

The Attackers: The Law of Volitional Responsibility; Doctrinal Management of Exigencies; Categories of Positive & Negative Volition, Illustration: Ladybug Game & Praying Mantis; Everyone Is a Slave to His Sin Nature or the Word of God; Jesus Introduces His Emancipation Proclamation with a 3rd-Class Condition, John 8:31

14. The Colonel's book *Christian Suffering* has a chapter that illustrates and amplifies this reality:

The implication of the law of volitional responsibility is that every human being must take the responsibility for his own decisions and actions. If properly reared, a person understands that he never blames others for his unhappiness. He acknowledges any mistakes or wrong decisions he has made regarding relationships, activities, motives, and functions in life and fulfills the obligations he has incurred. If he suffers from causes beyond his control, he does not allow the pain to tyrannize his soul. Rather than poison himself with bitterness and self-pity, he makes the most of his present options and opportunities through good decisions compatible with the protocol plan of God. (p. 19)

Arrogance is self-deception. An inflated opinion of self is the believer's great enemy, an illusion which will relentlessly undermine his life and happiness. Most suffering in life is caused by arrogance. In contrast to Bible doctrine, which orients the believer to reality, arrogance is divorcement from reality. The divine decree guarantees that the consequences of man's decisions occur in reality, and because the arrogant believer's perception and thought are divorced from reality, his sufferings will seem to come out of nowhere. The natural results of his decisions often will take him by surprise. Situations for which he himself is responsible will shock and disappoint him, will confound his expectations, will dash his misplaced hopes.

In arrogance and ignorance the believer will falsely blame his misfortunes on other people, environment, childhood trauma, bad luck, the devil, or even God. Because he is out of touch with reality, he is ultimately illogical in his thinking. Blaming others is rationalization; everyone is responsible for his own decisions.¹ (p. 20)

15. God knows all our negative thoughts, decisions, and actions but does not interfere with our free will to make them.

¹ R. B. Thieme, Jr., "The Law of Volitional Responsibility: Self-Induced Misery," chap. 2 in *Christian Suffering*, 3d ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2002), 19–20.

16. The issue in the angelic conflict is free will. Losers in the Christian way of life are those who fail to comprehend that how they handle adversity is what determines their worthiness to serve the Lord. Job is the classic example of this concept.
17. Life in the devil's world is filled with adversities, both from external and internal fifth columns. Both are external to the soul which must deploy problem-solving devices in order to protect the soul from being conquered.
18. Virtually every problem in life can be managed by the application of one or more of the ten problem-solving devices plus the application of a collection of principles found in the Royal Family Honor Code in Romans 12:9-14:23.
19. But learning, retaining, recalling, and applying these doctrines is impossible to do unless four barriers are removed. It's much like the Ladybug Game I've played with Ryan and Andie. The object of the game is to move your ladybug from "Start" to "Home," but, in between, if you land on the space marked "Praying Mantis," you have to go back to "Start."
20. This game can be used to illustrate the Four Categories of Positive or Negative Volition:

If the volitional challenge of the Gospel is rejected, then the person remains in unbelief, but if positive, he is saved and is imputed forty things.

If the volitional challenge to the believer is church attendance, he may opt to avoid it and the Praying Mantis will send him back to Start – saved but spiritually ignorant.

If he is positive, then he will attend Bible class and concentrate.

When doctrine is taught he may ignore or reject truth which means the Praying Mantis sends him back to Start which means he is still saved with forty things.

If he accepts the teachings a truth, he grows spiritually as he accumulates doctrines in his *kardia*.

When doctrine retained is put to the test and he refuses to apply it, the Praying Mantis sends him back to either attendance in hopes of renewed concentration or back to Start in case of negative volition. If he is positive, he will apply the pertinent doctrine to the situation and continue his advance toward Home: the sophisticated spiritual life and spiritual maturity.

21. At salvation, the believer is freed from the tyranny of the sin nature:

Romans 6:6 - Be knowing this: our sin nature has been crucified together with Him, in order that the human body, with reference to its sin nature, might be rendered inoperative, so that we should no longer be slaves to the sin nature. (EXT)

22. Whether or not his soul is freed from the sin nature remains to be seen. It would require positive volition to the Word of God followed by consistent inculcation of its doctrines for the purpose of serving his Lord Jesus Christ.
23. Everyone is in slavery to one of two things: (1) the sin nature internally and the allurements of cosmos diabolicus externally or (2) the Lord Jesus Christ and the mandates of the Word of God.
24. The Word of God is where truth resides and the extraction of its doctrines into the soul is what makes a person free.

25. Rapid advance in the plan of God is not possible until the believer comes to understand, believe, and respond to this idea: "It is the Lord Christ whom you serve" (Colossians 3:24b). All else is sinking sand!
26. Therefore, our Lord's admonition to the believers that came to Him at the temple is the secret to true freedom in the fallen environment of the devil's world:

John 8:31 - So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed in Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;

v. 32 - and you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." (NASB)

1. Verse 31 begins with the imperfect active indicative of the verb **λέγω (légō)**: to speak.

Imperfect: Inceptive: signifies the beginning of an action that is ongoing without implying anything as to its completion.

Active: Jesus Christ produces the action by speaking to these gathered believers.

Indic.: Declarative: a statement of historical fact, i.e., this is true.

2. He is addressing His comments to those who are said to have believed in Him. The verb here is the perfect active participle of **πιστεύω (pisteúō)**. The perfect tense is intensive which places emphasis on the results of a past action. Faith in Christ results in eternal life which is the existing result.

The Lord is addressing a group of Jews who have come to believe that Jesus is the Christ and are therefore Messianic Jews.

3. This faith response directed toward Jesus has both a purpose and a result: **(1) Purpose:** deliverance from the lake of fire and **(2) Result:** the imputation of eternal life. This had been established by the Lord Himself earlier in the Gospel of John in his discussion with Nicodemus (John 3:16).

“Then Jesus began to speak to those Jews who had believed in Him resulting in salvation and eternal life.”

4. He begins with the conditional particle ἔάν (*Eán*), which with the subjunctive mood of the main verb, indicates the protasis of a third class conditional sentence and is translated “If.”
5. A third class condition indicates uncertainty of fulfillment but, in this case, those who have positive volition toward learning from the Lord’s teachings and continuing in that pursuit of this knowledge will become His disciples.
6. The main verb is the aorist active subjunctive of μένω (*ménō*): to remain, to persist, to persevere.

Aorist: Ingressive: signifies entrance into a state or condition. Under the third class condition it indicates that those who do persist in the Word will become disciples.

Active: Those who chose to persist will produce the action of the verb.

Subj. This emphasizes the contingency of volition for fulfillment of the action. Some will persist in the Word; some won’t.
7. The target of their persistence is the Word, the locative of sphere of the noun λόγος (*lógos*). The Word in this case is Jesus Christ. There is no canon at this point. They must follow the Lord, listen to His teachings, and persist in applying what He tells them.

8. We, on the other hand, have the completed canon of Scripture. We are therefore challenged to take up the condition of the protasis.