

I Can't! I Can't! I Can't!

There are several views of religion that approach godly living as an “I Can’t” religion: “Thou shalt” or “Thou shalt not.” In such cases, the “Thou shalt not” is emphasized. It is similar to the Lord’s instructions to Jeremiah, saying, “when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What is the burden of Jehovah? then shalt thou say unto them, What burden! I will cast you off, saith Jehovah. And as for the prophet, and the priest, and the people, that shall say, The burden of Jehovah, I will even punish that man and his house. Thus shall ye say every one to his neighbor, and every one to his brother, What hath Jehovah answered? and, What hath Jehovah spoken? And the burden of Jehovah shall ye mention no more: for every man's own word shall be his burden; for ye have perverted the words of the living God, of Jehovah of hosts our God. Thus shalt thou say to the prophet, What hath Jehovah answered thee? and, What hath Jehovah spoken? But if ye say, The burden of Jehovah; therefore thus saith Jehovah: Because ye say this word, The burden of Jehovah, and I have sent unto you, saying, Ye shall not say, The burden of Jehovah; therefore, behold, I will utterly forget you, and I will cast you off, and the city that I gave unto you and to your fathers, away from my presence: and I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten” (Jeremiah 23:33-40).

When learning of the instructions of Jehovah, the proper response is not “Why can’t I?” but rather “What hath Jehovah answered?” Response is a difference in worldliness and godly obedience, i.e., recognizing God’s right to rule in our lives and “to fear Jehovah our God, for our good always” (Deut. 6:24).

Is there an application? Jehovah said to Isaiah, “every one that is called by my name, and whom I have created for my glory, whom I have formed, yea, whom I have made” (Isa. 43:7). The Psalmist said, “Examine me, O Jehovah, and prove me; Try my heart and my mind” (Psa. 26:2). Isaiah said, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee” (Isa. 26:3). As did Jeremiah, saying, “I, Jehovah, search the mind, I try the heart, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings” (Jer. 17:10). As the Lord himself affirmed, saying, “thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength” (Mk. 12:30). “Mind” is defined as, “lit. "a thinking through, or over, a meditation, reflecting," signifies (a) like No. 1, "the faculty of knowing, understanding, or moral reflection” (Vine’s). To which Peter said, “Wherefore girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:13).

Think about it: “There's good evidence that what you eat can make a difference in your risk of cognitive decline and dementia, including Alzheimer's disease” (mayoclinic.org). “Keep in mind that your diet affects the health of your mind as well as your body.” (myhealthyandwealthylife.com). And lastly: “Energy comes from the foods we eat and affects the overall performance of our brains. High-quality foods that contain fatty acids, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals nourish the brain and protect it from oxidative stress—the waste produced when the body uses oxygen, which can damage brain cells” (smithharris.org). That means, “I Can!” Ross Triplett, Sr.