

## *Choices*

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*All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.*

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## INTRODUCTION

There's so much going on today in Christianity. Problems continue to arise throughout the Church. I have received many, many letters—not just from people in our assembly and affiliated ministries, but also from folks in other denominations.

I have observed closely what's been happening in our church. It's a very precious ministry. But I've observed what Satan is doing in the lives of those who love Jesus with all of their hearts. Scores are giving a place to the devil through the choices they are making.

It is possible that if you will take heed to this message, your prayers will be answered and you can help put a stop to all the foolishness that Satan is bringing into the lives of godly people. Please concentrate. Think it through. Take these thoughts to heart, because those who hear the Word of God are *of* God. You will not benefit from the Word unless the soil of your heart is

prepared in meekness. Without condemning yourself, mix absolute trust in your reception of this message. Let the Holy Spirit administer God's operation of grace, and you will develop a capacity to make godly choices.

## *Chapter One*

# THE FIRST GIFT: VOLITION

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:16-17).

Adam and Eve were told *not* to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. They were given a prohibition. And, they had a choice. According to Genesis 3, their choice was to eat from that tree. The result of that choice was critical—for them and for the entire human race.

The first gift given to God’s created human race was volition, the power to choose. That’s a big gift, and with it comes the responsibility for our choices. It astonishes me to see Christians floundering over how to use their volition, and yet, it is most understandable. Does God force anyone’s will? No. You make the choice, but

God determines the consequences of your choice. You go to church because of a choice. You go to bed because of a choice. You get out of bed by choice. You eat what you eat because of a choice. You make a choice to pray or not to pray. Every single thing in our lives is determined by choices.

### ***Life and Death Set Before Us***

“But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, wither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore

*choose life*, that both thou and thy seed may live” (Deuteronomy 30:14-19).

God has been faithful to give us His Word. Is it far off? No. It is inside of us. We have the privilege of always doing what the Word says if we choose to, because it is in our mouths and in our hearts. This is why we must never quench the Spirit from our heart, or grieve the Spirit, with our mouth.

Notice the order of deception, presented in Deuteronomy 30:17. First, a person’s heart is turned away, then he can’t hear. After that, he is drawn away; he begins to worship other gods, and finally, he serves them.

Life, or death? Blessing, or cursing? If we choose life, Deuteronomy 30:19 says we will prolong our days against sickness and disease. It all centers on choices.

“Choose you this day whom ye will serve,” Joshua said, “but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Joshua 24:15). Joshua made a choice. He and his family served God because of a choice.

## *Chapter Two*

# THE POWER OF THE VOLITION

“But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace” (James 3:14-18).

The cemetery is full of people who made wrong choices. God gave them free volition. The Bible teaches me to control every thought with my free will through God. Free volition is choosing what I’m going to think, choosing how I’m going to feel, choosing what I’m going to say, and choosing how I’m going to respond. I

choose whether or not I want to be effective for God. My choices determine whether or not I will make an impact and be successful. I must *choose* to think clean thoughts, live a clean life, and serve God. I must *choose* to be a good father, a good husband, or a good friend. Everything is a choice.

Every emotional problem I have is caused by my choices. According to James 3, if there is envying, jealousy, and strife in my heart, then the basis for my human reasoning will be *earthly*—*epigeios* in the Greek text, speaking of the influence of demonic activity in the world system. Next, my human reasoning becomes *sensual*—*psuchikos*, meaning, the constructs of the cosmic system have been transferred into my soul. *Devilish*, in James 3:15, is *daimoniodes*—implying that I'm now being controlled by demons. The verbal form of this word (*daimonizomai*) signifies demon possession, but can also refer to demon obsession or demon activity controlling Christians. This word is used frequently in the Gospels (e.g., Matthew 9:32; 15:22; Mark 5:15). These demonic spirits desire to control believers for the entirety of their Christian life.

### ***Places of Influence***

Demons look for places where they can gain

influence. Ephesians 4:27 warns believers to “Neither give place to the devil.” *Topos*, the Greek word for *place*, refers to a marked off area. It means, don’t mark off an area where the devil can keep coming back to make you become what you are in your weakness. That’s demonic activity.

An irresponsible Christian makes wrong choices. Needs govern his decisions. In his volition, he makes choices according to his feelings, and he always wants to share his feelings with someone else who is feeling the same way. Using his volition, he decides that he’s not going to be responsible to what God says in His Word. By his choices, this person is saying, “I *refuse* God; I refuse my responsibility to use the Word of God, which is nigh, even in my mouth and in my heart. I refuse to use it. I feel so terrible! Yet, I refuse to exercise my will, and I choose to be passive.”

The moment I make one choice to respond in passivity, Satan deceives me and controls me until I renounce that decision. Once I have made several wrong decisions, I have already given a place for the cosmic system to transfer Satan’s attitude to my soul. As I continue to make wrong choices, demon obsession takes over.

Though I'm still a Christian and I am going to heaven, even the church and the sermons I hear will not protect me from my wrong choices.

In Luke 13, Jesus was teaching in the synagogue. There was a woman who "had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself" (Luke 13:11). Who had caused this woman to be bent over for so long? Jesus said, "Satan hath bound [her], lo, these eighteen years" (Luke 13:16).

That woman was morally upright and went to church all the time, but eighteen years before coming to Jesus, a demon found a place in her and gave her a disease. No one ever thought to blame the devil for her infirmity because she was such a wonderful lady! But a wrong choice was made, a place was given, then deception took over. The result: Satan controlled the woman's back, and she lost control over one part of her body. Jesus, recognizing the root cause of this woman's infirmity, "laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God" (Luke 13:13).

The purpose of demon activity is to get believers to lose control in the midst of satanic darkness. This loss of control is always the result of bad decisions in thinking, using the volition

passively toward truth, rather than objectively. These passive decisions affect children in the home because they aren't old enough to be responsible for all of their thoughts. Passive choices produce a passive environment in the home and a demonic atmospheric charge exists to separate and divide; to rob, destroy, and kill.

### ***Who's on the Lord's Side?***

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, he discovered that the children of Israel had cast all their gold in the fire and Aaron had made a golden calf for them (Exodus 32). Moses declared: "Who is on the LORD's side? let him come unto me" (Exodus 32:26). "If you want to live, get on this side," Moses said. "If you *don't* want to live, stay over there. I want to know who is for the Lord." The Levites chose to side with God and with Moses, and they lived. Those who remained with the golden calf, died. They made the wrong choice.

It is my responsibility to obey the Word of God that is in my mouth and in my heart. Right decisions to study are mine to make. I must decide to make the right decision concerning the geographic location God has called me to. Right decisions must be made about whom I will marry,

about how I will behave, and about being meek through the Holy Spirit.

How have you been using *your* volition lately?

### *Chapter Three*

## CHOICES AND CONSEQUENCES

Every anxious person is anxious because of his choices. Every seed of suicide has come through choices. An alcoholic becomes an alcoholic through a series of choices. A promiscuous person makes choices to be promiscuous. A homosexual is a homosexual because of choices, not because of any genetic tendency. A woman who isn't willing to be accountable to her husband and flirts with other men is doing so because of choices. Every man who is deceitful, is deceitful because of choices. Everything centers on choices.

You may say, "This happened to me when I was younger...." Yes, but you had to cooperate with what happened in order for it to make you what you are today—a nervous wreck, if you happen to be that way. And you're a nervous wreck because you have chosen death! You have

chosen to withdraw from mercy, grace, love, and truth. Somehow, something entered into your life and it wasn't identified and renounced. Perhaps you envy what you used to have or what you don't have today. This envying combines with the wickedness of the flesh in a diabolical conspiracy to control you through demonic pleasure. Like the children of Israel, you want to return to Egypt. If this is what you choose, then go ahead and wallow in it, eat it up, and lose precious days of life on earth. This is the effect of wrong choices.

Wrong choices can have tragic consequences. There was a story in the news about a pastor who let two people into his home to use the phone. He and his wife were murdered, their daughter was raped and their son was beaten. The intruders got away with forty-eight dollars. We cannot let just *anyone* into our homes, and we cannot let just *any* thought into our minds. Choose to think with God. Remember, the devil comes to rob, kill, and destroy.

I received a letter from a pastor's wife recently. "My husband just took off and left me for another woman. He's been a pastor for eighteen years. We have six children, and now I'm left alone."

Pastors, never allow yourselves to be alone with another woman. Don't even give it one thought. You are godly men with beautiful and precious calls on your lives. Purpose in your hearts that you will always choose to think purely and live clean. Don't ever give place to demonic lust. It will bring reproach to God, to your families, and to the people who love and trust you.

This is not a little thing; it's not just an influence. We're speaking of a kingdom of power at work. Once Satan transmits this power to a person's soul, then demons can either hypnotize their victim, or just come and go as they please to do their thing.

### ***Wisdom from Above***

The person living by wisdom from below can rationalize anything he does, but the one with wisdom from above is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated.... And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" (James 3:17-18).

God wants me to challenge any satanic attempt to gain a place of influence in my life, even if it comes through someone close to me. Didn't Jesus say to Peter, "Get thee behind me,

Satan,” when Peter tried to keep Jesus from going to the cross (Matthew 16:21-23)? Did Jesus take it lightly and say, “Tell me you didn’t mean to say that, Pete”? No. The Lord said, “Get thee behind me, *Satan!*” I must say the same thing to those who allow their mouths to be used by the devil.

Everything in the course of a Christian’s life depends upon his choices. The boy and girl whose parents were brutally murdered made decisions to overcome what happened to them. The boy went on to a career in politics and took up the cause for victims of crime. The girl chose to become an effective woman of God, serving Christ and her family.

More people go into their rooms and cry—over nothing—when they could be dancing all over the place, praising God and singing with all of their hearts to Jesus. But instead, they withdraw. The Word is nigh, in their heart, but they confess, “I don’t want the Word; it isn’t helping me. I just feel *soooo* blue. It’s nearly Christmas. I feel so awful. Everyone is celebrating Jesus coming into the world, but I feel so sad.”

When you start making choices to feel this way, knock it off! Repent! Sing unto Him. Shout His praises and glorify the Lord. Get right with

God and choose to live for someone besides yourself. Live for someone outside of your own emotions, outside of your own soul. Live for someone outside of your pride. Live for God! Renounce your wrong decisions; repent the old-fashioned way; and stop being “you” for a change. Shut off your negative emotions and stop living by your feelings. Tell them to shut up, and stop confessing how bad life is in your little old emotions. Get right with God and start confessing truth.

## *Chapter Four*

# RESIST THE DEVIL

The Bible tells us there was a veil before the Holy Place. Then there was another veil before the Holy of Holies. These beautiful curtains were made of linen and the colors were scarlet, purple, and blue—all heavenly colors. Of all the offerings made before the veil, only the sin offering had to include blood.

The veil speaks of Jesus Christ's sinless humanity (Hebrews 10:20). The moment He died on the cross, the veil to the Holy of Holies was *rent*, torn from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51). This meant that believers could now enter into the Holy of Holies, into the reality of their kingdom priesthood. As members of His New Testament Church, we now reign as kings, through grace, and we have access to the Holy of Holies at any time, day or night. No matter what we've done, or ever will do, we can enter in through

the rent veil.

In 2 Corinthians 3:15, Paul wrote that the veil was still upon the hearts of some members of the church at Corinth. This veil is not speaking of the Law; it's a veil of unbelief.

People have so many different veils upon them—the veils of depression, withdrawal, pride, selfishness, envy, materialism, and deceit. Friends, wherever there is a veil, Satan controls that part of your life. If you're overly emotional, it means that Satan is controlling your emotions. It isn't that you have bad emotions; it's just that you choose to let the wrong force control them. Today, mental institutions are full because the devil has controlled people's minds and destroyed their emotional patterns.

### ***Satan's Plan for Destruction***

Satan wants to destroy pastors and missionaries; he wants to destroy marriages and families. He's intensifying his attack in every way. The devil wants to destroy trust. He doesn't want wisdom from above to control our lives and will do whatever he can to prevent us from having an everlasting attitude of faith. Satan does not want us to build ourselves up in the most holy faith, to keep ourselves in the love of

God, or to look for mercy.

There are marriages in my church that are separated but shouldn't be. What is wrong? Someone has made a choice to live his own way. He is saying, "I will not sacrifice for my partner or my family. Nope. I'm going my own way." It's a choice, and the choice is negative. There are exceptions to this, but, for the most part, marital separations are the result of negative choices toward grace, toward the Cross, and toward unconditional love; choices against peace and joy in the ministry of reconciliation. These choices are made with a volitional mindset that is passive toward God and active toward Satan's desires.

It doesn't have to be this way. I look around my church and see a number of couples who have made right choices to allow God to bring them back together. These couples are not just back together, barely getting along; their homes are thriving because of reconciliation that comes through positive choices toward love.

I love it when someone chooses not to receive what Satan tries to transmit through his cosmic system, his *epigeios*. The devil's transmissions can't reach this person's soul, and Satan can find no place to control.

It's a mystery to me how some Christians allow Satan to control them, and then live in denial of his control. They just won't accept deliverance because they are under the control of an influence that doesn't want them to be free.

### ***Free Indeed!***

In Psalm 51:12, David wrote, "Uphold me with thy free spirit." I have a free spirit; so does every Christian who's confessed up-to-date and filled with the Holy Spirit. We don't wrestle with yesterday's problems. We aren't dealing with last year's skeletons or with provocations from someone who hurt us. We have a *freeeeeee* spirit! —and it's God's free Spirit!

What does it mean to be upheld with God's Spirit? Well, God is pretty free! He's already whipped the devil. God is free to forgive us, free to cleanse us, free to purge us, and free to live in us forever. He is free to give us love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and temperance. He's free to guide us into all truth and to quicken our minds. He's free to love us no matter what state we're in.

There is no reason for any Christian to mope around the rest of his life, calling the same people every other week for fifteen years because

he's trapped in the same depression. He is choosing to be depressed.

We're free to be contented. Contented! Contented! Contented!

We are free!—to love the Body of Christ.

Free!—to enjoy the love of friends.

Free!—to pray and fight diseases by faith.

Free!—to fight problems by God's provision.

We are free, free, FREE!

If, after I have said all of this, you want to choose to condemn yourself, go right ahead. Be depressed! and allow this message to add condemnation to your depression. Some people manufacture a problem and then go to the doctor to get a name for it. They can't wait to see what he will call the latest thing that's wrong with them.

The Bible says, "If ye continue in my word ... ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32). It doesn't say *some* of you will be made free, but *all* of you will be made free.<sup>3</sup> When a Christian has a free spirit, he confesses, "No condemnation!" He receives conviction without condemnation, gets converted, and goes away free. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

You may say to yourself, “Of course, God probably doesn’t mean *me*. I’m too bad.” All God is waiting for is for us to *choose* to believe Him and stand fast in the liberty of the Son of God wherein He has made us free. Those who are led by the Spirit are grown up, adopted children of God. They refuse to go back into bondage again to be controlled by fear. Instead, they cry, “Abba, Father” and the Holy Spirit witnesses with their spirit and they are free indeed.

### ***Making the Devil Flee***

Satan is always looking for Christians who will quench the Spirit by making passive decisions toward God’s provision. The devil, still having access to the Father, comes before Him and says, “See that woman. Your Spirit’s dwelling in her; she’s had years of doctrine, but I’m going to get her to deny it. I’ll send some of my crowd to her and have her depressed within two to three minutes. Watch, God! Watch what happens to your daughter as we do our thing. We’ve done it many, many times before.”

The devil finds a place of influence in this woman because she doesn’t resist the demons to make them flee. James 4:7 tells us to resist the devil. We aren’t told to resist our emotions or

our thoughts. We are told to resist the *devil*.

Resist the devil. Resist him! If you want him to flee, do what the Word of God says to do. If you don't want him to flee, why don't you just invite Satan in and have him sleep on the couch in your living room? He would like to do this with many of you, if you would give him a place.

Why don't you put your shoulders back, get some guts and say, "I'm a Christian. I am complete in Christ. I am seated above. I have God in me. My sins are paid for and I am going to choose life, choose obedience, choose faith, choose to think right, and choose to let my conversation be from heaven."

Every Christian should confess, "I am not going to be the devil's doormat anymore; I'm going to be the devil's tormentor! I don't need anything but God to make me happy. I am filled with the Spirit and that produces happiness."

## CONCLUSION

More families have broken up because of wrong choices. More people have committed suicide because of wrong choices. More people live in immorality and never get out of it, all because of wrong choices—choices that give place to the devil.

The next time you're tempted to give a place to Satan, stand up, raise your hand and say, "Hallelujah, praise God, I resist you devil. I resist your feelings, your projections, and your accusations. I resist this atmosphere. Blood of Christ, cleanse it! Praise God, I resist you Satan."

Renounce the devil's control over any area of your life. Denounce his attacks. Rebuke Satan in the name of divine resistance. Don't let him make you choose to allow vain imaginations to take over. Choose to bring every thought into correspondence with the Word of God and into obedience to Jesus Christ. Say to the devil, "I am

going to revenge disobedience with my obedience, at this moment.”

And do you know what Satan will say after all of this? “He really *means* it this time. Let’s get out of here!”