

I do not expect that the example I will use here to illustrate the "free will" gospel concept will be any more enlightening or persuasive than what I have already written extensively about on the subject.

It all should arouse interest, and stimulate logical thinking and discussion but since the literally true biblical doctrine itself has been largely neglected, and rejected for centuries why would the words of mere man be heeded, even though they accurately convey that truth?

It is neither reasonable, nor logical to expect such a "miracle." But, a presentation of the true gospel interpretation is always in order, even required by God, to be disseminated to the church.

While Revelation church prophecy graphically describes the mainly irreversible, degenerated state of the modern-day church, there is some hope of possible response from individual believers. This is implied in the admonition of "whosoever hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches".

A fundamental factor of the false gospel concept, is that man has a free will, capable of being induced to believe the gospel, and which must not be coerced, but allowed to make its own decision for, or against the "offer" of personal salvation.

All of which, may appear to be philosophically plausible (humanistically vs. spiritually), and seemingly supportable by various scriptural references to the subject interpreted according to typical Arminian, or free will theology. But, when read, and studied contextually, and comparatively with all related passages, the theological ideas of universal atonement, and salvation opportunity, and natural free will ability to believe, have no basis in the literal inter-related truth of the subject doctrine.

A case of how far this deception has gone, is exemplified by certain words expressed by a noted evangelical and political personality. The individual referred to is Mike Huckabee, for whom I expect defensive hackles are immediately raised, as this is being read!

Nevertheless, it is his expressed thoughts which I will quote, in essence, if not verbatim. In an interview with the avowed atheist, Bill Maher, Huckabee made a sort of passing, but poignant, remark in response to a point or question raised by Maher.

In connection with the process, or act of personal response to the gospel "offer" of salvation, Huckabee said, in effect, that if God forced anyone to believe, it would be a form of "rape", apparently of one's will, or mind!

Do you not see how deeply indoctrinated one has to be in their underlying theological belief on

that subject, to make such a serious statement implying that there is no question of the assumed reality of everyone having a "free" will?

Well, as I indicated in the title of this commentary, it is a classic example of scripturally illogical theology involved in what has historically been known as the Arminian interpretation of salvation doctrine.

Key questions involved are: (1) the condition of man's will (its capacity, ability, and relationship to God), (2) what faith is, and when, and how it may be exercised, (3) the extent and application of God's plan of salvation, and (4) how it is brought about, and executed.

The capacity of natural man's will? The essential factor affecting that question is the effect, and extent of the fall (the result of original sin), which we are to learn, and establish from the scriptures relating to the subject.

The straightforward, literal explanation of the condition of the natural will of man, establishes the principle involved in its relationship to how salvation, or, particularly, regeneration occurs. It is really a theologically simple truth, for anyone faithfully committed to learn it. Of which, there are comparatively few because, though the literal meaning of the scriptures is clear, the truth of its exclusive application to only certain foreordained individuals, is rejected by the vast majority of believers.

We will look at how the concept of a free will, is more a manufactured, false philosophy than true theology. Instead of being determined by scholarly study of the bible on the subject, it is arrived at by supposition and assumption if not outright manipulation of the pertinent scriptures!

On the true side, what happened to Adam's (man's) will when he disobeyed God's command in the garden of Eden? The most essential result was that his will (mind, and body) lost its spiritual component, which meant he had broken fellowship with God, and could no longer commune, or communicate with him. In other words, which the free willists deny, he was totally unable to respond to God, or have access to him. God is spiritual, and we must be spiritual to have any connection with him. That is how it was before the fall, and which was completely lost until God restores his spirit in predestinated man, at the time of his personal regeneration.

A spiritually dead will cannot understand, or believe spiritual truth, nor is it required to! That would contradict and violate the very principle, or nature of that strictly carnal faculty. The systemic fault with the free will philosophy is a Christian's indoctrination with several false assumptions about God's plan and work of salvation.

All of which, is facilitated by a predisposition to interpret scripture on an independent, grammatically literal basis, without proper regard to context, or interconnection with all other

related scripture. By which latter procedure, or methodology, the literal God-intended meaning, or truth is to be determined.

Is there any innocent, or allowable reason on the liberal side of this conflict? No, never! It is all part of the concept, based on false theology, to assume that if man's will is not free to be exercised in response to the gospel, that God would wrongly force man's will to accept salvation. Whereas, in truth, both conclusions are wrong. Man is neither free to decide, nor is his natural will made to believe. But, he is, in fact, given a new, spiritual will, by a direct, independent act of God, in the foreordained event of regeneration.

God does not incorporate, or use any part of our old nature in the creation of our new spiritual life principle! It needs to be recognized what a convoluted doctrinal system that a free will advocate is involved with.

If you take John 3:16, and various other salvation verses at face value, grammatically, in the sense that the entire world is included in God's plan of salvation (which must be believed to obtain it), then you logically infer that man's natural will must be exercised for, or against the gospel message.

And, that belief system forces conclusions on the application of various gospel factors, which cannot stand the test of true interpretation, by the required means of thorough exegesis of all pertinent scripture.

Once a wrong premise is assumed, then one is predisposed to make everything associated with it, agree, or fit the scheme. The end result is a false belief system, that is propagated as the true gospel, which it is not! How critically important it is, then, to get the basic, underlying principle right!

In another way of explaining what happens concerning man's natural will, is not that God would forcibly change it, but that redeemed man is given a new, spiritually endowed will. Unsaved man does not (can not) opt to be saved, he is made to be a Christian directly by God, at his appointed time, with no act of cooperation required of him (of man, that is)!

The fact that he must be a believer to go to heaven, means that he must be enabled to believe (which is faith, or a fruit of the Spirit received upon conversion).

Various parts of the commentaries in my website: theliteraltruth.net, explain the foregoing analysis in greater detail. Of which, I would remark that the conclusions of the studies noted, are not personal opinions, or anything unique to me, but biblically true interpretations that should be held by the entire universal church.

So, what to say about Huckabee's remark? That, despite one's assumption of his experience as a conscientious, knowledgeable pastor, and evangelically aligned national political figure, his errant gospel theology is status quo with the great majority of the contemporary church.

It is interesting that when he made such a bold, dogmatic statement about man's "free will", that Bill Maher raised his eyebrows as if a little surprised by it but did not interject any comment. I was bothered by the presumptuousness of what he so positively stated as if it were an incontrovertible conclusion when, in fact, I know it to be provably wrong by the very scriptures he, and most other believers today badly misinterpret.

A basic contrast between a liberal and literal mind set, or approach to doctrinal study is as I have written about elsewhere in my website material: assumption and presumption, based on (1) a liberal interpretation of words, phrases, and verses, contrasted with (2) a study of underlying principles.

For example;

At the risk of unnecessary repetition, or redundancy, when we read the word "believe" in scripture, is it simply a common grammatical definition, or is the meaning of "believe" qualified by a principle that is established in the word of God?

The Arminian, free will assumption is that natural man must believe to become a Christian! A superficial reading of the word would appear to mean that, which is almost universally agreed to in the church. But, from a principle standpoint, even referring to a concordance for the root word meaning, "belief" (and its various forms) is synonymous with "faith", and if as scripture teaches that faith is a "fruit of the Spirit", then, "belief" is a spiritual thing, when used in connection with the gospel, and other doctrine.

And, therefore, natural man cannot either comprehend anything spiritual (even the gospel), nor exercise required spiritual faith! In a word, God makes man a believer; man cannot elect to be one. The important distinction being, that believing is not a prerequisite to the new birth (regeneration), but to actual salvation the event of escaping hell, and entering heaven.

I Cor. 2 specifies clearly who can believe, and who cannot. And in corroboration with all other related references to the subject, is how that, and other principles are established by study and proof, not assumption based on general word meanings, custom, culture or anything less than "rightly dividing the word of truth".

How essential fundamental truths are to developing sound theology, cannot be denied, or overstated. A wrong basic premise leads to false conclusions, and therefore reflects poor scholarship. And no excuse will ever exonerate us from blame and judgment for it.

Because, even if one starts off on the wrong foot, an honest, dedicated student will find the truth, and get back on the right track. Not so with ones who unwisely follow and trust leaders, without proving their teaching, and hence, often turn out to be irreversibly indoctrinated with false beliefs, or wrong doctrinal interpretations.

It reminds me of the well-known computer caveat, "garbage in, garbage out", or the old saying that "you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear". But, somebody's always trying--even the impossible!

The product of such errors, is a system of bad gospel theology, which most Christians will take to the judgment seat of Christ, rather than come to the truth before then, and repent and honor God as faithful stewards of his word. Having, in that respect, served Satan, more than God, by falling prey to the same deceptive influences he used on Adam, and Eve. "Hath God said?", being the key technique employed. It is bad enough that so many Christians blindly follow pastors, and other servants of God, who mislead and falsely teach us, but we have to be aware who is really behind it all (Satan), and resist him constantly, because he never lets up in his efforts to lure us away from God, and to try to cause us to be unfaithful to him, especially in learning, and maintaining sound doctrine.