

## **The Power of Choice**

In order to get where you are or where you are going, you have to make some choices. As adults, we are responsible for our own lives, the choices we make, and consequences that come with those choices—whether good or bad.

***Life is the sum total of the decisions that you have made.***

In Deuteronomy 30:19 it says:

“This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life and he will give you many years in the land he swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob”.

This statement was actually made by Moses as he was nearing his final stages as leader of the children of Israel. Moses wanted the children of Israel to choose life so that God could continue to bless them as he swore to their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He challenged them to choose life so that they can continue in this blessing.

***Life is the sum total of the choices that you and I have made.***

As you read about the children of Israel and the choices they made, you will see the sum total of the choices that they made and the consequences they faced when they turned their backs on God along with the blessings received when they chose Him. Yes, there are times in the bible when God’s own, turned their backs on him and chose to worship idols or other gods.

The power to choose was never taken away from them, nor will it ever be taken from us. God has implanted a spirit in us to choose. It’s a powerful spirit; it’s a good spirit when used for good. But then again, you have the choice to choose good or bad. God wants us to come to him and choose freely and willingly. He wants us to make conscious decisions to choose Him and to follow Him. Everything in life is based on choices, and the best choice you could ever make in your life is to choose Jesus as your Lord and Personal Savior.

Let me give you an example of what took place when one of the Children of Israel made a very selfish choice. That man was Achan, he came from the tribe of Judah. Reference: Joshua 7.

***Life is the sum total of the choices that you and I have made.***

Achan’s disobedience caused almost two thousand people their lives. After the walls of Jericho fell, God gave the Israelites strict orders to destroy everything and not keep anything. Well, Achan’s love for material things was greater than his love for God. He stole some items for his own personal use and gratification. He blatantly chose to sin against God. As a result, when

the children of Israel went to fight against Ai; they were defeated terribly. This was their first defeat—not even Joshua understood why this happened. God punished all because of one. God was not with them when they went up against their enemy in battle; simply because of the evil choice of one man.

***Life is the sum total of the choices that you and I have made.***

Achan's second mistake was to underestimate God by refusing to take his commands seriously. Achan's choices and actions may seem insignificant, but the effects of his sin were felt by the entire nation, especially his family. When he finally confesses, he and his family were stoned to death and all his belongings were burned to ashes.

Like Achan, we must realize that our choices will affect more people than ourselves. Beware of the temptation to rationalize your sins by saying that they are too small or too personal to hurt anyone but you.

Here is how we all can make the power of choices work in our favor:

1. Everything in our lives is based on choices.
  - a. We have to live with the consequences of our choices, whether good or bad.
  - b. The more correct choices we make, the better our lives will be.
2. We must know where weaknesses are and stay away from them.
3. Good choices are made when they are based not just on inspiration, but on information.
  - a. Avoid making decisions when emotions are involved.
  - b. Save emotions until after the victory.
4. You can't tell everyone about the choices you've made or will make
5. When we set standards for our lives, we will know what choices to make.

Final Principle:

***A person who hates knowledge will always be captive to wrong choices.***