

Choices we cannot make

One of the activities that the family and I have enjoyed over the years is going to the dollar tree. I especially enjoy the fact that everything is a dollar.

However, I've noticed that my wife does not get the same enjoyment that we do. For one, it's hard to find good quality items at the dollar tree.

Kari won't let me buy deodorant from there anymore. She says it doesn't work and that they left out the Antiperspirant but that's not frustrating part. At the store I say to Ava and Shay "you can only choose one item."

Just when you think they've finally picked something, they put it back thinking they found something better. It takes us almost an hour to get out of the dollar tree because they can't make a choice.

One of the great qualities that God has put in us is the ability to choose. We can choose where to live. We can choose what car we want to buy. We can choose who to marry and where to work.

Today all of you have chosen to be here to give praise and worship God. Right now you're choosing weather or not to tune me out as we get into this lesson.

A. Life is full of choices and there are decisions that have to be made.

1. We have to make a decision about God. We have to make a decision about our character and we have to make a decision about our eternal destiny.
2. I can either choose to go to heaven or I can choose not to go to heaven. Where I go will hinge on the decisions I make in life. The bible teaches that God created us to be free moral agents.
3. We have the power of choice. In Deut. 30:19, Moses stands before the Israelites and says

"I bring heaven and earth directly against you this day, before you I place either life or death, blessing and cursings; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live;

4. Moses said "you need to make up your minds. I put before you life or death. It's either one or the other.
5. If you do not choose to live the way God wants you to live, you're going to die. Not only would this decision affect them, but it would also affect everyone they love.

When Joshua came to the end of his life, he gave his farewell speech (**Joshua 24:15**)

"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. In the N.T. Jesus said in Matt 11:28, "Come to me all of you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest." We've seen it both in the Old and N.T.
2. God says, "I'm going to let you decide certain things, but there will be some things that I will not let you decide."
3. Today we are going to look at decisions we cannot make in an effort to help us choose wisely in the areas we can decide.

I. I cannot choose to live because I am already alive.

A. I cannot go to almighty God, and say, "please do not bring me into existence."

1. When God made me, he put a spark in me, that says that I will never die. I will live as long as God lives. God made you and me into a living soul.
2. You are not a body that has a soul. You are a soul that has a body. Your eyes do not see but you see through your eyes. Your ears do not hear, but you hear through your ears.
3. There is something on the inside of this body that is eternal. God is pictured in the bible, as the eternal God, the Eternal Christ, and the eternal Spirit.
4. The only difference between the eternal God, eternal Christ and the eternal Spirit, and the eternity of man is that the eternity of man has a beginning, but will have no conclusion.

B. We will live as long as God lives.

1. You will be alive 100 years from now. We will be alive 10, 000 years from now. You and I are never going to die. Our journey on this earth may end, but our being will never end.
2. Jesus said in Matt 10:28, "Don't fear him that can destroy the body but fear him that can destroy both the body and the soul in hell"
3. Someone has said "make sure that you make yourself fit to live with because you'll never be able to get rid of yourself."
4. That's why we need the redeeming power of Jesus to make our personalities and our hearts worth living with.

II. I cannot chose the true and living God . He is the true living God whether I chose him or not.

A. Psalm 90:2 says "Before the mountains were made, before you formed the earth and the world, before the existence of time, you are God."

1. The living God is a fact. You can try to pretend that the facts aren't there. You can be ignorant of a fact but not of those things will wipe a fact our of existence.
2. Let's suppose I said to you, "I'm going to prove that the law of gravity does not exist." To demonstrate this I will climb to the top of this building and jump.
3. What would be the result? Instead of breaking the law of gravity, the law of gravity would break me. God is God whether you admit or not and being ignorant of this fact will not change it.
4. It's like getting on a merry go round. There's a lot of energy and movement, but when you get off, you end up at the same place you started.

B. The same is true for those who live their lives without God.

1. You can eat, sleep, go to work, have a family, go to park and have a good time together.
2. But eventually you will come to one of those sacred moments in life, realizing we're headed toward the judgment throne of God. That's a fact.

III. I CANNOT CHOSE WHAT God put in the Bible:

- A. There are some that come to the Bible with their minds made up as to what they would like the Bible to say and what they want to believe.
1. On the other hand a good student of the Bible will take the word of God at his word. They will study it responsibly, faithfully, and rightly divide it's content.
 2. We want to get out of the bible what God said and let that be our faith. The plan of salvation can change me but I cannot change it. Jesus can change me but I cannot change him.
 3. Jesus said in John 8:24, "Unless you believe in me you will die in your sins." In Luke 13:3, Jesus said, "Repent or perish." In Mark 16:16 Jesus said, He who believes and is baptized will be saved."
 4. This is the plan that brings us to Christ and it cannot be changed.
- B. I heard about a lady who did not enjoy discussing baptism. She was upset about baptism.
1. She did not like talking about it, and did not like anyone else talking about it. She did not even want to hear a preacher preach about it.
 2. One time at the worship service the preacher preached a whole sermon on baptism. She wanted to leave but was too embarrassed to leave.
 3. So there she was, seated during the entire service. She had to listen to that long, boring, sermon about baptism, she just wanted to get up and go home.
 4. Finally the amen was said, she was walking quickly for the door, unfortunately there was only one door leading outside the auditorium where the preacher was standing.
 5. When she got to him, he reached out his hand, and said "glad you came," then she took hold of his hand and said, "sir, did you get all of that out of the bible?"
 6. He said, "No, mam," "it's in there to stay." You can't get it out of the bible.
- C. If God put it in the bible it's going to stay in the bible. Whenever God says something it stays said.
1. Whenever God sets something up, Man cannot set it down.
 2. When God comes on the final day, he will come with this book. And we will be judged by what is in this book.

#4: I cannot choose the consequences of my sins.

- A. I can choose to gamble, but I cannot choose the results of my gambling.
1. I can choose to drink but I cannot choose the results of my drinking. I can choose to smoke but I cannot choose the results of my smoking. The bible has made this clear.
 2. Moses said, "your sins will find you out"(Num 32:23). Solomon said, in **Prov 6:28** "Can one walk upon hot coals, and not get his feet burned?"
 3. Paul said in **Gal 6:7-8** "Don't let anyone fool you, God is not mocked for whatever a man sows he will also reap."
 4. Hosea said, "They sow the wind, And reap the whirlwind" (Hosea 8:7) We can choose to sin, but we cannot choose the results.

#5. I cannot chose the time of the second coming of Christ, or the hour of judgment.

- A. The Lord is going to come and that is a fact. But you would never know it by listening to the news.
1. You would never know it by looking at other Christians. I am convinced that if the Lord came today, we would be surprised. The bible does not tell us when he is going to come.
 2. The only figure the Bible uses, is the thief in the night (1 Thess **5:2**) **2 Peter 3:10**
 3. What does the phrase “thief in the night” mean? It means that Jesus comes he will come unexpectedly and suddenly.
 4. We can know when a tornado or a hurricane is coming, but when Jesus arrives it will be without warning. I don’t know when Jesus is coming. It could be during the service.
 5. It could be at the end of your day. It could be the moment you step into your vehicle an all of the sudden the end of time has occurred.
- B. I cannot choose when Jesus comes back or the hour of judgment, but I can choose to be ready.
1. The world is not my home and I am looking forward to meeting my savior. As you put up the tent pegs of your life, don’t put them down too deeply because you are not going to stay.

6. I cannot choose the length of eternity.

- A. Do you know how long eternity is? The translators have a hard time with this phrase.
1. The phrase, forever and ever are found in revelation 20:10. What is it saying? Without end, without end, without end, without end.” Do you ever use that type of language?
 2. We do it all the time. When you waiting for someone who is late you say, “I’ve been waiting, waiting and waiting.”
 3. You did not have to say it that way, but you wanted to get the message across. God is trying to get through to us that Eternity is forever, ever.
 4. If you have a flat tire you can fix it. If you have a head ache, you can take an asprin. But if you go into eternity unprepared to meet God, you have made an eternal mistake.
 5. It cannot be changed. Eternity is without end. Without end, without end.....I can decide to be ready for eternity, but I cannot decide the length of eternity.

7. I cannot chose the horrors of hell.

- A. In America we are fond of saying, “don’t tell me about hell.” Tell me about the meek and lowly Jesus.
1. But do you know that we learn the most about hell from the meek and lowly Jesus. The word, ghenna” was used by Jesus more than anyone else in the N.T.
 2. He said, “would you like to know how large hell is? It’s is like a lake of fire. He said, would you like to know the confinement of hell? It’s like a furnace of fire.
 3. He said would you like to know the overwhelming nature of it? It’s like a baptism of fire.

4. He said would like to know the horror of it? It's a place of outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Those words came from the meek and lowly Jesus.
5. Hell will be as horrible as heaven is beautiful. I cannot chose the horror of hell.

8. I cannot chose the bliss of heaven.

A. I love the song "how beautiful heaven must be.

1. Rev. 21:4 says "There is no more death and no more sin. Think about how wonderful that is. There will be no more Devil to fight and no more temptations to overcome.
2. There are no cemeteries up there because people don't die. There are no hospitals up there because up there people don't get sick.
3. There are no rest homes up there because people never get tired. Not only do will we be redeemed, but we will also have an intimate fellowship with God, and with the angels of heaven.

9. I cannot choose the results of my preaching.

We can preach, teach and pray, but there comes a point where all we can say is "This is the line I cannot cross."

1. I wish I could be baptized for you, if you haven't been baptized but I can't. You must decide what you are going to do about the teachings you have heard.
2. I can preach it, but I cannot choose the results of my preaching.

Close: In Rev 3:20, Jesus is pictured as the perfect gentleman.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

Jesus says "If you hear my knock, if you hear my invitation, and you open the door, I will come in to you.

I will come in as the guest and you will be the host, and then I will turn the table, and I will become the host, and you will be the guest. I will come in and eat with you.

But he respects your ability to choose. He says you must decide to open the door. The handle is on the inside I will knock, I will plead, I will invite, I will forewarn, but I will not smash in the door. You will have to open it and allow me to come in.

B. Then on the final page of the bible, Rev 22:17, God closes his revelation to man saying,

1. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is thirsty come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."
2. Those of us who have heard the gospel and have received it, we too join, with the spirit and the bride, saying, come. Anybody who is thirsty for God, let him come. Now is the time

You can respond my meeting with our leaders in the back or you can meet me in the front.