

Are You Making The Right Choices?

(Part III)

➤ = next PowerPoint Slide

➤ Intro:

- **illus.:** before his death, Joshua called on Israel to make a “choice” (Josh. 24:14-15)
 - believe in God and serve Him, or serve pagan gods and idols of earth
 - warned, they would have to live with the consequences of their decision
- we have to make choices in life, and each one effects our salvation and eternal home in some way

➤ - PP: review

- choose: happy or sad, positive or negative, friend or enemy, good or bad reputation, how we deal with mistakes
- **this lesson:** these choices have to do with time and money
 - things we know, but need constant reminder
 - can be a taboo topic
 - **illus.:** two subjects criticized regarding lessons is when it's on money or retirement – not from people who are members here
 - criticism never been from someone who didn't have much, but from ones who have it and aren't working very much in the kingdom with their blessings

- **We choose how busy we are with secular affairs** – choices, priorities, balance
 - **Matt. 6:25, 31-33** **God's kingdom 1st, secular 2nd**
 - **don't worry about necessities** of life, don't eagerly seek after them
 - not consumed by, not make secular affairs the priority of your life
 - **can't focus all** our time and energy on secular affairs
 - **manage our time** – choices, balance
 - **if we have the courage to put God 1st in life, He will take care of us**
 - **illus.: Beth and I have chosen to change jobs**, so we could serve God the way we wanted – not preaching
 - **blessed each time, prospered** more spiritually and materially
 - **today, we have less** money and less financial security than if we would had taken other options in life, but our **lives are so much rich we would do it over and over again**
- - **Matt. 19:16, 20-22, 23-24** **lay up treasure (wealth) in heaven, not on earth**
 - **especially hard for rich** people to do this
 - **don't focus all** our time and energy on secular affairs
 - **manage our time** – choices, balance
 - **illus.: judgment**, standing before Christ, how strict do you think He'll be about this – **exemplify**
 - **Matt. 16:26** What will it **profit if we gain the whole world and forfeit our souls?**
- **we have control over our schedules**
 - **work / jobs / school**
 - **illus.: time is money**
 - **must invest our time to make money**, which means we have **less available free time**
 - **if we spend too much time to make money, we neglect** other responsibilities
 - **extra curricular activities**
 - **illus.: how many things we are involved in** - sports, clubs, associations – choices, priorities, balance
- **if we're too busy to serve God as we should, then we're too busy** – have TB, disease of materialism
 - **our life reflects the choices we've made** – serve God 1st, or the world
 - **illus.: young folks: tell employers your availability** (can't work Sunday, Wed. evening)
 - **stick to it**, they want people with conviction and morals – choices
 - **illus.: visiting a congregation once and an elder began explaining how one sister could rarely attend** church services because of her health
 - **knowing a little about the situation, I asked**, “How many days a week is she working?”
 - **shouldn't make excuses** for ourselves, or other people – not be enablers – choices
 - **illus.: a man walks into church and a member says, “We've missed you.”**
 - **the man explains he's been working and unable to come to services** – chose work over worship
 - **other man said, I could work too, but the Lord wants** us to assemble with the saints
 - **we shouldn't chose work a job that keeps us away** from assembling with the saints, worshiping God, and working in the kingdom – choices
- **as Christians, we work hard to make the right choices and have the proper balance** in our lives, so we don't neglect to serve God as we should
 - **choices, priorities, balance**

➤ **We choose how spiritual we are**

- **Ps. 90:12** we must number our days to have a wise heart

- properly prioritize life to be spiritual as we should

- **time and energy necessary to be spiritual** – become spiritual, grow, remain spiritual

- **illus.: like making money, career** – time is money / time is spirituality

- **we can expend so much time and energy on secular affairs, there is not enough left to serve God** as we should

- **choices / priorities:** God should come 1st with allocation of time and energy, not last

- **Satan:** wants us to be so busy we don't have time to be spiritual toward God, then we become spiritual toward worldly things

- **illus.: teaching a lesson on this topic while visiting another congregation**

- **woman** (friend) **commented afterwards, if we use all our energy** of secular things we won't have energy for spiritual things – be sick often, be too tired for Bible study, not do personal work, etc.

- **unfortunately, she did exactly that within a few years**, getting so wrapped up in her career it seemed to become an obsession

- **stopped attending church** as she should

- **divorced husband**

- **had little contact with children**

- **put the world 1st**

- **messed up her life and her family**

- **rather than growing and maturing, teaching more, becoming an elder's wife**

➤ - **What does it take to become spiritual, and grow spiritually?**

- **2 Pet. 1:5-8 diligent and increasing:** faith, moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, love

- **How do we do this?**

- **2 Pet. 1:3 true knowledge** (spiritual maturity) of **God's word** – reading, studying, learning, practice in everyday life

- **Rom. 12:12 devoted to prayer**

- **Heb. 10:24-25 not forsaking assembly of saints**

- **for many of us, doing the things of life that are necessary, and spending the time we should assembling with the saints, leaves almost no time for anything else**

- **illus.: after work and sleep, we have 48 hours a week** to take care of personal things like eating, preparing meals, going to church

- **12 hours per week devoted to church alone**, including travel, prep for Bible classes, personal and family preparation for classes and hygiene – **25 %** of personal time each week – **30%** as Bible class teacher

- **add time for personal Bible study, prayer, meditation** – **30% - 35%+** of personal time for spiritual things

- **that's why a lot of recreational activity is on Sunday** – rob God to recreate – saints different from world

- **as Christians, we work hard to make the right choices and have the proper balance** in our lives, so we don't neglect to serve God as we should – **spiritual** - choices, priorities, balance

➤ We choose **how much work we do in the kingdom** – relate to above

- “work” used in different ways

- **2 Tim. 2:21; 3:17** “work” used in sense of everything we do in obedience to God is a good work
- earn living, raise family, assemble with saints, etc.

- **1 Cor. 16:10, 16** some work is specifically for God is in respect to the kingdom – Lord’s work, the work

- we should evaluate ourselves in both respects – secular, kingdom

- **illus.:** some Christians choose to work a lot and involve themselves a great deal with secular work, thinking they are excused from working in respect to the kingdom

- **being good father** does **not exempt us** from doing personal work toward widows

- **feeding our families** does **not exempt us** from studying God’s word so we can lead others to Christ

- **taking care of our children** does **not exempt us** from taking care of orphans

- **we choose** how much work we do in the kingdom (church), vs. secular

- **danger: affluent society**, we try to keep up with worldly people, not have time or energy to work in the kingdom – harder for rich man to enter kingdom than for camel to go through eye of needle

➤ - **1 Tim. 6:17-19** we store up treasure in heaven by doing good works

- **helping people, spiritually and physically**, not by providing ourselves with a certain standard of living, earning and saving money

- **illus.:** Michael Schmid, Wednesday class, talked about teaching kids it’s **more blessed to give** than receive, their kids have done that lately – lesson we should all learn and practice

- **takes time and energy to work for the Lord in His kingdom**

- **time is money / time is spirituality / time is working in God’s kingdom**

- **we have limited time and energy:** must allocate properly

- **illus.:** take time illustration above, add time for personal work, factor necessities of life, about all we have time for is the necessities of life, spiritual things we do every week

- **when we choose how much work to do in the kingdom, we choose how involved to be with the local congregation**

- **illus.:** elders, deacons, their work with the congregation – give examples

- **illus.:** Bible teachers – time and work, give examples

- **illus.:** elders and deacons teaching Bible classes

- **illus.:** ladies active in benevolence

- Irene, everyday is like Christmas when Donna brings my clothes, because of the little presents she hides in the basket

- **We have some very busy people in the congregation, but are we all as busy as we can be?**

- choices, priorities, balance

- **illus.:** song, Room In God’s Kingdom – there is work that we all can do

- **we choose whether to do it, and how much**

➤ - **2 Cor. 9:7 - Phil’m 1:14; 1 Pet. 5:2** God doesn’t make us do it - He wants us to do it voluntarily

- **illus.:** elders, not make people do work, not have work teams, but wants people to do it **voluntarily**

- **as Christians, we chose how much work to do in the kingdom (church), and always try to do as much as we can, as we sacrifice our lives to God (Rom. 12:1)**

- choices, balance, priorities

choose: happy or sad, positive or negative, friend or enemy, good or bad reputation, how deal with mistakes, how busy with secular affairs, how much work we do in kingdom

End Part III

- **choose:** happy or sad, positive or negative, friend or enemy, good or bad reputation, how we deal with mistakes, how busy we are with secular affairs, how spiritual we are, how much work we do in the kingdom

- **inv.:** also **choose** whether to be a Christian or not

- **Josh. 24:15** “choose for yourselves today whom you will serve” - “but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”

- **illus.:** song #620, **Room In God’s Kingdom**