

Foundations of Bible Study

The background features a circular emblem with a brown and red color scheme. At the top is a cross. Below it is a heart with a crown of thorns. At the bottom is an open book. The emblem is centered on a solid brown background.

The Mind Behind the Bible

True Overcoming

- Not through self-discipline alone
- Reconciling James 1:13-15 and Heb 4:15
- Biological inputs are not sin - James 1:14-15
- Eating chocolate versus drinking hot tar
- Very advanced Christianity
- It is a grace of God and comes through closeness with Him
– James 1:21

Then Why Do We Need to Resist Sin?

- It demonstrates how little we desire to overcome
 - We often think too much of ourselves and too little of God
- It demonstrates how weak we are before sin – Rom 7:5-25
 - Self knowledge begins the path to freedom – Mark 2:16-17
 - Self knowledge helps us see ourselves and God accurately
 - Self knowledge helps us see God's merciful love
- It is an encouraging barometer of our transformation
- It builds our constancy of choice for love

Constancy in Love

- Picture the end goal – fully transformed
 - Just like Adam, Eve, and Lucifer
- Our Freedom means we have a role in our salvation
 - The nursing baby
- Our response, our struggle against sin, builds constancy
 - Rom 5:2b-5 – hypomone – active resistance to defection
 - James 1:3-4,12

Freedom versus Determinism

- Modern threat – Positive advances in biology and psychology
 - Good: greater compassion and less judgment
 - Bad: Psychophysical Reductionism – biological determinism
- Ancient threat – Misunderstanding God's Omniscience
 - Foreknowledge version pre-ordination
 - God exists outside time and so knows the outcome of all decisions without pre-ordaining them
 - What will be will be – baloney!
 - More than one path to God's will – Ex 32:7-14
 - In the instant of our decision, God does not know our choice
 - Once we have made it, He already knows it!

Freedom is Essential

- God ordained our freedom
- We must be free to be like God because God is free
- Freedom allows us to give God something He does not have – our free choice to love Him – God in His garden
- Freedom is why there is merit and reward
 - II Cor 5:10
 - Matt 16:27

Freedom is Essential

A large, faint background graphic in shades of brown and gold. It features a central heart with a crown of thorns around it. Above the heart is a cross, and below it is an open book. The entire graphic is set within a circular frame.

- When transformed, we are free of slavery to self
- This is why the sin of choosing for self after being set free is so grave:
 - Heb 10:26-29
 - II Peter 2:20-21
 - Heb 6:4-6

Freedom and Humility

- Transformation into the divine nature frees us from self
 - Rom 6:3-6, 20-22
- This freedom from self is humility
 - Freedom from fear – Heb 2:14-15
- Humility then frees us to love – Matt 5:39-41
 - The nothingness of John of the Cross
- Freedom is essential because

Without Freedom, perfect Love cannot exist!

Love and Freedom

- Freedom from selfishness is freedom to love
- Gal 5:13-15 – freedom yet servants!
- I Peter 2:16
- John 8:31-36
- John 10:14-15,17-18 – read backwards to understand it!
- Phile 8 (command), 9 (love), 14 (freedom), 21 (trust)
 - This is how we can give God great joy or sorrow
- I John 3:16 – doing the love in front of us, 17-18
 - When we get in the car, what is our goal?
- Eze 33:31-32

Love, Freedom, and Suffering

- James 1:2-3 – Trials not negative, James 1:12 vs. 13
- Heb 2:16-18 - Was this for God's sake?
- II Cor 1:3-4
- James 5:11
- To love perfectly, we must be perfectly free
- To be perfectly free, we must be perfectly detached
- The freedom of our love is built and proved in the crucible of suffering – I Pet 1:6-7
- Matt 16:21-25