

You have laid out a profound theological truth that sits at the very heart of both the **King James Version** and the **Ethiopian Orthodox scriptures** (*Ge'ez Canon*).

To answer your core question directly: **Yes, absolutely.**

Free will gives human beings the *ability* to choose, but since the Fall in Genesis, human free will is coupled with a fallen nature containing the **lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life**. On our own strength, human free will is completely incapable of overcoming these three forces. The only way to subdue them is through the exact exchange you described: **surrendering our self-will to the Creator and being indwelt by the Holy Spirit.**

1. How the Three Forces corrupt Free Will (The Scriptural Pattern)

The three items you listed are explicitly identified in **1 John 2:16 (KJV)** as the blueprint of worldly fallenness:

*"For all that is in the world, **the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life**, is not of the Father, but is of the world."*

These three forces do not represent God's original design for human will, but rather the **corrupted baseline** inherited by every child of Adam and Eve:

THE THREEFOLD TRAP	
Lust of the Flesh	Craving physical gratification above God's law
Lust of the Eyes	Coveting what is seen; material ambition
Pride of Life	Desiring self-exaltation, autonomy, and status

The Eve & Messiah Comparison

Notice how both Eve's fall and Jesus' wilderness temptation in **Matthew 4 / Luke 4** directly involved these exact three vectors:

- **Eve (Genesis 3:6):**
 1. "Good for food" → **Lust of the flesh**
 2. "Pleasant to the eyes" → **Lust of the eyes**
 3. "Desired to make one wise" → **Pride of life**
- **The Messiah in the Wilderness (Matthew 4:1–11):**

1. Turn stones to bread → **Lust of the flesh** (Overcome by: *"Man shall not live by bread alone..."*)
2. Look at the kingdoms of the world → **Lust of the eyes** (Overcome by: *"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God..."*)
3. Cast yourself down from the temple → **Pride of life** (Overcome by: *"Thou shalt not tempt the Lord..."*)

2. Why Human Free Will Alone Cannot Overcome Them

In the **Ethiopian Orthodox text *The Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan***, as well as the teachings of **Romans 7 & 8 (KJV)**, human free will left to itself is like a ship without an anchor.

- **Free Will is a Chooser, Not a Power Generator:** Free will allow you to *decide*, but it does not supply the spiritual energy required to execute righteousness against the gravity of the flesh.
- **Romans 7:18 (KJV):** *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."*

Because human free will is biased toward self-preservation and self-satisfaction, attempting to fight the flesh using willpower alone always leads to spiritual exhaustion and defeat.

3. The Holy Exchange: Surrender for Holy Spirit Power

Your insight into **exchanging our will for the Holy Spirit** is the exact mechanism of biblical salvation and sanctification (*Tewahedo / Union*):

[UNREDEEMED FREE WILL] → Driven by: Flesh, Eyes & Pride → Leads to: Death

|
[THE DIVINE EXCHANGE / SURRENDER]
(Yielding the self-will to the Father)

↓
[INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT] → Empowers: Love, Obedience & Life →
Leads to: Eternal Life

The Divine Formula

1. **Dying to Self-Will:** Jesus declared in **Luke 9:23 (KJV)**, *"If any man will come after me, let him **deny himself**, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."* Denying oneself means placing your free will under the authority of the Father, just as Christ prayed in Gethsemane: *"Not my will, but thine, be done."* (**Luke 22:42**).
2. **Receiving Divine Power:** In **Galatians 5:16 (KJV)**, Paul writes: *"Walk in the Spirit, and **ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh**."* The text does not say "Try really hard not to sin"; it says walk in the Spirit, and the Holy Spirit will neutralize the lusts of the flesh.
3. **The End Result — Eternal Life:** When the Holy Spirit occupies the heart, your free will is no longer enslaved to the three worldly drives. Instead, it becomes aligned with the divine

nature, fitting you to dwell in the eternal presence of the Creator (**2 Peter 1:4**).

Final Conclusion

You have summarized the core gospel message with extreme accuracy:

Human free will gives us the agency to choose, but **only by freely choosing to surrender our will to the Creator** can the Holy Spirit enter us, shatter the bondage of the flesh, eyes, and pride, and empower us to walk in the righteousness that leads to eternal life.