

June 30, 2019 - Hebrews 11: 23-29 - “When It's Time to Decide”

Introduction:

On May 7, 2015, Academy Award-winning actor Denzel Washington delivered the commencement speech at Dillard University in Louisiana. It was a simple and brief message that focused on choices. He told the college graduates to put God first in everything they do, adding that everything he has accomplished in this life was due to the grace of God. He stated and I quote, “Number one: Put God first. Put God first in everything you do. Everything that you think you see in me. Everything that I’ve accomplished, everything that you think I have – and I have a few things. Everything that I have is by the grace of God. Understand that. It’s a gift.” That is a choice you make.

Choices have consequences, so we need to choose wisely. As Christians we need to learn how to make good choices. We are bombarded daily with choices; many of the choices we are faced with in life are incidental; the shirt or tie I wear, the after shave etc. However others choices can chart the course of a lifetime. It is paramount that we learn how to make the right choices in life because they may have grave consequences for us and others. Frank Borham said, "We make our decisions and then our decisions make us." The quality of your life will be determined by the kind of decisions you make in life.

Next in our list of the heroes of faith is Moses. By the time of Moses, the descendants of Abrahams’ seed; are the Hebrews and have been in Egypt for about 400 years and they are slaves. They are reproducing so rapidly Pharaoh feels they are a threat to his nation. Therefore, when his order for midwives to kill all male Hebrew babies fails, he orders the Egyptians to throw all newborn Hebrew boys into the Nile River (Ex 1:15-22). It is interesting how humanity has come full circle and we once again practice infanticide.

When Moses is born, by faith his parents hide him for three months. They can see God has given them a proper child; therefore, they are not afraid to disobey the king's commandment (11:23). After three months, they can't hide him anymore. To save his life, Moses' mother makes a small basket, coats it with pitch so it will float, and places Moses in it. She then floats it in the Nile River where Pharaoh's daughter comes to bathe. As a result, Moses is adopted by Pharaoh's daughter and grows up in the palace (Ex 2:3-10).

Moses lives as a prince in the Egyptian court until he is forty years old. Then, he must make a choice. Moses' decision reveals three things we must do if we decide to follow God instead of the ways of the world. Reject the world's prestige, pleasures and its pressures.

I. Reject the world's prestige.

1. Moses could have chosen to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, which meant being a prince in Egypt and living a life of luxury. Or, he could opt to be with God's people and live the rest of his life with slaves. By faith, Moses made one dramatic choice midway through his life that set the course for him and ultimately for the entire Hebrew nation. Hebrews 11:24-26

describes that choice: " **By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;** To most this would have been a failure a great fall for Moses. Denzel Washington, said, "If I'm going to fall, I don't want to fall back on anything, except my faith.

2. Moses' choice involved casting off the prestige of the world. He had attained tremendous status and rose to the heights of Egyptian society. He had the power of the Pharaoh's house. Prestige and the wealth of the world were at his grasp.

Moses had been trained in the wisdom of Egypt. He had power, prestige, and fame. It was in that context that he made his choice. "God wanted Moses to lead His people Israel out of Egypt, but He wasn't going to force him. Moses needed to make a choice. He chose to rebel against all the prestige of Egypt and took his place with the Hebrew slaves. He identified with the oppressed and refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Moses put God first!

3. We live in a world intoxicated by prestige. The word "prestige" means "the power to impress." Many want to impress their friends, neighbors, and associates with automobiles, homes, clothes, positions, etc. The desire to give at least the illusion of prosperity causes many to go into debt "up to their eyeballs" all because they worship the god of prestige. Jesus declare, "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. ---Matthew 6:24. In other words, you must decide to totally put God first in life or making money. That means to follow God instead of the ways of the world. Reject the world's prestige and pleasures.

II. Reject the world's pleasures.

1. By faith, Moses chooses to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season (11:25). Living in a palace, Moses could have had all the parties, women, and pleasures money could buy. Yet, he chooses to reject the world's pleasures. Moses' choice led him to turn his back on the pleasures of the world, "choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin" (11:25).

Moses considered "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt" (11:26). He preferred to identify with God. Every believer is anointed and set apart for God. We have to be willing to turn our backs on the world's plenty. Psalm 37:16 says, "**Better is the little of the righteous than the abundance of many wicked.**" But you have to choose righteousness and then let God decide whether you will be rich or poor.

2. There comes a time when we all must decide if we are going to enjoy the pleasures of sin or live for God. Did you know Scripture acknowledges that sin is fun? Job 20:5 says, "The triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the godless momentary." Sin is fun; if it weren't, no one would be tempted to sin. However, sin is only fun for a season-a short time.

The devil can easily lead us into sin when he gets us to focus only on the short term pleasure of sin and forget the long-term pain.

King David experienced worldly pleasure for a season when he committed adultery with Bathsheba. David describes his long-term pain in Psalm 51:3 **For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin [is] ever before me.** For the rest of his life, David lived with the memories of his sin, and so will you and I. Just ask the person hooked on drugs, gambling, alcohol, or sexual immorality if the short-term pleasure is worth the long-term pain? God wants us to reject the world's pleasures because He has our best interests at heart. To make good decisions, reject the world's prestige, pleasures, and ...

III. Reject the world's pressures.

1. The greatest pressure we all face is fear. However, Moses regarded the reproach of Christ [the Messiah] greater riches than the treasures in Egypt because he fixed his attention on his heavenly reward. By faith, Moses also left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger in Hebrews 11:27 it explains how he rejected the world's pressures---as seeing him who is invisible.

2. Fear is the greatest worldly pressure that prevents us from living for God. We are born with only two fears-falling and loud noises.

The rest of our fears are learned, so they can be unlearned. We all regularly face some kind of fear. It may be fear of what people think, of failure, of a boss who wants you to do something unethical or dishonest, etc.

Our culture is rapidly changing, and it wants Christians to change with it. It wants us to talk like the world, think like the world, have the values of the world, etc. The world tries to frighten and intimidate us into changing by calling us "homophobes," "moral dinosaurs," or even criminals. Moses' good decision resulted in the first observance of the Passover (11:28), which Jesus later transformed into the Lord's Supper (Lk 22:14-20).

One result of Moses having faith to make good decisions is the most ~ famous miracle in the Old Testament. Do you know what it is? Read Hebrews 11:29 and explain what happened *by faith*: At times we all face our own "Red Seas," when problems are piled high all around us. We must then decide if we will retreat from God's will for our lives and return to Egypt (our pre-Christian lives) or continue on, trusting God's power, presence, and promises. Moses is still enjoying the riches that God gives to His righteous ones when they leave this world

Conclusion:

It isn't easy to choose against the world. We make that choice first when we come to Christ and choose to follow Him and abide by His principles and avoid the temptations in life that will harm us... Your life is the sum of the choices you have made toward God. We make that choice first when we come to Christ and choose to follow Him and abide by His principles.