

Choices We Must Make

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Introduction

The Scripture that we read for the 6th Sunday of Holy Joyful Fifty Days is from the Book of **John 16:23-33**. It has a verse that I would really like to reflect on:

✠ “Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me”
(**John 16:32**)

This verse tells us that the disciples were faced by choices that they must make. The choice that God warned them about is that they will leave Him alone. It was a warning about a wrong choice because God said it before it happened. The disciples, as we all do, made the wrong choice and left Him alone on the day He was arrested at Gethsemane.

How can we avoid making wrong choices? Moses gave us a unique answer in the Book of Deuteronomy:

✠ “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil... I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live”
(**Deuteronomy 30:15, 19**)

However, in our everyday routine, we are faced by many choices that affect us and others in our lives. When God created us, He gave us free will, meaning the freedom to make important and eternal life decisions and choices. With the freedom of choice also comes responsibility. So, what are the different types of choices that we make and must make in our life, here are just a few.

Types of Choices

1. We choose the kind of name we have:

✠ “A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches” (**Proverbs 22:1**)

These names could be love, humbled, meek, kind, gentle, etc.

2. We choose the people we associate with:

✠ “By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin” (**Hebrews 11:24-25**)

So, would you rather choose God’s path even if you suffer walking in His difficult way and be counted with the few who will go through; as the Lord said:

- † “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:13-14)
- † “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from’” (Luke 13:24-25)

Or, do you rather associate yourself with worldly friends, against the teaching of the Bible:

- † “Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits” (1 Corinthians 15:33)

3. We choose whether to know God as He taught us or as we want Him to be according to our pleasures:

- † “Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” (Matthew 16:13)

As the Son of Man, meaning on behalf of man, we should follow His footstep and live the life of holiness, prayer, fasting, love, and sacrifices.

4. We choose whom we will serve:

- † “And 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” (Joshua 24:15)

Remember that God chose you, as He said:

- † “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you” (John 15:16)

Would you reject His love and choice to make you His precious child and go after the world, which will perish with all its lusts and pride? Please read what the Bible says about this world:

- † “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world -- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life -- is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever” (1 John 2:15-17)

4. We choose to be an instrument or an ornament:

- † “Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as

instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace” (**Romans 6:6-14**)

St. Paul teaches us that we should choose to Be Instruments of Righteousness rather than Ornaments of Emptiness. An ornament is something to be looked at; something that brings attention to itself. An instrument, on the other hand, is a TOOL that has a purpose; it is used by its master to achieve a purpose, aim, goal, or intent.

Bad Choices

† “And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram’s livestock and the herdsmen of Lot’s livestock. The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land. So Abram said to Lot: ‘Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren. Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left.’ And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar. Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other. Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom. But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord” (**Genesis 13:7-13**)

Let me share with you three aspects of the choices of Lot

1. Lot’s Choice Involved Sight

Lot chose the land that LOOKED best to him. He never considered his godly uncle, just himself and he never consulted God in Prayer; he practiced humanism. There are five Points of Humanism that you ought to know. They include Atheism; Evolution; Amoralism (nothing right nor wrong; no absolutes); Man controls his/her own destiny; and Need for One World Government.

2. Lot’s Choice Invited Sin

It is always dangerous to leave God out of our Choices. Lot didn’t intend to backslide into deep dark sin; it happened gradually. This is Satan’s way. He never exposes his way right away. He waits and waits and then brings destruction. He is patience. What else does he have more than time? He doesn’t sleep or rest. He only roams the land to find a prey to destroy.

Lot invited sin when he left God out of the Choice. When he lifted up his eyes; he chose the Plain of Jordan. He Separated Himself from his godly family and pitched His tent toward Sodom.

Nothing seems to be all that bad at this point – Right! The Scripture says:

† “But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord”

St. Peter described what happened to Lot after he made such bad choices - vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

✠ “For that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds” (**2 Peter 2:8**)

3. Lot’s Choice Included Sorrow

Lot lost his burden for souls - Not even 10 righteous people found in the city where he was (**Genesis 18:32**).

- He lost his decency - Offered his own daughters to the homosexual men of Sodom (**Genesis 19:8**).
- He lost his testimony - His own sons-in-law mocked him (**Genesis 19:14**).
- He lost his family - His wife came out of Sodom, but Sodom was still in her. Later on, his own daughters get him drunk and lay with him bearing two enemies of Israel- Moab (Moabites) and Ben-Ammi (Ammonites) (**Genesis 19:26-38**).
- Lot lost his JOY!

Other Example of People Making Bad Choices

1. Adam and Eve chose to disobey God.
2. Cain chose to offer a sacrifice unacceptable to God.
3. David chose to commit adultery with Bath-sheba.
4. Judas chose to betray the Lord Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.
5. Pilate chose to allow the Lord Jesus to be crucified.
6. The Jews chose to set Barabas free instead of the Lord Jesus.
7. Felix chose to wait until some more convenient season.
8. Rich man chose to live life without God and woke up in hades.

Conclusion

What choice will you make today? Would you like to live in peace or away from peace? Listen to what the psalmist says:

✠ “Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it” (**Psalm 34:14**).

Would you like to gather your family around you and around the family altar, or would you rather have the TV to be the Dad and the refrigerator to be the Mom.

Would you like to instill in your family the Word of God, or do you rather instill the world and all its pleasures.

The Choices are YOURS to make!