

# **What is Jesus Doing?**

## **WHO'S THE BOSS?**

I don't know how many of you have ever held a managerial position, but even as a supervisor to a single person or a small group of people, let alone Director of a very large company, (and I have been both), the weight of responsibility is incredibly heavy. This is especially true if the person to whom you report has given you complete responsibility for the bottom line.

The pressures of running the day-to-day operations of a number of departments that report to you without having anyone to give you guidance is incredibly stressful. Well... I don't know about you but my life before Jesus was a lot like that. I was running the world and doing a pretty poor job of it and I was under a lot of stress.

As anyone who's ever worked for a corporation knows there is generally someone to whom even the CEO reports. Sometimes it's an owner who founded the company or it could be a Board of Directors or shareholders.

Think of your life as a job that has been given to you and where you have responsibility for the bottom line and yet you report to a higher authority whom you've never met. What we are going to talk about today is the nature of free will and how it makes us the boss and how to be the best boss we can be.

If you think about it, God (who is three persons, one God), created man (you and me) in His own image. When He gave us dominion over the Earth, it was with the express understanding that we would be His managers and report to Him as our senior partner.

It was for this purpose that He gave us free will. He wanted us to make good decisions. Early in the game, however, we made a bad one and are still paying the price today as the human race. Free will is a gift from God that has been given to human beings for good and not for evil.

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However, there is no regulator put on our free will except God's consistent desire that you use it for good, and His Word which has been given to you and consistently encourages you to use it well.

It is free will that makes you the boss of your own life. I've spoken before from this pulpit about how our free will is the greatest power on earth. It was given to us by God and He has never rescinded it. We have unhindered ability to make good choices or bad choices as we go about our lives. God won't override the bad decisions we make, although there will always be consequences for our choices. The world itself will see to that.

Satan can't take our free will away from us, but he can trick us into using it to our own detriment. This was proven in the garden of Eden. Even though Eve was given to Adam as a helper for his good, and they were both given Dominion over the Earth... (not only for their own benefit but also for the good of the Earth), because of their unhindered ability to choose, they were able to be tricked by the serpent into using their free will to harm themselves.

Our enemy is still using this trick today. The trick of course as we know, from the third Chapter of Genesis, is to get someone to take pride in the fact that they have the ability to choose, and then to believe that the choice that they have is not a gift from their Creator but a right that they deserve, and finally that their Creator (who is the real owner of the company in this analogy), is a meanie and just doesn't want them to be the owner of the company (even though they are doing all the work).

It's a small step then to make them believe that all their choices are good ones simply because they have made them. This trick works because of the same pride that caused them to choose poorly to begin with... In effect, then they (who is us) simply stage a hostile takeover and start our own company acting as if we were the owner and founder.

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The Amazing Life company is now re-formed as Death, Inc. Adam and sons, Proprietors. Now I know that some of you will think that I played a little fast and loose with the whole idea of original sin, but it pretty much does work like this if you think about it.

## Why would God do this?

I maintain that it is because He did not want to spend eternity with robotic puppets that He created to do exactly what He wanted them to do. He wanted to spend eternity with beloved creations who by their own free and unfettered will decided with all their heart, mind, soul and strength that they loved Him and that they wanted to be with Him forever.

A friend of mine who was homeless and whose homelessness was pretty much by his own hand because he was a drug abuser and had made many bad choices in his life, said to me one day after I gave a sermon about sin at a Homeless lunch...

*If God wanted man not to sin, why did He give us free will?*

*I said to him, "Aha! That is an excellent question.*

*Here is the answer. It is because love requires free will and God is love."*

Here is the point. God is free to do whatever God wants and because He loved us so much that He wanted to give us dominion over His precious Creation, He gave us free will so that we could choose to honor Him and to continue the good work of Creation from which He rested on the seventh day. He wanted the seventh Day to be an eternal Sabbath with those who chose to love Him.

However, because God, the Creator, who gave us free will is omniscient, (which means He knows everything), He always understood that in giving human beings free will, they would mess up. He also knew that He was going to ultimately give them a way to use their free will for its true purpose, which was to choose Him as a Savior and work in co-operation with their Creator as they were originally intended.

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We see throughout the Bible story, from the tower of Babel to the exile in Babylon, from the slavery in Egypt to the wilderness of Sin both literal and figurative, that God has always let us know what was good and what was bad from His perspective. This scripture sums up what is good from God's perspective.

*He has shown you, O man, what is good;  
And what does the Lord require of you  
But to do justly, to love mercy,  
And to walk humbly with your God?*

- Micah 6:8

He always said that IF we would choose His ways then our lives would be good.

On Mt. Gezaim and Mt. Ebal, God had the people of Israel proclaim that IF they obeyed God's Word they would be blessed and IF they did not that they would be cursed. They agreed to the concept but could not follow through with the reality, and we know how that turned out. The Bible is full of these IFs but one of the greatest of them and simplest to understand is the one found in 2nd Chronicles.

*if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray  
and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from  
heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

- 2 Chronicles 7:14

And yes... that IS a Quid Pro Quo. IF you do this THEN I will do that. Because God is gracious, merciful, and abounding in love, He allowed the people of Israel to fall into idolatry time and time again, but when they were suffering the consequences of their sin and they cried out to him, praying and seeking his face, once again... He delivered them. Until the next time... This cycle of sin and salvation continued over and over again until...

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Ultimately, in the fullness of time, God Himself entered His own Creation, (in effect taking back the Company from our hostile takeover) as the New Human Being, the perfect Adam, the Son of Man Jesus, who was also fully God. He came to be a sacrifice for all those who would use their free will to humble themselves, receive the grace of God in Christ and return to peace in relationship with Him.

That is us. Death Inc. has now become in us Life Unlimited, Jesus Christ, Proprietor. Now I don't know about you but when I gave my life to Jesus, it was an instantaneous and deliberate use of my free will even though I realized that He had been drawing me to Himself for a very long time by His Spirit.

The first thing I realized was that I no longer had that feeling of heaviness and stress that comes with the responsibility of running the whole world. I knew that now, while I still had a job to do, in Christ, I had the direction, the resources, and the power of the God of the universe behind me, within me and guiding my every step. I was still the boss of my life, but I had made Jesus the boss of me.

What I do know is that you have the same authority and power in Christ Jesus that I have and so I can tell you this. You are still the boss, but now you report to the once and always original owner of everything. Whether you will use it well or not, you now again have dominion over your life with the authority of the owner and CEO at your disposal.

So... now, every morning when we wake up, we have a choice to make about how we are going to start our day. What kind of a boss are we going to be? The first person of whom we are the boss is ourselves.

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So... we wake up every morning and we get to decide what kind of a person we are going to be today. We can still choose to be like the old person who can do whatever we want that satisfies our creature comforts, focusing on our needs and our desires... or we can choose to be the new kind of person that trusts God to fulfill all our needs and sets out to live a day that will bring honor and glory to God by seeking out opportunities to bless other people with the blessings that we ourselves enjoy.

I really like this quotation from the apostle Paul from his letter to the Ephesians...

*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

- Ephesians 2:10

The reason I quote this passage from Paul all the time is because it shows us that although we do not control the circumstances under which we find ourselves, we do have the ability to trust in the God that provides them for us and who has a plan for us for every day.

That's why it's so important for us to seek him early in the day to ask him for sensitivity in our spirits to what his Holy Spirit is doing, because that way we have the opportunity to use our free will wisely in the best possible way, which is to recognize the good works that are prepared beforehand by God for us to walk in and then simply walk in them.

By doing so every day, we will bring glory to Jesus the CEO of Life Unlimited and we will be in all ways joyful because we are fulfilling His purpose for our lives on a moment-by-moment basis. His Glory is His bottom line and your obedience in joy is what brings the company profit.

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Here's another great scripture from Ephesians which we can use as our manual in moving through this now great eternal life that is coursing through our veins and our spirits...

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.

- Ephesians 5:8-10

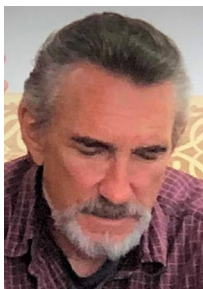
Paul tells us in this passage that not only were we in darkness but that we were darkness and not only are we now in the light but we ARE light and so we should walk as children of light.

So... if we want to be a good boss of the life we are blessed to be living under the authority of the One and only great CEO Jesus, and not only receive our promised paycheck which is the blessings of salvation, life and peace, but also receive bonuses that our CEO distributes liberally, we will also do our best to be a good steward of those blessings and do our job to bring light into the darkness where we have been placed.

That's why having an early morning meeting with Jesus is the best way to start your day. After all, if you're going to bring the owner of the company profit, you will need to understand the business, and since every day brings its own challenges, (Even though you are the boss of you), showing up early is the best way to head off in the right direction.

If you are like me, you want to be the best boss, the best employee, the best servant and the best child of God you can be every day. That's the best way to use our free will and it's what God intended for us from the beginning.

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*Let's Pray,*

*- John Henry Raskin, Roadhouse Rabbi*