**We Are Free Moral Agents**

Jarrod Jacobs

 What does this title mean? Put simply, it means that we, as humans, have the ability to choose how we will live our lives. Though all things are created by God, God gave man the ability to do something that plants and animals cannot do. Men have the ability to obey or disobey God and then face the consequences. Man is the only one in God’s creation that can tell God “no.”

 In the beginning of the Bible, we read about Adam and Eve’s creation, and God’s command to them to not eat of the tree bearing the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. We also read about the consequences if they disobeyed (Gen. 2:16-17, 3:3). They abstained for a period of time, but there came a day when Satan tempted Eve to partake of this tree. She ate and then gave it to her husband and he ate of it too (Gen. 3:6). After this, the man and woman were cursed and driven from the garden (Gen. 3:16-24). Notice please that at one point in time, they both could have chosen not to eat of the fruit. It could have been that Eve ate and Adam did not, or vice versa. Each person had the ability to choose, and then had to face the consequences of their independent decision.

 Free will was not lost to this world just because Adam and Eve sinned. In fact, we see men all through Scriptures faced with the opportunity to choose good or evil. For example:

* “I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live” (Deut. 30:19).
* “I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I set your rules before me” (Ps. 119:30).
* “… Mary has chosen that good portion, which will not be taken away from her” (Lk. 10:42).

 As the apostle Paul recounted his meeting Christ on the road to Damascus and the words Christ told him; he told Agrippa, “Therefore, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision” (Acts 26:19). This statement lets us know that Paul had the option to choose obedience or disobedience to Christ even while on the road to Damascus. How grateful are we that he chose the right thing!

 So it is with us. We stand before God as free moral agents. Will we choose to obey or disobey? Yes, the choice is ours, but so are the consequences that follow (Matt. 7:13-14)! The Bible was written to encourage, and exhort us to choose the right things. God will not force anyone to obey, but He does present the consequences of obedience and disobedience for anyone who will listen. God wants us to willingly follow Him. What will you choose?

 *-- Jarrod Jacobs preaches with the Caneyville church of Christ in Caneyville, KY. He can be reached at (270) 589-4167.*