

Choose Wisely Ps. 1:1-6

CHOICE

During World War II, Winston Churchill was forced to make a painful choice. The British secret service had broken the Nazi code and informed Churchill that the Germans were going to bomb Coventry. He had two alternatives: (1) evacuate the citizens and save hundreds of lives at the expense of indicating to the Germans that the code was broken; or (2) take no action, which would kill hundreds but keep the information flowing and possibly save many more lives. Churchill had to choose and followed the second course.

Klyne Snodgrass, *Between Two Truths - Living with Biblical Tensions*, 1990, Zondervan Publishing House, p. 179.

When the author walks onto the stage, the play is over. God is going to invade, all right; but what is the good of saying you are on His side then, when you see the whole natural universe melting away like a dream and something else comes crashing in? This time it will be God without disguise; something so overwhelming that it will strike either irresistible love or irresistible horror into every creature. It will be too late then to choose your side. That will not be the time for choosing; It will be the time when we discover which side we really have chosen, whether we realized it before or not. Now, today, this moment, is our chance to choose the right side.

C.S. Lewis.

The words of Eleanor Roosevelt ring true: One's philosophy is not best expressed in words. It is expressed in the choices one makes. In the long run, we shape our lives and we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately our responsibility.

Tim Kimmel, *Little House on the Freeway*, p. 143.

When you have to make a choice and don't make it, that is in itself a choice.

William James.

"When I was a boy, my father, a baker, introduced me to the wonders of song," tenor Luciano Pavarotti relates. "He urged me to work very hard to develop my voice. Arrigo Pola, a professional tenor in my hometown of Modena, Italy, took me as a pupil. I also enrolled in a teachers college. On graduating, I asked my father, 'Shall I be a teacher or a singer?'"

"'Luciano,' my father replied, 'if you try to sit on two chairs, you will fall between them. For life, you must choose one chair.'"

"I chose one. It took seven years of study and frustration before I made my first professional appearance. It took another seven to reach the Metropolitan Opera. And now I think whether it's laying bricks, writing a book--whatever we choose--we should give ourselves to it. Commitment, that's the key. Choose one chair."

Guideposts.

A pastor I know, Stephey Bilynskyj, starts each confirmation class with a jar full of beans. He asks his students to guess how many beans are in the jar, and on a big pad of paper writes down their estimates. Then, next to those estimates, he helps them make another list: Their favorite songs. When the lists are complete, he reveals the actual number of beans in the jar. The whole class looks over their guesses, to see which estimate was closest to being right. Bilynskyj then turns to the list of favorite songs. "And which one of these is closest to being right?" he asks. The students protest that there is no "right answer"; a person's favorite song is purely a matter of taste. Bilynskyj, who holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from Notre Dame asks, "When you decide what to believe in terms of your faith, is that more like guessing the number of beans, or more like choosing your favorite song?" Always, Bilynskyj says, from old as well as young, he gets the same answer: Choosing one's faith is more like choosing a favorite song. When Bilynskyj told me this, it took my breath away. "After they say that, do you confirm them?" I asked him. "Well," smiled Bilynskyj, "First I try to argue them out of it."

Tim Stafford, *Christianity Today*, September 14, 1992, p. 36.

He who chooses the beginning of a road chooses the place it leads to. It is the means that determine the end.

H.E. Fosdick.

Film maker Walt Disney was ruthless in cutting anything that got in the way of a story's pacing. Ward Kimball, one of the animators for Snow White, recalls working 240 days on a 4 1/2 minute sequence in which the dwarfs made soup for Snow White and almost destroyed the kitchen in the process. Disney thought it was funny, but he decided the scene stopped the flow of the picture, so out it went. When the film of our lives is shown, will it be as great as it might be? A lot will depend on the multitude of "good" things we need to eliminate to make way for the great things God wants to do through us.

Kenneth Langley.

HUMOR

British prime minister Herbert Asquith once spent a weekend at the Waddesdon estate of the 19th-century Rothschild family. One day, as Asquith was being waited on at teatime by the butler, the following conversation ensued:

"Tea, coffee, or a peach from off the wall, sir?"

"Tea, please," answered Asquith.

"China, India, or Ceylon, sir?" asked the butler.

"China, please."

"Lemon, milk, or cream, sir?"

"Milk, please," replied Asquith.

"Jersey, Hereford, or Shorthorn, sir?" asked the butler.

Today in the Word, May 5, 1993.

God's Way/Other Way Direction

Men who live in the past remind me of a toy I'm sure all of you have seen. The toy is a small wooden bird called the "Floogie Bird." Around the Floogie Bird's neck is a label reading, "I fly backwards, I don't care where I'm going. I just want to see where I've been."

The Words of Harry S. Truman, selected by Robert J. Donovan.

The Wrong Way

In November, 1975, 75 convicts started digging a secret tunnel designed to bring them up at the other side of the wall of Saltillo Prison in northern Mexico. On April 18, 1976, guided by pure genius, they tunneled up into the nearby courtroom in which many of them had been sentenced. The surprised judges returned all 75 to jail.

Campus Life, September, 1980.

A man on a flight across America in 1976 rose from his seat, drew a gun and took the stewardess hostage. "Take me to Detroit," he said. "We're already going to Detroit," she replied. "Oh...good," he said and sat down again.

Source Unknown.