

Turning Points in Life—Choices We Have To Make!

Joshua's first appearance on the pages of Scripture required him to choose to be submissive to Moses and lead the Israelites in battle (Ex. 17:9-10). He was a young man (Ex. 33:11) when he was chosen to become Moses' servant shortly following the exodus from Egypt. About 18 months later he was chosen to be one of the twelve who spied out the Promised Land. Then, he made a choice to exercise great faith in God, even though He had to stand alone with Caleb against the majority.

Upon Moses' death, He chose again to be obedient to God and serve Him faithfully. Over a period of about 60 years he led the Israelites in conquering the enemy and settling the land according to God's directions. "Old and stricken in years" (Joshua 13:1), he was approaching the end of his life. First, he called the leaders of Israel before him (Josh. 23:1-2), and then all the people (24:1) to speak his last words, which are among the most important he ever spoke.

In his conclusion, he challenged them to make a choice about their future. It appears that those of his own generation made wise choices (Josh. 24:31), but things changed with later generations (Judges 2:10) and Israel entered a state of lawless decline.

Today, the choices we make are important, and they affect other people of both today and tomorrow! Let us consider the issues Joshua set before the people as they faced a very important choice...maybe we can learn from them. Will we make choices that please God, choices that allow Him to bless us?

I. THE ANATOMY OF MAKING CHOICES

- A. Considering Critical Information**
- B. Deciding What We Really Want—What we really want is what we will get!**
- C. Recognizing That All Choices Have Consequence—Choose Wisely!**

II. CRITICAL FACTORS OF DECISION MAKING

- A. The Experience Factor: Remember who we are "*you have seen*"** Joshua 23:3
 - 1. In God's law we have seen the authority of God active in our lives
 - 2. In God's actions we have experienced the love of God
 - 3. Apply the lessons of our past to have success in our future
- B. The Heart Factor "*cleave*"** Joshua 23:8
 - 1. Pay attention to my heart and guard it Deut. 5:29; 6:5-6; 8:14,17; Jer. 5:23-24; 17:9-10
 - 2. What we love in our heart is expressed in our choices and actions
Deut. 6:7-9; Matt. 12:35; 15:18-19; James 1:13-15
- C. The Responsibility Factor "*take heed therefore unto yourselves*"** Joshua 23:11

III. CHOICES PRODUCE CONSEQUENCES

- A. God Has Given Us the Freedom to Choose, and Choose We Must** Joshua 24:1
 - 1. God allows us to reject Him even after He warns us 1 John 2:15-17
 - 2. God offers us a choice and implores us to trust Him John 6:66-69
- B. God Has Proven Himself and Passionately Responds to Our Choices** Joshua 24:17-18
- C. God Allows Us To Have The Consequences of Our Choices** Joshua 24:19-20
- D. We, not God, Are Responsible For Our Choices and Consequences**