

Westminster Confession 9 on Man's Will

1. God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor, by any absolute necessity of nature, determined to good, or evil.
 2. Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom, and power to will and to do that which was good and well pleasing to God; but yet, mutably, so that he might fall from it.
 3. Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation: so as, a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.
 4. When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin; and, by his grace alone, enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; yet so, as that by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly, nor only, will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.
 5. The will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to good alone, in the state of glory only.
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Belgic Confession 14, paragraph 2, on Man's "Incapacity to Perform What Is Truly Good"

1. Therefore we reject all that is taught repugnant to this, concerning the free will of man, since man is but a slave to sin [John 8:34: "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin"];
2. and has nothing of himself, unless it is given from heaven [John 3:27: "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven"].
3. For who may presume to boast, that he of himself can do any good, since Christ saith, No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him [John 6:44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him"]?
4. Who will glory in his own will, who understands, that to be carnally minded is enmity against God [Romans 8:7: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be"]?
5. Who can speak of his knowledge, since the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God [I Corinthians 2:14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"]?
6. In short, who dare suggest any thought, since he knows that we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but that our sufficiency is of God [II Corinthians 3:5: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God"]?
7. And therefore what the apostle saith ought justly to be held sure and firm, that God worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure [Philippians 2:13: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure"].
8. For there is no will nor understanding, conformable to the divine will and understanding, but what Christ hath wrought in man; which he teaches us, when he saith, Without me ye can do nothing [John 15:5: "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing"].