

“Choose You This Day!”

Joshua 24:14-15

Intro. – Max Williams was stopped in Speedway, IN by police and was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. They took Williams to the station and allowed him to make one telephone call. He made this call and within minutes the phones were ringing off the wall. Townspeople were calling to complain they had no water – their water had been cut off. Eventually police remembered the guy they had arrested for drunk driving, that his name was Max Williams and that Max Williams was the supervisor for the City Water Dept.

Eric Edmonds of Virginia Beach was determined to lose weight. He went to Humana Hospital Bayside and had his stomach stapled. This procedure simply shrinks the size of the stomach. But within forty-eight hours after the surgery Edmonds snuck out of his room and raided the hospital refrigerator. He ate so much he burst his staples. Edmonds chose to sue the hospital for \$250,000 for “failure to keep their refrigerators locked!”

Let me use these two individuals to help illustrate the idea that every one of us make choices every day. What determines how you make the choices you make? What process do you consciously or unconsciously go through in making the decisions you make? Does truth play a key role or does truth even matter?

Purpose: to better see how truth is central in our making right decisions

Joshua knew his days were numbered and having a concern for Israel’s well being he calls the people together for some final instructions. Note, Joshua’s concern is in the lack of commitment on Israel’s part. Thus, Joshua says, “*Choose you this day...*” In short, make your decision to remain faithful to the Lord!

I THERE IS A CHOICE THAT MUST BE MADE

- Joshua makes clear that “this choice” is “The Choice” – a choice having bearing on all other choices!

A. This Choice is Clear (“Whom Will You Serve?”)

1. Who will be *the authority in your life* – i.e. who will have final say in your life...
2. Who will be *the benefactor of your life* – i.e. who will have honor as a result of your life...
3. Who will be *the Master of your life* – i.e. who will you turn to for council, guidance, wisdom...

This choice will be the determining factor in the rest of your life – i.e. Who will be Lord of your life?

B. The Selections Are Few

1. Joshua makes clear the matter of making our choice has been simplified – but two choices:
2. The Lord God of all is given as one of the two choices:
 - a. here Joshua says “*serve HIM*”
 - b. Joshua knew this was the choice to make... too many blessings come to him from the Lord!
3. Foreign gods are given as another choice:
 - a. Joshua says, “*...if it’s disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord...*” serve other gods...
 - b. Satan is the leader of this choice (2 Cor 4:4 “*god of this world...*”; Eph 2:2 “*prince of the power of air.*”) -- becomes clear through Scripture, our choices in this “Choice” are limited to two! “Whom will it be?” is what Joshua is asking. There is a choice that must be made!

II THERE IS URGENCY IN THIS CHOICE

- all though the following is not specifically mentioned, it certainly is alluded to by Joshua:

A. One or the Other Will be Chosen

1. I.e. there will be no *fence straddlers* or *middle of the roaders* – either for Christ or against Him!
2. Romans 6:16 “*Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey – whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness.*”
3. John 8:34 “*Jesus replied, ‘I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.’*”

4. 2 Peter 2:19 *“They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity – for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.”*

By what are you overcome – Christ or Satan? Be assured it is one or the other!

B. Eternity is Involved

1. Those who choose to be slave to Satan are given several promises:
 - a. promise to be their leader... Satan’s intent is to take as many to hell with him as he can...
 - b. promise to be tormented day and night with no relief (Revelation 20:10) *“And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”*
2. Those who choose to be slaves to Christ are given several promises:
 - a. Revelation 21:2-4 *“I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the thrones saying, ‘Now the dwelling of God is with me, and He will live with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the older order of things has passed away.’”*
 - b. Revelation 22:3-5 *“No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and His servants will serve Him. They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign forever and ever.”*

C. Time Limitation in Making This Choice

1. It’s a known fact that the passing of time closes some doors to free choice:
 - Illus. – man in rowboat on Niagara River. He is headed for the falls. Just how far can he go before reaching the point from which he could not return safely? Here’s the point - somewhere down stream you lose the power of choice!
2. Such is the case in choosing whether or not to follow Christ. Sometime in the future all will lose the opportunity to choose – physical death or the second coming of Christ.

Such decisions are most urgent! Too much is at stake to take this lightly! We must choose *this day!*

III THERE IS AN EXAMPLE IN THIS CHOICE

- Joshua directs our attention in this matter by emphatically declaring his personal commitment:

A. He Resolves This Choice for Himself

1. Commitment (service) to Christ I hardly *beneath* anyone --- to be great must become a servant...
2. There is no pain or burden to commit one’s whole being to Christ – anything He would ask of us we are more than capable of doing and/or giving.”
3. One gives up no “liberties” to be slave to Christ:
 - a. there are no liberties apart from Christ: 2 Corinthians 3:17 *“Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”*
 - b. there is freedom only by being *in Christ*: Galatians 5:1 *“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.”*

B. He Resolves This Choice for His House

- “house” = family, servants and those under his care and influence:
 1. Joshua was the ruler over Israel: yet, he didn’t use this as an excuse for neglecting his family...
 2. Shows Joshua wouldn’t send his house in a direction he himself would not be willing to go...
 3. Joshua was a true leader (especially for his house) – made the choice and stuck by it!

C. He Resolves This Choice No Matter What Others Do

1. Though Israel chose to revolt against God – Joshua and his house adhered to their commitment...
2. Application is clear – those committed to God must not do the following:
 - a. must not mind being in the minority...

- b. must not mind swimming upstream...
- c. must not do as most do, but do what God's will is = TRUTH

Must choose this day to serve Him and Him alone!

Conclusion: I know the following to be true. An individual living in Rush County, IN was not faithfully attending worship time. Preacher and another man of the congregation called upon this individual... In the course of the conversation this man said, "I became a Christian, but I didn't make any promises!" Truth of the matter is, in becoming a Christian one makes the biggest promise of their lives – to live for Him who died for them!