

Choices

A common problem for many people is disowning our choices and trying to lay the responsibility for them on someone else. "I had to." "She made me." We are in control of our choices no matter how we feel. Throughout the Scriptures people are reminded of their choices and asked to take responsibility for them.

So, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation whatsoever to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. For if you keep on following it, you will perish. But if through the power of the Holy Spirit you turn from it, and its evil deeds, you will live. (Romans 8)

You must each make up your own mind as to how much you should give. Don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves the person who gives cheerfully. (2 Corinthians 9)

God has something good that He wants us experience every day of our lives. Have we asked Him lately what He wants? Too many times we just do what we feel like doing and that is not how life works. We are to give ourselves to God and to listen to God's voice and then choose to do what God shows us to do. Once in a while we will feel like it and some times we will not. That's not the point. The point is that God gets to tell us through prayer, through the Bible, and through responsible Christians what to do and we choose to do it. When we do things God's way we have the promise that love and joy and peace and goodness, etc. will all follow along with us.

But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5)

If we are missing any of these good things in our lives, it's the result of choices we have made to do things our own way rather than God's way. We walk a long time with sadness and feeling let down or discouraged most of the time. We feel like someone else owes us something today in order to live well. When we feel that way, there is always something that we have not done that God had told us to do or something we are doing that God has told us not to do that we are still doing. If we would choose to do things God's way, goodness would grow in our heart.

The solution is not waiting for God to change something. The solution is to change what WE are doing so we obey what God has said to do. When we put a habit of obeying and acting into our lives, we will notice change in our heart and our feelings. Our feelings are not going to change on their own. We are going to have to obey and work our way into something different. It won't be an instant change when we obey one time. We have to make a HABIT of right choices and watch goodness grow in our lives. The choice is our's. God has told us the truth. God gives us the power each day to make the right choice and to act on it. It's up to us what we do about it.

Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. Who or what do I tend to blame when I don't like the consequences of the choices I've made?
2. Why is "no choice" really a choice?
3. In what kind of circumstances have I gathered strength to make responsible and healthy choices?
4. What would it take to do that in other areas where I struggle to choose well?
5. How does God intend for me to make choices?