

Choice

God made us in His own image and gave each of us the divine right of choice. Since our destiny is tied to our choices, it behooves us to choose wisely. Where you are today hinges principally on the choices you made yesterday. And our world today is full of choices: who to marry, job, or friends, and even non major choices such as what clothes to wear or what food to eat.

Sometimes our choices are based on our felt needs rather than our actual needs, and the greater part of our decision process is driven by desire. Our desires are influenced by several things, such as the company we keep and the daily advertisements we are bombarded with, especially on television.

The company we keep influences the choices we make. Some young people plunge themselves into sinful and destructive habits such as drugs, fornication, and alcohol because of the groups they join. The people we keep company with are particularly important. Someone once said, "Tell me who your friends are, and I will tell you who you are." Choose your friends wisely.

When making important decisions on what to choose, our thought should be, "will this choice honor God?" The following steps will help you in making choices that honor God:

1. **Pray:** The Bible says, "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:6). You acknowledge God by discussing with Him before you make your decision. If He is the Lord of your life, He has interest in your wellbeing – talk to Him through your prayer.
2. **Search:** Search God's Word, the Bible, to find out if He has said anything about the decision you about to make. Remember His Word is a lamp to your feet and a light to your path (Psalm 119:105).
3. **Seek:** Look for godly counsel in difficult decisions, it's wise to get spiritual and practical counsel from your leaders such as parents, pastor, or a mature believer. Proverbs 15:22 says, "Without counsel, plans go awry, but in the multitude of counselors they are established."
4. **Trust:** Trust God to lead and guide you. He says, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye" (Psalm 32:8). He also said, "Who is the man who fears the LORD? He will instruct him in the way he should choose." (Psalm 25:12).
5. **Obey:** Willingly obey whatever He tells you even though it may not be your first choice. "If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land" (Isaiah 1:19).

Eternal Choice:

The choices we make such as what car to drive, where to live, or which college to attend have no eternal consequences; we can change these choices as much as we like while we still have breath. However, there exists a choice that, once made, has eternal consequences, and cannot be changed after death: "In the place where the tree falls, there it shall lie" (Ecclesiastes 11:3).

This choice is whether to accept God's means of averting the consequences of our sin. The path to everlasting life is only through Jesus Christ. The Bible says, "The soul who sins shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). And all have sinned (Romans 3:23). Also, the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23). Jesus also said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). God's salvation for humanity comes only

through His Son Jesus Christ. To avoid eternal death, the penalty for sin, you must believe in God and His means of reconciliation.

The Israelites in Numbers chapter 21 had a choice to live by looking up at the lifted brazen serpent or to die by ignoring God's means for healing. They had nothing to do with the way they were healed, but due to unbelief, some wasted their time looking for alternatives. Those who doubted God's method of healing and followed their previous knowledge of treating snakebite perished. God's methods may not make sense to us, but they are the only way to be saved. Paul says, "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18). Jesus tells us in John 3:14-15, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

There exists within man the pride to act independently of God by devising his own way of reaching Him. There are some who do it by following other religions such as Hinduism, Islam, or Buddhism, all claiming they are ways to heaven. But there is only one way to reach the true and living God, and that is through Jesus Christ. The Bible says, "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

There are some people who trust in their good works or charitable donations to lead them to heaven. As noble as these acts may be, they are not God's means of salvation. God has determined that faith in Jesus is the way to enter heaven. If we choose another path or no path at all, the result is the same: eternal death. For the Israelites, God's means to heal them was the brazen serpent. If anyone chose a different way, they died.

Even among church people, there are some who believe God is too good to send people to the lake of fire. Remember, the choice is yours, and if you have breath, there is hope if you believe in Jesus. God declared in His Word, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore, choose life" (Deuteronomy 30:19). You can only make one choice; there is nothing in between. Life or death; heaven or hell. It is not what you think or how you perceive it should be done: it is what the Word of God says.

I heard Dr. David Jeremiah on television telling the story of a lady who came to him after his preaching, saying, "My God would never send someone to hell for simply not believing in Jesus." She probably thought Dr. Jeremiah would debate her statement or go through the Bible again to show her proofs. But he calmly answered her, "You're right, your God wouldn't do that, because he doesn't exist." What a wise response! There is only one God, and any other gods you create in your mind do not exist. Whatever the living God says in His Word is the truth. "Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven" (Psalm 119:89). Choose Jesus Christ and live eternally with God.