the importance of free will is to do with us being able to pick good or bad. It is possible to have a kind of free will that only lets you choose one of a number of things that are good and noble without having the power to do bad. But that is not the kind of free will the world wants to believe in. It would say, "You could be able to freely choose different kinds of good but not evil. But since you cannot do evil your works have no merit. They are free but not freely good morally speaking. They are said to be not really good for they do not mean you are a good person but only a puppet."

What if you define free will as the power to self-program? Then even if we have the power to do freely do evil, we can make it dormant so it is the same as if it is not there at all. You can be your own puppet so what is wrong with that? The only problem is that you need free will in the classical sense to choose your programming. It means that evidence that you were not free when you killed somebody means nothing for you are not free anyway anymore as you programmed yourself.

As we only go after the good we see in harmful actions, it follows that if we have free will at all then it is choosing proper good or the wrong good. This is no different from saying we have free will to choose different kinds of good.

