

Free Will, Determinism and Buda order a pizza.

Free Will, Determinism, and Buda are at a pizza place together and they order a pizza. Free Will tells the waiter *'Whatever you decide is fine'*. Determinism tells the waiter *'No matter what I order, the pizza toppings have already been predestined'*. Buda looks at the waiter, opens his arms and says, *'Make me one with everything'*. (Insert rim shot here). We're going to let Buda eat while we discuss Free Will and Determinism. Let's start with Determinism.

Webster defines Determinism as *"The doctrine that man's choices, decisions, and actions are decided by antecedent causes, inherited or environmental, acting upon his character: opposed to free will"*.

Simply stated, you don't have a choice. What is, is. You can't choose good or evil. The outcomes have already been predetermined. This may appear to fly in the face of most major theological doctrines, stating what is, is and that we cannot choose good or evil, but let's keep one thing in mind. We did not choose to be here. We did not choose to be born. We did not choose the color of our skin, hair, or eyes. We did not choose when to show up in this world of the physical, or who our parents would be. If the basis of our existence was determined before our arrival in this physical world, then our life must be based on predetermined factors, right? Not so fast.

Webster defines Free Will as *"The doctrine that man is entirely unrestricted in his ability to choose between good and evil: opposed to determinism"*.

Simply stated, you chose to do what you're doing right now. You chose to choose whatever choice you made. You chose whether or not to shower this morning. You chose whether or not to drive safely today. You chose to turn left when you could have turned right. Even if you chose not to make a choice, choosing not to choose is a choice. Well if I have the choice, how come I was not able to choose the basis of my existence?

Wow, that's deep. That's so deep the sediment underneath the Titanic is saying *"that's deep"*. It gets deeper.

Compatibilist Dr. Daniel Dennett, Philosophy Professor at Tufts University, stated that we live in a world where not only both exist, but the two actually work together. He also states that determinism is only a term used to describe something as "unavoidable". If something is avoidable, then it cannot be predetermined since we have the free will of choice to avoid or not to avoid that which is not predetermined. If you jump off the roof of a building without a parachute or something to break your fall, gravity predetermines that you will hit the ground. But, gravity predetermining you hitting the ground only happened after you chose to jump.

There are events in life that are predetermined and we have a free will to decide how, if at all, we're going to respond. Think about that as you go about living freely today.