

Choose Wisely!

By Dawn Wilson

When I started studying the topic of choices, I searched for the word “choice” and “choose” in the Bible. I found few references, so I assumed God didn’t have much to say on the subject. In a true “duh” moment, I suddenly realized that every command God made, and every truth principle taught by Paul, Solomon, David, and so many others, was an opportunity for choice.

For example, Haggai 1:7 says, “Give careful thought to your ways.” There’s a choice. We can choose to give careful thought to our ways, or we can choose to walk haphazardly through life.

We are told to “pray without ceasing.” We can choose to pray about everything in our lives and stay in intimate communication with God, or we can live like the fool in Proverbs who was arrogant and self-sufficient, living as if there is no God.

So, the Bible is full of opportunities to make choices. We can make wise choices because we have the infallible Word of God and the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Do you remember the film *Indiana Jones and the last Crusade*? Indy, played by Harrison Ford, was looking for the Holy Grail—which in the movie was the chalice of Christ. Unfortunately, a Nazi also wanted the ancient cup for Hitler. Later in the plot, all of the characters ended up in a musty cave with an old knight. Referring to a display of many different cups and goblets, the Knight said, “You must choose. But choose wisely.” When the Nazi, Donovan, chose the gold, jeweled cup, and drank from it, he died. The aged knight said, “He chose poorly.” Then Indy chose a simple carpenter’s cup, and drank from it, gaining strength. The Knight said, “You have chosen wisely.”

That is God’s message to us: “Choose wisely ... choose wisely every day, in every part of your day.”

Choices involve thinking. Proverbs 23:7 says, “For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.” In other words, our choices are the voices of our hearts. What we think about eventually affects our beliefs and behavior. Making wise choices isn’t simply a matter of knowing what were supposed to do. The problem is we don’t *do* what we know were supposed to do. God wants us to know his heart, understand his will, and obey!

David was called “a man after God’s own heart” because he was wholly devoted to discovering ways to please God and bring him joy. In contrast, Saul was so full of himself that he crowded out God’s purposes in his life. In other words, Saul chose poorly; David chose wisely.

Choices Reveal Who We Are

Our choices, especially those choices we make when no one holds us accountable, reveal our heart, our character, our priorities and values, and ultimately, our relationship with God. There are hundreds of daily choices that we can make to strengthen our walk with God, more effectively serve others, and build a life of excellence. For example, James 4:8 says, “Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.” That’s an opportunity for a positive choice with a promised benefit! We can choose to respect our husbands, minister to a sick friend, brush our teeth—so many wise choices.

In the same way, there are hundreds of daily choices that we can make that will weaken our relationship with God, feed our natural selfishness, and tear down our character and effectiveness. Something as simple as eating half a bag of cookies, not taking time to talk to God, spending more than we make, or hitting the snooze alarm a half dozen times—so many foolish choices.

Some women think that they will play it safe by not making any choices at all. But not making a choice is still making a choice. It is making the choice not to choose, proactively, the best and wisest choice.

Every choice we make creates a new version of who we are. In other words, we are designing our lives through the power of our choices. Eleanor Roosevelt once said, “We shape our lives and we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately our own responsibility.” Our choices shape our future.

And our choices aren’t limited to us. Women have tremendous powers of influence—God created us to be nurturers, and our choices affect others’ lives.

I love the story the Barbara Rainey of FamilyLife tells about Pete Flaherty, mayor of Pittsburgh, and his wife, Nancy. They were standing on the sidewalk, surveying a city construction project, when one of the laborers at the site called out to them.

“Nancy, remember me?” he asked. “We used to date in high school.”

Later, Pete teased her. “Aren't you glad you married me? Just think, if you had married him, you would be the wife of a construction worker.”

Nancy looked at him and said, “No, if I'd married him, *he* would be the *mayor of Pittsburgh!*”

God’s Love Motivates Us

Paul spoke of being “constrained” by God’s love. It is God’s great heart of love that motivates us to desire to choose Him, and to choose what He desires for us.

The Christian woman who is constrained by God’s love will want to align her choices with the heart of God. This is expressed in Psalm 26:3. David says, “For your love is ever before me, and I walk continually in your truth.”

In other words, when we focus on God’s love—when we become women “after God’s own heart”—we will make choices every day to keep in step with God’s revelation of truth, the holy Word of God.

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