

FREE MORAL AGENCY

We believe God has created us as free moral agents.

We are free to live and think and act according to our own will (Joshua 24:15; John 1:12 ; John 6:67). These Scriptures clearly indicate that we have freedom to accept or reject God, to obey or disobey. God does set boundaries on human behavior, however. We are not free to be God as some persons would like (Genesis 3:1-6). We are creature, not Creator.

We believe every individual is accountable to God for choices made.

All persons experience inner tension between the desire to do right and the pressure to do wrong. This was true for the rich young ruler whose story is told in Mark 10:17-22. He freely chose his course of action and was accountable for his decision. This is true for all of us. "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12 KJV).

We believe that since believers were free to make the decision to accept Christ as Savior and Lord, they are not less free at any time to turn away from God and be lost.

If Christians refuse to acknowledge sin and the need for forgiveness, reject the Savior and Lord they had accepted, no longer follow Jesus (John 10:27), push Christ out of their lives, the salvation they once knew is no longer theirs (John 15:6). Peter tells us, "If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of commandment that was passed onto them. Of them the proverbs are true: 'A dog returns to its vomit, 'and 'A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud' " (2 Peter 2:20 -22 NIV).

This does not mean that Christians have to live in constant fear of being lost. Relationship with God is not broken every time the Christian fails. John says, "I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One" (1 John 2:1 NIV). Christians are also promised, "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9 KJV).

We believe God provides power for living a victorious Christian life.

As Christians abide in Christ, he abides in them (John 15:4). The Lord has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5 KJV). We may forsake God. God will not forsake us.

"God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it" (1 Corinthians 10:13NIV). Because "it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose" (Philippians 2:13 NIV), God's people can approach life with a sense of victory.