

## DECISIONS

### Int.

1. Aim: To show that we are responsible for the decisions we make in life.
2. Joel 3:14 - "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision."
  - a. Joel was a prophet of God
  - b. He was sent to the southern kingdom of Judah. He speaks of judgments upon the people of God, such as locusts, drought and fire, for failure to repent.
  - c. His message is a call to repentance.
  - d. They needed to make a decision !
3. We are all walking through the valley of decision.
  - a. Life is a series of decisions. To live is to make decisions. We make hundreds of them every day.
  - b. Most are routine decisions but some are big ones. How do we make these decisions?
    - i. Some will not make a decision unless they consult the stars, others consult their friends. Astrology !
    - ii. Some refuse to make decisions at all and are simply washed to and fro.
  - c. Two thoughts about making decisions:
    - i. We cannot overly delay making a choice - an old expression says: "Opportunity knocks only once." is often true and that time frequently skips by us while we are still pondering.
    - ii. Once we make decisions we should attempt to abide by them. One sure sign of maturity is the ability to abide by and live with decisions.
4. We should follow God's advice in making good decisions.

5. Joshua 24:15 "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."
6. Learning to make wise decisions is a most important skill.

## Discussion

### I. WE ARE FREE MORAL AGENTS

#### A. We have the power of choice

1. Rev. 22:17 "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. **And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.**"
2. God made us as humans who have the ability to choose
  - a. We can choose to obey God's Commands
  - b. But we can also choose to disobey - disregard
  - c. God does not force anyone to serve Him!!!

#### B. Fatalism contradicts the power of choice

1. Fatalism is the view that the future is already set and therefore, that human deliberation and actions are pointless because things have to be the way they have to be. The Events of Life are Inevitable!
2. One ancient argument, called the idle argument, went like this:
  - (1) \* If it is fated for you to recover from your illness, then you will recover whether you call a doctor or not.
  - (2) \* Likewise, if you are fated not to recover, you will not do so even if you call a doctor.

(3) \* So, calling a doctor makes no difference.<sup>1</sup>

3. Fatalism is a belief that we have to accept the outcome of events, and that we cannot do anything that will change the outcome, because events are determined by something over which we have no control.<sup>2</sup>
4. This is the belief that "Whatever will be will be".
5. This doctrine says that everything is planned for man through destiny, a dead, blind power, and that nothing that one is or can do figures into this picture.<sup>3</sup>
6. Examples of this doctrine:
  - a. Someone gets killed in an accident
  - b. People will say It was his/her time to go -- their time was up and there was nothing they could do about it
  - c. It was their time to die. It would not have mattered where they were or what they were doing.

C. What is wrong with this doctrine of Fatalism?

1. If the doctrine of Fatalism is true then we are just programmed computers doing what God has programmed us to do.
2. This would make us to be like a robot.
3. Fatalism is a pessimistic view of life and avoids the responsibility of trying to make ourselves better or changing life's conditions.<sup>4</sup>
4. If we believe that there is nothing we can do to make life any better then life has no meaning. We have no responsibility for doing anything because it makes no difference.

D. Instead of Fatalism the Bible teaches the Providence of God.

1. Providence is the care and guardianship of God over his people.
  - a. Rm. 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."
  - b. God does not cause all things to happen, because we have a free will and can choose the good or the evil, to choose to obey the laws of God or to disobey them.
2. Providence means that God has the ability to take whatever does happen and use that event to the ultimate accomplishment of his divine purposes.

E. We have the power of choice - we can make decisions. Let us notice some of the choices we have in life.

## **II. CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE**

Josh. 24:15 "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

- A. Many decisions involve an element of either-or <sup>5</sup>
  1. If one chooses one thing he cannot have something else.
  2. If he goes one place he cannot go another.
  3. If one does this he cannot do that.
  4. In the most important decisions of life we have a choice between two things. We must choose one or the other.

B. Two rulers of men - We must choose one or the other **Christ/Satan**

1. Christ -

- a. Mat. 28:18 "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."
- b. 1 Cor. 15:22-25 "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. 24. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet."

2. Satan -

- a. 2 Cor. 4:3-4
- b. Eph. 2:1-2 v. 2 "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"
- c. Eph. 6:11-12

C. Two Foundations **Rock/Sand**

1. Rock

- a. Mt. 7:24-25,
- b. 1 Cor. 3:11 "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."
- c. Eph. 2:19-20 -Jesus is the chief corner-stone

2. Sand

- a. Mt. 7:26-27
- b. Lk. 6:46-49

D. Two ways traveled **Narrow/Broad**1. Narrow - difficult

- a. Mt. 7:13-14
- b. Matt. 7:21-27      Lk. 13:24

2. Broad - easy

- a. Mt. 7:13-14
- b. Mt. 20:16

E. Two Guides for men **God/Man**1. Faith in God

- a. 2 Cor. 5:7 walk by faith not by sight
- b. Rom. 10:17
- c. Heb. 11:6

2. Man's opinion

- a. Prov. 14:12
- b. Mt. 15:8-9
- c. I sa. 55:8-9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. 9. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

F. Two views of Authority **Bible\Creeeds**1. Bible Only -

- a. Deut. 4:2            Prov. 30:6
- b. Rev. 22:18-19
- c. Gal.1:6-9

2. Creeeds of men

- a. 1 Cor. 4:6 "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another."
- b. 2 Tim. 4:3-4 - turn from the truth    -    2 Jn. 9-11

G. Two Doctrines Held **Faith/Faith Only**1. Obedient faith

- a. Heb. 5:8-9
- b. Rom. 6:16-18 "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? 17. But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. 18. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
- c. 1 Pet. 1:22 "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:"

## 2. Faith only

- a. Jas. 2:17,19,
- b. Jas. 2:26 "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."
- c. Jn. 12:42-43

## H. Two Places to die **Lord/Sin**

### 1. In the Lord

- a. Rev. 13:14
- b. 1 Thes. 4:13-18

### 2. Lost in sin

- a. Jn. 8:21,24 "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am [he], ye shall die in your sins."
- b. Ezek. 3:18 "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand."
- c. Ps. 9:17 "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

## I. Two Destinies Await **Heaven/Hell**

### 1. Heaven

- a. Jn. 14:1-3
- b. 2 Cor.5:1 - Rev. 21:1-7

## 2. Hell

- a. Lk. 16:19-31
- b. Mt. 25:41
- c. 2 Thes 1:7

J. It is YOUR CHOICE JOSH 24:15. "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

### Conclusion

1. We must decide to serve God or Mammon - MATT 6:24 "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."
2. We have to decide to either serve God or the world.
3. 1 Kings 18:21. "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."
  - a. Halt - Hesitate
  - b. Halt = ASV "limp between two opinions"
4. Decisions - we have the power of choice
  - a. Life is one decision after another - we must make wise decisions for our eternal destiny will be determined by our decisions in life.
  - b. We as free moral agents have the power of choice - fatalism [which teaches that all events are predetermined] is false.

- c. The Providence of God means that God can make good come of any event.
  - d. Every man is in the valley of decision now.
5. Which road are you traveling? The Broad or Narrow way.

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1. <http://encyclopedia.lockergnome.com/s/b/Fatalism>

2. Copyright© 2001 Alex Scott <http://www.angelfire.com/md2/timewarp/fatalism.html>

3. FHC Lectures 1972 p. 316 "Ps.23: Providence Versus Fatalism" by Charles Williamson

4. FHC Lectures 1972 P. 315-316 "Ps.23: Providence versus Fatalism" by Charles Williamson

5. Firm Foundation - May 28, 1963 p. 339 "Valley of Decision" by Douglas Rohre

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