

Yonsei University Early Admissions 2016
UIC Underwood Field

[Question 1]

Idealists go into the world and preach freedom. But men in their simplicity cannot understand it; they even fear and dread it at heart, for nothing has ever been more unsustainable for humans and human society than freedom. Idealists may seek to increase freedom for man, but they forget that humans prefer peace to freedom. Nothing is more seductive for man than his freedom of conscience, but nothing is a greater cause of suffering. Idealists emphasize the dignity of free choice, but the masses cannot bear the fearful burden of free choice. They will cry aloud that they cannot swallow the heavenly bread of freedom, being tormented by so many cares and choices they cannot handle. They will be convinced, from their painful experience of freedom, that they can never be free, for they are weak, vicious, and quarrelsome. Idealists preach that man lives not by bread alone, but by the heavenly bread of freedom. But mankind will rise up for the sake of that earthly bread, and will cry out, “Feed us first, and then ask of us to be virtuous!”

How do you understand the assertion made in the passage above that free choice—or freedom—is a “fearful burden”? Based on your understanding of this assertion, provide your own example of a concrete situation that illustrates how freedom is a fearful burden. What reasons can be given for thinking that freedom, even if it is a fearful burden, should be valued and pursued?