

## Human Will

Does man have a choice relative to acceptance of God's righteous demands? Only to a limited extent—he may choose to believe through assent of heart and mind, or he may choose to remain in unbelief. The confirmation is given in John 3:18, 36. See Acts 17:30, 31.

It is impossible for man to understand the “Mystery of Godliness” with the natural mind (1 Tim 3:16). The Word of God contrasts human wisdom with the wisdom of God (see 1 Cor 1:18-25). “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor 2:13, 14). God is a spirit (Jn 4:24), and says of Himself, “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways” (Isa 55:8). God is eternal (a fact beyond our comprehension), and when asked by Moses of His identity could say “I am That I am” (Gen 3:13, 14). The Bible states “without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him” (Heb 11:6).

Our conscience can convict us of sin (see Jn 8:9), but conviction is spiritually meaningful only when of the Holy Spirit of God (Jn 16:7-11), who even to this day is striving with man (Gen 6:3). “Now is the accepted time . . . now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor 6:2). “When a sinner gives assent of mind and heart in trusting faith to God's offer of salvation through Christ Jesus, the miracle of the new birth occurs (Jn 3:5). It is all of God (Jn 1:13). Read Romans 10:13, 17 carefully.

God does not hate the sinner, but rather the sins. Because He is holy, righteous, and just, sin (and therefore the sinner) is condemned before Him, because righteousness cannot be compromised. We gain some understanding of righteousness compromised, in the viewing of “light and inequitable sentences” of criminals, before our bars of justice. That God does not hate the sinner, but rather loves the sinner, is abundantly clear in the Bible. Amongst other verses, see 2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Romans 5:6, 8; John 3:16; 1 John 4:10. I have some understanding, because I love my children even when I hate some of their actions. God showed His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners (unlovely and unlikeable), Christ died for our sins.

He who is “almost persuaded” and dies will be altogether lost. And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment (Heb 9:27). Scripture speaks of a man who exercised many choices, for he said “I will” again and again. But God said, “Thou fool, this night the soul shall be required of thee . . .” (Lk 12:16-21).

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<i>Be not ashamed . . .</i>	nor in friends;
To serve others for the sake of	but glory in God
our Lord Jesus Christ,	who provides you with all things,
and to be looked upon	and above all desires
as poor in the eyes of the world.	to give you Himself.
If you possess riches,	—Thomas A. Kempis
do not glory in them,	

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“Oh, worldly pomp and glory, Your charms are spread in vain;  
I've heard a sweeter story, I've found a truer gain.”