

5 Key Words

From the beginning of creation, God tells something about our identity.

In Gen 1:26-28 and Gen 2:14,15 we come across five key words that tell how God looks at man and his identity.

Keyword 5. Free Choice

God gives Adam and Eve the choice to eat from the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Free Choice

In the OT we sometimes see the people in exile. This means that the people to live under a different ruler. The people of Israel were regularly attacked by various enemies.

As we described in the previous chapter, Jewish law was used in the OT. If the law was obeyed, there would be peace and fruitfulness. You regularly read about kings who ruled the people well and kept the people under Jewish law. These periods were very fertile periods, in which the people devoted themselves to worship and served the God of Israel.

If the people chose not to serve God and started worshipping other gods, we see that quickly the situation changes. All kinds of enemies came and often dominated the people by force or sometimes even brought them to their own land to rule over them.

In the NT we see that there is a Roman overlord who kept the Jewish people under control. Many were tortured and imprisoned. There was also an army of rebels who tried to fight the Romans for their freedom. The clergy were concerned with the pure doctrine. The Romans allowed the temple service to continue as usual.

When Jesus began His ministry, He gave a very clear message about another Kingdom. The OT already spoke about this. There was to be a Prince of Peace. Everyone was expecting this person.

When Jesus came, hardly anyone realized that He was that person.

Jesus did not come up with rules that people should obey. He especially showed them what the Kingdom of God on earth is about and how you can get into it.

The values of the Kingdom are opposite to the laws known to the Jews. These laws where they had to do their best might bring the reward of everlasting life. Jesus shows that the Kingdom of God is mainly about the attitude of the inner I am in your heart. He always gives the choice that people may follow Him. He will not force anyone to do this. He also shows grace for those who are condemned by the law. Instead of forcing people to follow Him, He gave them a free choice to follow or not.

EXERCISE

Do you experience in your life the freedom to make choices? If so, which person, vision of life, etc. do you follow? Has this set you free to become the person God intended?

Are you also someone who gives others the choice to make their own decisions?

PRINCIPLE 8

Jesus asked to follow Him. This is a choice that you can make yourself. If you follow his ways in his Kingdom, you will be able to live in freedom as an heir.