

List of Reports

Report
Summaries

News & More Info

Email List

Contact

Donate

Search

The Logic of Love

Chapter 3: Freewill



Freewill is like money. Generally, the concern is not whether we have any, but *how much* of it we possess. The assumption here is that when spiritual beliefs and attitude are at issue, we are rich with freewill. For countless generations, across all cultures, from all different walks of life, and with the broadest range of personal experiences, people have chosen to have faith in God. This is not an adequate reason to have faith in God. But what this does indicate is that we are very free as human beings to make choices about spiritual beliefs. Our attitude toward life is another area where we enjoy a great degree of freedom. The question, "Is the glass half empty or half full?" stands as a call to own our attitude. Belief in freewill activates the self-assertion of personal responsibility for one's attitude and spiritual beliefs. By so doing, belief in freewill makes love and faith a *real possibility*.

The importance of nature and nurture, of course, must not be ignored. The impact that these factors can have on our decision-making process spans the range from negligible to extreme. Culturally, we make allowance for extreme conditions of nature and nurture. In spiritual contexts this is expressed in terms of whether someone has been "brain washed." The domination of circumstances beyond our control is also respected in the context of our legal system. Limitations on freewill are reflected by the insanity defense and in laws that require a requisite mental capacity in order for a crime to be successfully prosecuted.

Mental retardation, extreme duress, and other circumstances can liberate us from the imposition of legal consequences for our actions. But even though the existence of extreme situations calls attention to the difficulty of defining just how free freewill is, *exceptions should not be allowed to define the rule*. The issue is not whether nature and nurture play key roles in life. The issue is the

degree to which we transcend such origins with the personal empowerment and self-assertion that has come to be known as the trademark of the human spirit.

We cannot always control how full our glass is, but we can control how much we appreciate the water that is in the glass. We did not create our bodies, but how we treat them reflects our appreciation for these tabernacles of life. We cannot always control what thoughts pop into our head, but we can direct the course of our contemplation. We cannot control what our parents taught us about spirituality, but we can savor the opportunity to take personal responsibility for such matters.

We can act courageously in extremely stressful situations and take responsibility for our actions rather than make excuses. We can let go of emotional baggage. We can claim authority over our spiritual prerogatives and, by so doing, experience the reality of our freewill.

We are so free spiritually that we can even deny the existence of freewill. Freewill is similar to love in the sense that its existence can be the subject of unresolvable rhetorical debate. But it is also similar to love in that personal experience can provide a sufficiently satisfying validation of its reality. As with love, freewill is another instance where experience can compensate for the limitations of logic.

[Go to Chapter 4: God](#)
[Go to Table of Contents](#)

[Back to Top](#)

UBtheNEWS
Verifying History and Science in The Urantia Book