

How can I be free if God already has plans for me?

God created you because he loves you! He desires that you will freely choose to return his love by seeking his Will for your life.

Even before you were born, God already had a plan for you. Nevertheless, you are truly free; you may choose to reject the plan God has for you and to go your own way. But you should know that you cannot be truly happy without God.

~~should I do for Christ?"~~ (INTERVIEW WITH FR. A. SPADARO, S.J., AUG. 19, 2013)

Loving yourself

But how can you love God if you have trouble believing that other people really love you? Or when you cannot really love yourself? These are good questions, to which everybody has to find an answer. For starters, you may be sure that God loves you the way you are. People often appreciate us for what we do, or for what we have. But you don't need to do anything for God to love you: he really does love you exactly the way you are, with your less than perfect exterior appearance and personality, with both your talents and your shortcomings.

Read more

Longing for happiness: CCC 1718–1719, 1725; CCC 361; *YOU CAT* 281.

Freely choosing God: CCC 1730–1733, 1743–1744; CCC 363; *YOU CAT* 296.

God knows you better than you know yourself and knows what you are like. He made you!

(GEN. 1:27; SEE TWEET 1.2).

What now?

“Okay,” you might think, “God loves me for who I am. But I can’t sit around doing nothing all day!” You are right. That is why the next step is to walk together with God to find your path in life. This can be difficult, as you usually have to find it while attending to the many things you must deal with every day (SEE TWEET 4.6), but discovering what will make you truly happy is worth the effort as it will change all your life for the better.

To find an answer to the question of what you are called to do in life, it is important first to work on your relationship with God. The answer can be found only with him. By praying (SEE TWEET 3.1), by learning more about yourself and your faith, and by caring for others (SEE TWEET 4.7), you can become better at listening to God.



Trust that God loves you and wants you to be happy, then share that love with others. The rest will follow.

Was the Church wrong about Galileo Galilei?

The Italian scholar Galileo Galilei (†1642) is often mentioned as an example of a scientist at odds with the Church. As the story goes, Church leaders silenced Galileo simply because he had said that the heliocentric theory of Copernicus (†1543) was true, that the earth revolved around the sun. This notion met with a lot of opposition, both inside and outside the Church, and lacking sufficient proof, Galileo was forced to withdraw to his villa for the rest of his life. Still, his daughter became a nun.

Later Galileo was proved to be mostly right. However, the Galileo affair is much more complex than often portrayed, with misunderstandings on both sides, and on more matters than the solar system. When the scientific evidence became clear, the Church accepted that the earth revolved around the sun. The contributions of Galileo to science have since been praised by the Church, and his name has been cleared of all blame. Pope Pius XII called him a great scientist (Dec. 3, 1939). Pope John Paul II regretted that Galileo suffered much at the hands of Church leaders (Nov. 10, 1979) and formally asked forgiveness for their treatment of him (Mar. 12, 2000).

~~discover about his creation. That's why faith in Jesus Christ remains the single most important thing, because only he, as the Son of God, can reveal the full truth about his Father.~~

Faith and science

The Second Vatican Council, an important gathering of the Church (SEE TWEET 2.48), wrote in 1965 that God “can be known with certainty from created reality by the light of human reason” (DEI VERBUM, 6). By using their reason, that is, by thinking carefully, people can come to the conclusion that God exists (SEE TWEET 1.6).

Faith and science are both very important. Pope John Paul II wrote an encyclical (a papal letter) about the relationship between faith and human reason: “Faith and reason (*fides et ratio*) are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth – in a word, to know himself – so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves” (FIDES ET RATIO, INTRODUCTION).



The truth, whether it is discovered through science or faith, does not contradict itself. Jesus said: “The truth will make you free.”

Read more

Science and creation: CCC 282–289; CCCC 51; YOUCAT 41. *Laws in creation:* CCC 339, 346, 354; CCCC 62, 64; YOUCAT 45.



1.43 What happens when we die?



Many of us find it difficult to believe that death is really the end, especially when someone we love dies. How could that love really be over? At such a moment, people feel deep inside themselves that there must be something more. Jesus confirmed there is more and promised all believers that death is certainly not the end: after death, their life continues with God in heaven. Jesus said “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die” (Jn. 11:25–26).

Fear of death

Most people are at least a little afraid of death, even if they believe in the Resurrection (SEE TWEET 1.50). Death is so definitive, so mysterious. It means separating from everything that we know and crossing into an unknown state. You die alone, taking neither your loved ones nor your possessions with you. Even Jesus was afraid when he approached his own suffering and death (Mk 14:33–36). Yet this angst that most

of us feel, while understandable and very human, is not necessary. While life changes at the moment of death, it still continues!

~~For this reason, at the Mass for the dead, the priest prays: “Indeed for your faithful, Lord, life is changed not ended, and, when this earthly dwelling turns to dust, an eternal dwelling is made ready for them in heaven”~~

~~(PREFACE I FOR THE DEAD).~~

Four last things

The Sacred Tradition of the Church speaks of the “four last things”: death, judgment, hell, and heaven (CCCC APPENDIX B). Some skeptical people say that there are only two certain things in life: death and taxes. Death is a reality for everyone. Death is also definitive: after death you cannot change anything about your former earthly life (CCC 1021). During that life, you were free to respond positively or negatively to the love of God, but after death comes judgment (Heb. 9:27).