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“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
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J.N. DARBY DISCUSSES FREE WILL

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(editing by Kathy Boynton)

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J.N. Darby was a 19th century Bible teacher, influential in establishing Christian gatherings which became known as "Plymouth Brethren." On October 23, 1861, he wrote a letter regarding the "fresh breaking out of the doctrine of free will." As the 20th century has come and gone, the doctrine of "free will" has largely permeated "Christendom."

Concerning "free will" Darby wrote:

"This fresh breaking out of the doctrine of free-will ministers to the pretension of the natural man not to be entirely lost, for that is just what it amounts to. All who have never been deeply convicted of sin, all those with whom this conviction is based on gross and outward sins, believe more or less in free-will. ... but it completely changes the whole idea of Christianity, and entirely perverts it. ... If Christ came to save that which is lost, free-will has no more place. Not that God prevents man from receiving Christ -- far from it. But even when God employs all possible motives, everything that is capable of exerting influence over the heart of man, it only serves to prove that man will have none of it, that his heart is so corrupt, and his will so determined not to submit to God (however much it may be of the devil who encourages him in sin), that nothing can induce him to receive the Lord, and to forsake sin. ..." (J.N. Darby)

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Here, J.N. Darby is simply recognizing what the Bible, itself, teaches. Man's fall in the Garden of Eden was complete. He was not just rendered spiritually damaged. He became spiritually dead, just as God said he would.

J.N. Darby goes on to quote from the following passage of Scripture. It teaches the absolute inability of man to exercise, from his fallen nature, a decision to follow Christ Jesus the Lord.

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Romans 8:5-8)

Though man is not restricted from choosing good, his will, itself, is bound to his fallen nature. During His earthly ministry, Jesus told the religious leaders,

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the

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