

Dear Jason,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You asked two questions. In your first inquiry you wanted to know why God gave Adam and Eve free will, thus allowing them to sin. Secondly, you asked if there was reliable evidence that all the New Testament writers risked their lives and ended up dying for their writings.

Question #1: Why did God give Adam and Eve free will, thus allowing them to sin?

Had God given Adam and Eve free will, but prohibited them from committing sin by guarding them from Satan's temptation, they and all their progeny would have been continually liable to suggestions of evil from without and to ambitions from within. With such an uncertain future, disobedience (sin) would always be a possibility and the concept of good would not be appreciated except by its contrast with evil (Genesis 3:22). When God created man in his own likeness, he created him with the ability to love and do right as well as with the ability to hate and do wrong. This liberty of choice is part of man's original endowment. God, in his infinite wisdom foresaw that an actual experience with evil would be the surest and most lasting lesson to serve the entire human family for eternity; and for that reason God did not prevent but permitted the human race to experience sin and its penalty—death.

The good news is that God had a plan; a well devised and thought out plan. He sent his Son, Jesus, to earth to die as a perfect sinless man in order to ransom Adam and his entire race from the endless cycle of sin and death. Jesus paid the ransom price that will give every human being that has ever lived the opportunity in the Millennial Age to return to the God-honoring perfect condition that was lost in the Garden of Eden. "For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ." (1 Corinthians 15:21-22)

Therefore, the terrible experience with sin and death, although a temporary curse, is actually an eternal blessing for humanity. When God's kingdom on earth is established, the glory of his divine character and his mercy will be made known to everyone. Then humankind will understand God's wisdom in allowing the temporary permission of evil as a lesson for all eternity of the sinfulness of sin. In view of the great plan of redemption, and the consequent "restoration of all things" (Acts 3:21), through Christ, we can see that blessings result through the permission of evil that, probably, could not otherwise have been fully realized.

Question #2: Is there reliable evidence that all New Testament writers risked their lives and ended up dying for their writings?

No, there is not reliable evidence that all the writers were martyrs.

Matthew, the Apostle, is believed to have been put to death in either Persia or Ethiopia.

We could not find out any information on how either Mark or Luke died.

Tradition says that the Apostle John was banished to the Island of Patmos for many years and then finally released. But some Biblical scholars say he was martyred. He is believed to be the last apostle to die at the approximate age of 100.

The Apostle Paul was executed in Rome.

The author of the Book of James was either the cousin or brother of Jesus, who some think was also known as the Apostle, James the Lesser. Tradition says he was stoned to death in Jerusalem in 62 or 66 AD.

Tradition also says that the Apostle Peter was crucified head downward in Rome.

Jude Thaddaeus was an Apostle and wrote the Book of Jude. We were unable to find out any information on how he died.

We hope we have answered your questions. Please write us again.

Sincerely,
Christian Questions Radio