

## DECISION MAKING; CHOOSE THIS DAY

(Joshua 24:-3a;14-25) John 6:56-59

Life is made up of decisions and choices. Some are simple and others are complex. Some decisions are unconsciously made; others are carefully thought through. Not making a decision is a decision too. The quality of our lives depends on the decisions wisely made. Choices foolishly made can make our lives a living hell. So, the power to choose is also the power to bear responsibility or liability. Choosing is a sacred right and a sacred duty. The consequences of right or wrong choices can be generational. We rise or fall because of the decisions we make.

Think about it, one chooses to marry another person and bears the responsibility and even the liabilities of that one choice.

Even shopping at a Department store brings confusion to because they can't choose. A watchful eye of a trained sales person will be following you to say, *May I help you?*

God gives each one of us the right to choose----It is called FREE WILL. The first couple Adam and Eve had the same right and they made a wrong choice, we are suffering the generational curse and consequences to this day.

God speaking to Israel in Deut. 30:19 said, "*I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. So, choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants."*

 (That's generational, is it not?)

At Shechem, which is one of the texts for today, Joshua charged the people of Israel saying, "*Choose for yourselves, this day whom you will serve."*

 (Joshua 24:15). The key words are, ***choose for yourselves***, which means that the decision is personal. Second, they were not given waiting or probationary time; they were given ***one day***. The reason for this is that we are not promised of tomorrow; tomorrow never comes. It was up to us to choose TODAY to serve God the Almighty or other gods.

Likewise in today's Gospel (Jn. 6:66), when many followers of Jesus became offended for inviting them to *eat his flesh and drink his blood*, which sounded like cannibalism to them and on the issue of *His divine origins*, ---as *the bread that came down from heaven* and they left Him, Jesus had to ask his most inner group, the Twelve, *Are you also going to leave?*

In all these cases, the follower is asked to make a choice. An individual choice can affect an entire generation. A person must choose God or the gods he/she will serve. There many gods to choose from, some are ancestral gods, others personal gods, others are consumer gods, and money ranks higher in list of gods.

We are called to determine our allegiance today, either to God or to gods.

For as Jesus taught, *Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* Mt.6:21.

What do we treasure the most in our lives? If we know, that treasure is our god!

Admit it or not, your god is whatever controls your life and there are many such gods that control our lives.

The easiest way to identify these gods is on our Bank or Credit Card statement. We may be fully aware of the number of gods we serve, but they come to surface in moments of quiet reflection and prayer. They're found and exposed in habitual or obsessive patterns of thought or preoccupations. Our Mental traffic is filled with many such gods.

The most tempting god is the ME in me; a god who makes me feel different or special. Whatever pleases me, what appeals to me, what makes me feel good, that's my god.

Joshua has idea for us all when he says, *CHOOSE THIS DAY!*

Then he separates himself saying, "...*AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE; WE WILL SERVE THE LORD.*" Joshua chose for himself and his family to "*SERVE THE LORD.*" He articulated his allegiance openly to God before the congregation of Israel. He made his choice known!

False gods can communal, tribal and even generations. For this reason the Jews were summoned to make a decision. "...*Joshua assembled all the tribes of Israel at Shechem. .... the elders, leaders, judges, and officials of Israel...they represented themselves before God.*" 24:1. They represented themselves to make a choice for their people.

We are put into leadership roles to represent the people and to decide on their behalf. Joshua had to answer on behalf of his family. Peter had to answer on behalf of the Twelve, saying, *Lord, to whom shall we go? You've the words of eternal life...you are the Holy One of God!* ( Jn.6:66).

Choosing to serve God is not a onetime decision. Decision-making is an ongoing thing. It is easy to slip away into quiet rebellion and abandon God in daily temptations. We must choose to serve God daily and daily declare our allegiance

to God. If we chose God the Almighty, there is always a renewal of Covenant to be made or the re-affirmation of our commitment to God as a daily exercise.

Jesus' teachings may look challenging to us. He asks each one of us, *Do you want to leave too?*

None of us is forced into discipleship at all. Even as I speak, Peter is not there to answer on our behalf. We are of age and are already confirmed into faith. We are no longer seekers being taken by every wind of doctrine. We are in Christ. Christ is our Lord. He is our Savior. He is our Shepherd. He has set us free with His blood. We are his.

*Where else shall we go? Peter asks. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. (Jn. 14:6). For salvation is found in no one else, (and) ...there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved but the name of Jesus. Choose this day! Stay the course! Abide in Him! Re-commit yourself to Him. Renew your covenant with Him. Yes, *today when you hear his voice, do not harden your heart.....For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" Rom 10:13.  
Amen.*