

Your Choice

And let me tell you about a dilemma that I face. Oftentimes, we'll be traveling somewhere. I say to my wife, "Do you want to get something to eat?" She says, "Sure." I'll say, "Well, where do you want to go?" She says, "Oh, I don't care." And then I'll start going through the restaurants. You know, "Do you want to go to that hamburger place? Do you want to go get some Mexican food? Do you want to go get some seafood?" And little by little, I'll just go through every restaurant that we have in town. And finally we'll come to a place and she goes, "Okay, that doesn't sound bad." And I'll think to myself, "Why didn't you just say that? I mean, if you wanted to go there, why didn't we go there? You knew what you wanted, but you wouldn't say."

Why did she do that? Why do we do that? Why is it that when it comes to making a decision, we hesitate? You know, I was talking about my wife and her inability. Now I'm sure none of you face that same problem with somebody making the decision.

Maybe you're that person. You get to a choice and you can't make it. You know, sociologists talk about this as choice.

Why do we have that problem? Sociologists talk about it as "choice overload". We have so many choices that we have to make. You know, you go to buy a pair of jeans and you walk into the store and they say, do you want slim, baggy, waistline? You do want low cut, high cut? Do you want them stonewashed? And by the time you just, I just want some jeans, right? We have too many decisions to make it.

We hesitate to make those decisions, but there are certain choices that are important and sometimes even easy choices we don't want to make. Not because the choices, you know, we say it's a hard choice. Well, it's not a hard choice. We know the two options. We know even which one is better. It's the consequences of that choice that we don't want to make.

And I think that happens to us a lot when it comes to the choices that God gives us. We do realize that God gives us a choice.

You know, in our life, we have a lot of things we don't have any control over, right? You didn't get a choice of where you were born, who your parents were. You didn't get a choice of how tall you were or how good

looking you are. And we think, oh, those are important things. But in the end, the most important thing is the choice that you have.

It's where you will spend eternity. And God gives you that choice. It's a choice between his way that will lead to heaven and another way that will lead to destruction.

And it should be an easy choice, but sometimes we don't want to make that choice. But unfortunately, in not making the choice to follow God, we are making a choice. It's a choice to go on our own, and it's a choice that we will deal with the consequences.

Every one of us face a choice of whether we will serve God or whether we will not serve God. And we have to make that choice. If we don't make the choice, we've made the choice. It's forced upon us.

You know, the prophet Joel talked about how there are multitudes and multitudes in the valley of decision. We all have a decision to make. Will we serve God or will we not? God gives us a clear-cut choice.

Even in the garden, think about the choice that he gave mankind. Here is the fruit that you're not supposed to eat. He could have made it where they could never have accessed that fruit, but he gave them a choice. Either they could choose to serve God or not serve God. And when Satan comes in and muddles up that choice and makes them think that the choice they're making is actually between being like God and not being like God, well, they made a choice.

But it was a bad choice, and that choice came with consequences. They lost their place in the garden. They lost that unique relationship with God. They lost their chance to partake of the tree of life because their sin now separated them from God.

The choices that we make have consequences. Every choice that you make, it has consequences.

And we are defined by our choices more than anything else. More than our talent or our ability or anything else. What you become comes about because of your choices.

And so we must be very careful to make good choices. Sometimes the choices aren't hard, but we don't want to make them.

And you know, it's like with my wife in the restaurant. She wants to go to the place that she wants to go to, but she doesn't want the responsibility of the decision. Because if we go there and it's not very good that day, well, she'll feel bad because she made that choice. So it's just easier to put it off, put it off until eventually I'll make the choice for her to give her what we want.

And sometimes we think that's how we can work with God. We can do whatever we want, and in the end, we'll expect God to make a choice to save us. But God is giving us the choice to serve Him or not.

And if we don't follow Him, we don't obey Him, we're making a choice to go against God. And in doing so, we're putting ourselves in a terrible situation. I want you to think about how many times in scripture we see God giving people choices.

Think about on Mount Carmel with Elijah, right? "Why do you hesitate between two opinions," He told the Israelites. "If God is God, serve Him. If Baal is God, serve Him." Make a choice. But they didn't want to. They hesitated. They wanted the best of both worlds. They wanted the pleasures of sin of Baal, but they still wanted the protection of God. But it doesn't work that way.

You have to make a choice. Think about Joshua as they were going into the promised land. "Choose you this day whom you will serve." Make a decision. "Are you going to serve the gods that came before you and the land that you were or the gods that you're going to? Or are you going to choose to serve God?" If you're going to choose to serve God, you're going to have to follow up on that decision. You're going to have to abandon those things.

And unfortunately, what we see later in the book of Judges is they didn't want to make the choice. They wanted to have both worlds. And in doing so, they abandoned God.

God would eventually abandon them. Of course, they'd come crawling back to Him and crying back to Him to save us. God and His graciousness would save them, but their destruction was already in that cycle. Why? Because they'd made the wrong choice.

You think about Jeremiah. Jeremiah chapter 21. He talks to the people and he says, "Behold, I set for you a way of life and a way of death."

What's he telling them? I'm giving you a better choice here, but you still have to make the choice.

You know, every one of us has a choice. We need to make it a good one.

Thank you so much for joining with us today. Thank you so much for sharing with this lesson.