

Choose You This Day

Introduction

Scripture reading Joshua 24:14-24

Joshua 24:14-15 "Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. **But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**"

1. **Joshua was trying to get the people to understand that they had a choice whom they would serve.**
2. **Man has had the power of choice since the beginning.**
 - A. **Adam and Eve were created as free moral agents.**

Genesis 2:16-17 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; **but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat**, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

- B. **Why did God make man so that he could choose evil?**
 - 1) **Because he wanted man to do good and the highest good is a chosen good. To give man the choice of good demanded the freedom to choose evil.**

3. Man's freedom of choice is taught throughout the scriptures.

A. Freedom of choice:

John 7:17 If anyone **wills to do His will**, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.

Matthew 11:28 **Come to Me**, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Psalms 119:30 **I have chosen** the way of truth; Your judgments I have laid before me.

B. The kinds of choice: Foolish (Lot's); beautiful (Ruth's).

- 1) **Ruth, Naomi, Boaz – a story of devotion, ideal family life; unselfish generosity; love and trust in God.**

C. The power of choice: It is great but often not realized.

- 1) **Evil influence of heredity can be overcome by moral choice (Ahaz the wicked father; Hezekiah the good son).**
 - a. **AHAZ: Idolatry and meanness**
 - b. **HEZEKIAH: Reorganized the temple service and worked to drive out idolatry.**
- 2) **The evil influence of environment can be overcome by moral choice (Saints in wicked Nero's household).**
 - a. **He greatly persecuted Christians – yet they remained loyal.**

Philippians 4:22 All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household.

Moral Choice Is Inescapable

1. The choice of the master we serve is inescapable.

A. Every responsible person is a moral servant by choice, not by birth.

1 Thessalonians 1:9 For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

B. Our choice of masters is narrow.

1) Only two alternatives:

a. God or idols:

1 Kings 18:21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people answered him not a word.

b. Christ or Satan:

Matthew 12:26 If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?

Matthew 12:30 He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

c. Obedience or Sin:**Romans 6:16-18**

- 2) **Neutrality is not possible - each must choose.**
- 3) **Compromise is not possible - each must choose only one.**

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

C. Israel had chosen idols, Satan, and sin - in spite of warnings.

Exodus 20:3 "You shall have no other gods before Me.

Exodus 23:24 You shall not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their works; but you shall utterly overthrow them and completely break down their sacred pillars.

- 1) **Their choice meant disobedience, ingratitude, and ultimate punishment.**
- 2) **Joshua chose God and obedience because of love and faith. This is the choice of masters that you and I must make!**

2. The choice of causes is inescapable.**Hebrews 11:24-26**

- A. **Moses at the age of forty was confronted with a choice between two causes. (Relate story of Exodus chapter two)**
- B. **What were his alternatives?**
 - 1) **It was the cause of God's people or the enemy of God's people - Israel or Egypt; Freedom or Slavery.**

- 2) **It was the cause that meant suffering and affliction - or the cause that meant worldly wisdom, pleasure, and popularity.**

Acts 7:22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.

- 3) **This is the choice that confronts everyone.**

- a. **It confronted Jesus:
Philippians 2:5-8**
- b. **It confronted Paul:
Philippians 3:7-10**
- c. **The reasons for Moses' wise choice of righteousness:**
 - 1) **He knew the pleasures of sin were transitory - for a season.**
 - 2) **He realized that spiritual riches were true riches.**

Matthew 6:19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;

- 3) **He looked to the future recompense.**

Romans 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

3. The choice of destinies is inescapable.

Matthew 7:13-14 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

- A. Every person determines his own eternal destiny by choice.**
- B. Our choice of destinies is narrow - only two gates, roads, destinations.**
- C. Our choice of masters and causes is our choice of destinies.**

Moral Choice Is Individual

1. Reasons moral choice must be individual:

- A. God created us individually. Each has an immortal soul.**

Genesis 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

- B. God saves us individually. The invitation is to "all" but the acceptance is personal.**
- C. God will judge us individually.**

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

2. As an individual choice, it must be independent of:**A. Family.**

Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.

- 1) A Christian wife may pray and plead, but she cannot make the choice for her husband.**

B. Friends:

- 1) Sometimes a young person says, "I will if you will" - It must be "I will even if you won't." It is INDIVIDUAL!**

C. Popular choice:

- 1) It doesn't matter what the majority may choose - I must choose the Lord! (Remember - broad is the way that leads unto destruction (the majority).**

3. "as for me and my house...."

- A. The choice is individual but Joshua knew what their choice was and was merely stating it. A compliment to Joshua - he taught them right!**

Ezekiel 18:20 **The soul who sins shall die.** The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

Moral Choice Is Immediate

1. Some choices are not immediate and urgent.
 - A. Education (College, graduate, etc)
 - B. Marriage (If, when, whom)
2. The moral choice, though, between God and Satan is immediate.
 - A. We can't put it off until tomorrow. To put off God is to serve Satan longer.
 - B. Felix and Agrippa didn't postpone their choice for Christ, they made it.
 - C. The choice for Christ ought to be immediate.

2 Corinthians 6:2 For He says: "IN AN ACCEPTABLE TIME I HAVE HEARD YOU, AND IN THE DAY OF SALVATION I HAVE HELPED YOU." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Hebrews 3:7-13

3. The day of choice will soon be ended by death. The uncertainty of life should make the right choice imperative now.

Conclusion

1. To become a Christian and to be saved finally in heaven is not by divine decree nor by accident, but by choice.
2. "Choose you this day whom you will serve", because in that day (the judgment) Christ will do the choosing.
3. His choice will depend upon your choice now. What's your choice?

Place

Date

[illegible]

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