

Life Changing Choices

by Denny Kenaston

Denny Kenaston emphasizes the importance of making life-changing choices in our spiritual journey and the impact of obedience on our relationship with God.

Duration: 1:07:27

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 14:12-16, John 14:27, Romans 12:1-2

Topics: "Choice"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of making life-changing choices in our Christian walk. He shares his own experience of coming to a life-changing decision to surrender his life to God. The preacher references Joshua 24, where Joshua gathers the people to give them his final words before his passing. He challenges them to make a choice to serve and follow God wholeheartedly. The sermon concludes with the preacher encouraging the audience to sell out to the Lord and experience the transformative power of God in their lives.

Transcript

Greetings this morning. In Jesus' name, what a joy and a blessing to be gathered together again to sing the songs of Zion, to sing out our heart to the Lord. By the words of these songs, what a joy.

I don't know if I'll ever get over that one. Some of the songs that God so graciously has given to us, that we can express the desires of our heart through these songs. It's so good for you, it's so refreshing, it's so accountable, isn't it, to sit there in our pew and sing these songs before the Lord and to say, I will be true to Thee, Lord.

I will be true to Thee. You know, if you've not been true to the Lord, it convicts your heart when you sing the song, and if you have been, it only thrusts you forward for the next commitment that God asks us to do. Amen? I'm sure we would all agree this morning that this is just the simple posture of every child of God.

This isn't the posture of a select few that God uses in special ways. No, this is the heart, or should be the heart, of every child of God, fully surrendered, Lord Divine. I will be true to Thee.

All that I am or have is Thine. I will be true to Thee. Though it may cost me friends and home, cause me in lands afar to roam, I will be true to Thee, Lord.

How do we sing that song? Do we lay our life before the Lord as we sing that song and say, yes, Lord, I'm willing to wander in some land a long ways away from home? Oh, what a healthy exercise to lay our lives and our future and our families and our businesses and our homes and our properties to just lay them on the line Sunday by Sunday and say, Lord, where you want me to go? Whatever land you want me to live in? You want me to wander around somewhere? I'll be true to you. I will go with Thee all the way. All of Thy bidding will obey.

Yes, we all know this morning this is just the posture of a Christian. Nothing special. Nothing special at all.

My prayer for each one this morning, I'm going to read you my prayer. I don't know if we ever did that around here. I'm gonna read you my prayer this morning.

That He, God, would grant you according to the riches of His glory to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. That ye being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is a breadth and length and depth and height.

And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. That's my prayer this morning. What a joy to know that it's a biblical prayer and that it's God's heart, too, this morning for each and every one of His people.

Well, I'd like to share this morning, and I must say this is a message that's not motivated by baptism, but it's a good baptismal message. So those of you that are planning to seal your faith in holy baptism today, you can just get some extra mileage out of the message. But I'd like to speak this morning on the subject, life-changing choices.

I mentioned a little bit about the message as we were sharing about our trip last month, as we were speaking here on Wednesday night, sharing about the trip last month. Life-changing choices. We have those.

I know that many of the people that are in this room have made life-changing choices, and I believe that it's part of the Christian life and that if you've gone a few years and you haven't made any life-changing choices, there's probably something wrong with your Christian life. Because life-changing choices are part of the Christian life. Reading for an introductory scripture in Joshua chapter 24 and verse 14, we're at the end of the book of Joshua here in Joshua 24.

Joshua has faithfully led the children of Israel into the promised land. He has led them forth in battle. They have overcome the enemy.

They have taken the land. They have burned down cities. They have been victorious in many, many areas, taking the inheritance that God had promised for them.

And here we find ourselves in Joshua 24 at the end of Joshua's life. And as was the custom in those days, when an old man was about to pass off the scene and he carried the burden of the people upon his heart, he would gather them together and share with them some last words, some last challenges, some last direction for their lives before he passes off the scene. And Joshua finds himself at that place, and he knows his people real well.

And thus he gives them a challenge, and we want to break into this chapter and start reading in verse 14. Joshua is, we're right in the middle of a sermon. He says, Now therefore, fear the Lord, and serve him in

sincerity and in truth.

And put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt, and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you 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 you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods. For the Lord our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed. Joshua's challenging the people, and he lays before them a choice.

He says, You make a choice today. I'm passing off the scene. I'm an old man.

My words, my wisdom, my direction for your life is going to be gone. You have to make a choice, Joshua says, who you're going to serve. You know who God is.

You saw his mighty hand. You saw him deliver you. You saw him break the walls of Jericho down.

You saw him knock the giants down. You saw him deliver the enemy into your hands over and over again. You, you choose today who you will serve.

And of course, he finished that challenge with his own testimony, which we hang on our walls all around this county. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Well, we see in this text that Joshua was bringing the people to a choice.

He was saying to them, I want you to make a life-changing choice today, a life-changing choice. Who are you going to serve? Joshua said to the people. And of course, they responded somewhat in innocence and said, Oh, well, surely we will serve the Lord.

But Joshua knew their hearts and he knew what would happen when Joshua was gone and the elders of Israel who walked with Joshua were gone. I believe in a prophetic word. Joshua knew what was going to happen, and therefore he laid it out before the people and said, You make a choice this day who you will serve.

Recently, I was visiting with a couple of friends in another state. We were sharing, they were asking questions and we were sharing about one who had erred from the faith. As we stood there together, grieving over the error of this man's ways, one of the brothers spoke up and said, Oh, but I want to be careful not to judge him too harshly, for but by the grace of God, I'd be in the same shape.

I had to think to myself as he spoke those words. Yes, that is true, but it's not all true. It's but by the grace of God and my own choices, I'd be in the same place.

And every one of us, we have to face that fact and the reality of that fact. From time to time in our Christian life, yes, but by the grace of God, I'd be in the same condition as that other fella who's out on the street and a drunk today. But it's not just by the grace of God.

It's by the grace of God and the choices that I make that I'm not out there on that street with that drunk. We need to come to grips with that, that choices were made. We meet the remnant all around the country.

And it's just a just an intriguing mystery, if I can say it that way, to meet the remnant people around the country. It's an unusual thing about them. They have such a sweet fragrance about their lives.

There's just something fresh about them. There's something sweet about them. There's something that you can see God's blessing upon their lives.

And and, you know, it's so interesting, you know, you can look at them and and everything may not look exactly the way that we would like it to look. And we can even go to their house and and maybe there's some things there that we wouldn't like to see there. But yet there's this sweet fragrance about these remnant people.

You see God raising up men into places of leadership who've never been to a Bible school, who never sat under some great preacher's ministry, who never experienced some great revival to some great move of God's spirit. They know nothing of any of these things. Some of them, if you ask them what revival is, I don't even know if they know what it is.

I don't know if they could define it, but they're living in the reality of it. And that's all that matters. What is it? Oh, it's choices they made.

They made some life changing choices. Those choices cost them something, but those choices brought something down upon their lives. What is it? It seems that some come among us here, get converted, and it seems like in a very short time they begin to outstretch the others who have been here for years.

What is that? There seems to be more zeal, more burden, more fervency, more direction, more understanding, more desire. What is it? How is it that some can outstretch the others in such a short time and others may sit for five years, taking one little baby step at a time? Well, I believe it's choices. They're making choices, life-changing choices.

And brothers and sisters, when we make life-changing choices, it brings life-changing affections and influence upon our lives. You cannot get away from it. Let us turn into the New Testament and take a look at this, at the key to this mystery that's clearly defined in the New Testament, if you'll turn with me to John.

The book of John and chapter 14, we see it so clearly defined. John chapter 14 and verse 12 is where we'll begin reading. We like to key in on the verses from 15 on, but I thought it was interesting to see the context and the flow of these verses.

So I chose to read from verse 12. Jesus is speaking some of his last words, by the way, here in John 14. And they're very important also, just like Joshua's were.

Verse 12. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me the works that I do, shall he do also. And greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. Verse 15.

If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever. Even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you, yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more. But ye see me, because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, Not ascariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not to the world? He couldn't figure this out. Lord, how could you do that? How could it be that we would see you, but the world won't see you? He didn't understand the death, burial, resurrection, and the pouring out of God's Spirit yet, and he asked this question.

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings, and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father which sent me. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Oh, what a profound secret our Lord Jesus shared with his disciples there, and yes, I'm sure that he meant that the Holy Spirit would come and teach you many things, but I believe for sure that what he meant was that the Holy Spirit would come and remind you of these things that I've just said to you, and this morning, my prayer is that the Holy Spirit will come and remind us of these things which Jesus spoke to his disciples. I think it's safe for us to say this morning that obedience is a path to continuous revival. And if there is no obedience, there will be no continuous revival.

If there is a broken obedience, there will be a broken revival. If there is an obedience that moves like this, and then this, and then this, and then this, there will be that kind of revival. But God's heart would be that we would know him, and truly, just like John said, that our fellowship would be with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ, and that's exactly what Jesus is saying right here, and John was there listening to those words.

You see, in essence, what Jesus was saying to the disciples there is that I have laid before you many life-changing choices, and if you love me and my word, then you'll do what I've told you. You see, we're looking at Jesus at the end of his ministry. For three and a half years, these men have been listening to what he had to say, and we here this morning, we know what he had to say to them.

He told them, leave everything and follow me. If you can't forsake all and follow me, you can't be my disciple. He told them, don't let money, and don't let possessions, and don't let material things, and don't let cares of life get in the way of your relationship with me.

He told them. These are many of the commandments that Jesus is referring to here in this text. But, praise God, he didn't stop there.

He said, if you love me, you'll keep my commandments, and if you love me, then the Father, he will come, he will love you, and he will come, and he'll be close to you, and I'll be close to you, and I'll manifest myself

to you, and we'll make our abode with you, and it'll be sweet, and our presence will be with you. These things have I spoken unto you yet, being present with you, he said. What was he saying? He was saying, disciples, I'm giving you, I'm giving you the key to a blessed life, I'm giving you a key to a fruitful life, I'm giving you the key to the sweet presence of my Father and of me.

I'm giving you a key. Here it is. And it's interesting to me, that as we look at this text, that just before that, as we're reading there, he said, and greater works than these shall ye do.

Why? Because I go to my Father. But, let us not forget the kind of obedience that Jesus demanded of those disciples while he was with them. He told them, follow me.

He told Peter, leave your nets and come with me. And Peter followed him. And Jesus was only bringing, reaffirming the principles of his blessing, of his direction, of his comfort, of his presence, of his mighty working power in their lives.

He was only reaffirming the principle, the same one that they'd been living by already. And that was, you follow me, you follow me, I'll make you a fisher of men. If you follow me, I'll bless you.

If you follow me, I'll grace your life. That's what he was saying. That's what these people have been doing.

They come from the East and West. They come from the North and South. Their names are different.

They're not names that we're used to hearing. Their backgrounds are different. But yet, there's this sweet fragrance about their lives.

And it's because they've made some choices. Hallelujah. They've made some choices.

Life-changing choices. This is the mystery of this blessed life. And just like the song that we sang here and reiterated and looked at the words of it, just like that song, God is laying that very same call out to each and every one of us.

To make life-changing choices. I cannot help but think, in a room this size this morning, that there are men and women, there are brothers and sisters in this room this morning, that are wrestling with choices that need to be made. And you're looking at them.

And there's a price tag on them. And there always is a price tag on a life-changing choice. There always is.

They're never easy. They always go against the flesh. They always make you deny things.

And I cannot help but think that there are those in this room this morning. Maybe you're trying to figure out your Christian life. And you're wondering already why things just don't seem right anymore.

Maybe you've missed a life-changing choice that you needed to make. And God touched your heart about it. And you said, I don't believe I can do that.

Obedience is a path to continuous revival, just like it says in 1 John 1, 7. If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin. Obedience.

That's the only way that we can walk in the light. I told some of the people, I believe it was in Indiana. We had a crowd of people, something like this.

There are many plain people there. German Baptists, Old Order brethren, Mennonites were there. And there were many remnant people there.

And I challenged the Mennonite people as we were there, and the plain people that were sitting in the room. The remnant people are not the only ones that have to make some life-changing choices that cost them everything. They're not the only ones.

We look upon them and say, bless them. Bless that sister who was willing to put a covering on her head and be made fun of. And her mom and dad don't understand her.

And her relatives think she's crazy. And we bless them for doing that. But I tell you this morning, they're not the only ones that have some life-changing choices to make that cost them everything.

I tell you, that's the road of the Christian life. If we walk in the light as He is in the light, then we have fellowship one with another. Oh, the fellowship.

Oh, it's sweet. Oh, the fragrance of Christ in our lives. But we must walk in the light as He is in the light in order for that sweet fragrance to continue in our lives.

And I'm afraid that many times choices are being made. Choices are being made in the wrong direction. Because God begins to do a work in somebody's life, and the heaven opens up over their life.

And all of a sudden they have reality again. And they begin to walk. And maybe they walk a month or two or three.

And then all of a sudden God brings a choice before them. And my brothers and sisters, that is normal for God to do that. And He brings a choice before them and says, this is the way, walk in it.

And they say, whoa, whoa, wait a minute. I'll lose my reputation. We'll join the group.

Why not? I don't want to lose my reputation. I'll be made fun of. My people won't understand me.

I can't do that. That's extreme. Maybe we're being too radical here.

And we explain it all away. But yet, we turn right around and look at those remnant people and see the radical things, the choices they're making. And bless them, because they're making the ones that we've already made.

And they're making the ones that are already acceptable among our people. And I wonder many times, if God isn't asking us to do some things that we aren't willing to do, but obedience. Obedience is the path to continuous revival.

That's the way it is. There's a price tag on walking in the light. So, I wonder if that's the reason why some go to an altar, go to the basement, open their heart, break their heart, get clear, get clean, go on for a little while.

Then all of a sudden, you don't hear much from them anymore. They're a silent pew-sitter again. What happened? Well, I wonder what happened.

I wonder, is God laying some choices out before us? And we're all different people. We all have different choices to make. Is God laying them out there and we're looking at them and saying, I'm sorry.

I can do this, and I can do this, and I can do this. But that, I can't do. Well, hear the words of Jesus.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. If a man love me, he will keep my words.

And my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. As just like John said, and truly, our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. Life-changing choices.

God calls us to make those. There's a few that I had to make through my Christian life, and there may be some that you need to make this morning. There may be one that God is just laying right before you right now.

He may just be painting the picture right before your heart, even as you sit here in this room, saying, there it is. There it is. What will you do? How many times will you look at it? How many times will you come around this bush and take a look at it again and say, ah, too much.

Price too high. I'm so glad that God is merciful and patient and long-suffering with us. But, there comes a point where God says, okay, if you're not going to go on, I'm not going to go on.

With you, in reality, and favor, and blessing. I look back over my Christian life, and a few life-changing choices that I had to make, and I'm just going to assume this morning, and not give my testimony of salvation, but let's just assume that we all know that's a life-changing choice that every one of us must make, and if we've never made that one, we cannot go any further than that. But, I'd like to zero in this morning that there are many more besides that one, if we're going to go on in the blessings of God.

I remember so clearly about six months after I had become a Christian, and bear with me, because when I became a Christian, I didn't know the Bible, I didn't understand God's truth, I didn't have any of God's principles in my heart, I just heard the gospel, and I realized that I was a mess, and I needed the Lord, so it took me about six months to figure out what God wanted for me in my life. But, I remember that day when I sat in that little Baptist church, and I don't remember who the preacher was, but some preacher came there, and he preached a message out of Romans chapter 12, verse 1 and 2, and he said, And I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service, and he went on and said, and be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you, as an individual, can prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. And I remember that preacher challenging all the people there, and saying, you lay your life on the altar for God, you sell out to the Lord, I mean, you count your life done, your reputation, your future, your dreams, your goals, you sell out to the Lord, and God will shock you what he'll do with you.

Well, I don't know how many other people listened to what he said, but there I sat, and I listened, and God stirred in my heart, and I went to the altar, and I said, okay, Lord, I know what it's all about now, I've got enough understanding, Lord, here it is, you can have it all, I'll do what you want me to do, I'll go where you want me to go, I'll live the way you want me to live, I'm going to take this book and make it the treasure of my life, dear God, you do with me what you want. I remember making that decision. I had no idea what the price tag was on it at the time, but I'm so glad that I made it, I'm so glad that I made it, you can be sure

there was a price, I knew what it meant, I knew what my friends would think, I knew what relatives would think, I knew what mom and dad would think, I knew what brothers and sisters would think, and it didn't surprise anybody back home much at all when we made some of the changes we made because we've always kind of been a nut.

Ever since that day, welcome to the group of nuts that everybody can't figure out. So I made that choice. Oh, I just love brother John D. Martin's whole matter, he just says, you just take a blank piece of paper and sign your name at the bottom of it and give it back to the Lord.

I like that. Fully surrendered, Lord divine, I'll be true to you, I don't know what you have for me, I don't know where you want me to go, I don't know where my paths are going to lead me, I don't know what the sacrifices will be, I don't know what I'm going to have to pay as the years go by, but here's the blank sheet of paper, Lord, fill it in any way you want. Well, I made that choice.

Oh, blessed be God for that choice. That was a life-changing choice. A life-changing choice.

And if you've never made that one, that's step number one this morning, my friend. If you've never made that one, some of you young people in this room, that may be the one you need to make. The light is dawning clearer and clearer in your heart and you realize what God really wants out of you.

Fully surrendered, Lord divine, I'll be true to you. Well, that led to many other choices in my life, in our life, Jackie and mine. But another life-changing choice that I made, that I had no idea what would be involved in it, but I tell you, I look back on it and it has been a life-changer that I would never trade.

It was the day that I made the choice in my heart that I am going to live for other people. I'm going to live for other people. Not for me, but for everyone else.

I remember it so clearly. It's like it was yesterday to me. It was a Sunday morning, going down the street on a bus route in North Chicago, Illinois, picking up the children.

This side of the street, then this side of the street, up to the third floor, down to the basement, up to the fifth floor, down to the basement. Get this one out of bed, put his diaper on, put him on the bus, make sure this one eats his cereal and get him on the bus. And that's the way it was going.

And I'll never forget it, I was running ahead of the bus about a half a block, trying to gather some more children together, just running with everything I had. And the joy of the Lord flooded my soul as I was running down that street to see all the little children and to see the blessings that they were going to get. The joy of God flooded my soul and I remember crying out to God as I ran down the street, Lord, I'll do it, I'll do it, I'll do it.

I made a choice there. I didn't understand what all of it meant, but I made a choice and it was a life-changing choice that I've never been sorry for. You have a life-changing choice that you need to make.

They're part of the Christian life, aren't they, brother? There are times when there are things that we need to face and we're not going to go on in the blessing unless we face them and say, yes, Lord. It's just the way it is. The third life-changing choice that I made came a few years later as I found myself in the basement of my house in Hammond, Indiana, with my Bible and my Baptist theology.

Here I was in the basement. I had my Bible and I had my Baptist theology, which I'd learned very well as a fine young student in Bible school. I sat at the feet of the teachers and I hung on their every word and I listened to what they said.

But there I found myself in my study with my Bible and my theology. And I made a life-changing choice there in my basement. I said, God, I am not going to read this Bible with my Baptist theology.

I am going to read it and just take it for what it says. Now, that was a life-changing decision. And again, I had no idea.

I had no idea what that meant, but I knew that it meant that I'm probably not going to be what I am as I made the commitment. I had no idea where it would lead me, but I knew it would lead me somewhere. And I had no idea if I would ever get to preach again.

But I made that decision. God, I'm just going to take this book literally. You know, like the African does who never got to go to seminary to figure out all the dispensations and all those things and never got to figure out all the Hebrew and the Greek and all those things.

He just had to take it and read it for what it said and believe it for what it said. And I made that choice there in my basement many years ago. You know how it is.

You're reading along, you come to a text and you read it for what it says, but then you stop. And your mind says, now wait a minute. I know what it says, but it can't mean what it says because... And then your theology runs around those verses and you put it in a slot of your theology and you go on reading.

More of us do that in this room than maybe we even realize. Somehow God helped me to shake that thing and just say, OK, what does the Bible say? What does it say? What a life changing choice that was. I'm so glad I made it.

What a life of liberation and freedom and adventure and blessing that has come from that choice. Oh, the price tag on that choice. Just a heretic, that's all.

Just a heretic. Went off the deep end. Don't talk to him.

Don't have any fellowship with him. Don't smile at him. Don't get close to him.

Don't help him. Don't bless him. He's a heretic.

Is he? Oh, I appreciate the little book, the title of the book. Will the real heretic please stand up? There's some people around that are reevaluating what heresy is. And it's about time.

Choices. Life changing choices. Well, there's another one that I made.

I made the choice a few years ago that I was going to have a godly home no matter what it cost me. That was a choice that I made. I don't know if you ever made that choice.

Maybe you take it more for granted. Maybe you just kind of go along in the motion of things. But for me, I had to come face to face with that thing.

I had to come to grips with that thing. And with the reality of my own life and the failures in my own life and the failures in our life as a husband and wife, we had to come to grips with all of that. And there came a

point in time where we said, God, whatever we have to pay, whatever we have to live, whatever kind of job I have to work, whatever for beans I have to eat, we're going to have a godly family.

That's a choice to make. And all across this country I meet fathers and mothers over and over again who have made that same choice and they've been amazed. God has made their heads spin.

How many choices that flowed out of that one choice that they made. I will have a godly family. I don't care where I have to go.

I don't care what changes I have to make. I don't care what kind of a job I have to work. I will have a godly family.

And they had no idea. All the things that would take place in their life because they made that one choice. But it is a big one because it's a matter of influence.

And you know, you can get along and do a lot of things on your own, but when you have these precious little ones growing up before you and you realize that they're easily influenced in some of the things that they go through, you start making choices because you're committed to watch over the souls that have been given into your care and choices start being made. Radios go. Televisions go.

Thrill sports go. All kinds of things go. The toy box changes.

The bookshelf changes. Many, many changes, but it all came from one. By the grace of God, I will have a godly family.

I'll do whatever I have to do to have one. I'll pay whatever price I have to pay. Life-changing choices.

There's another one that I made. And that was the choice to make revival a priority in my life and in my preaching. Revival.

I don't know what it is about revival that makes so many people upset. I don't know what it is about revival that brings the wrath of God's people down upon you. I don't quite understand all of that.

But I know that it's true. And I know that it happens. There came a point in time in my life where I looked at all that and I said, I don't care.

I don't care what rumors come. I don't care what attacks come. I don't care all the things that happen from it.

I don't care what I lose. I don't care whose fellowship I lose. Revival is going to be a priority because revival and the emphasis of revival changes people's lives.

And I decided that changing people's lives was more important than all the other things that they seem to throw at you at a time like that. It seems like revival stirs up trouble wherever it goes. And it's sad that you can sit in your church dead, complacent, just a bench warmer, sitting there week after week, month after month, year after year, and you'll be a good church member, but as soon as the fire of God begins to burn inside of your soul and you get on fire and you get a burden for souls and you get a burden for other people and you get excited about Jesus and you want to have a prayer meeting and try to stir some other people up, all of a sudden you get in trouble.

And the first time around it's usually quite a shock because, you know, you can't figure this out. You're so excited and God is so good and He's just blessing your life and what a joy and a blessing! Well, look what God has done for me! And you figure everyone else surely will be excited like you are. And you find out they're not very excited.

And they're not jumping up and down. And they're not patting you on the back and they're not encouraging you. But instead you'll hear things like, now let's not get too radical here and now you want to be careful of your emotions and immediately they begin to water that thing back down again.

Life-changing choices. Do you see what I mean? They just keep on coming and with each one we have a choice to make. We have to look at that thing and say, okay, here's the next step.

Am I going to take the next step or am I going to settle for where I am right now and not go on anymore? And we know the answer to that. At least we know it in our heads. We know that cannot be.

We must go on from there. But many times, we back away from those choices. And I'm not saying that it's wrong if the first time you see it you back away from it.

I'm not saying that. I realize that sometimes we take a look at something that God is asking us to do and we think, boy, this is a rough one. I need to pray about this.

I need to seek the face of God. And yes, we need to wait upon God for strength and wisdom and understanding, but the bottom line is that God is saying this is the way, walk in it. And we must be willing to walk in it.

And they don't stop, do they, Brother Moose? I think of the dear remnant people around the country. And how we love them. And how we have a burden for them.

But there's a price tag on them too. When you begin to ponder, what are we going to do? Where are we going to stand? Are we going to love them? Are we going to bless them? Are we going to reach out to them? Will we give them right counsel? We begin to realize there's a price tag on that too. And if you don't think there is, you ask some of the Mennonite preachers who just tried a little bit to bless the remnant.

Ask them whether there's a price tag on the remnant or not. There is! It's a big price tag. Some have already lost their reputation over it.

God bless them for it too. The time shall come when they will see great blessings out of the choices that they made. Though right now they may lie in despair and they may wonder if they made the right choice, but I tell you, the day will come when they will bless God for the choices that they made.

To bless the remnant. Even though it doesn't quite look like we do. And you know that's pretty important.

Is not this the spirit of discipleship, brothers and sisters? Isn't it? I'm afraid sometimes we hinder ourselves from a radical Christianity. You know, Christianity is still radical. It is! But we are afraid, you know, to go against the status quo.

So we just stay in a complacent life when God is saying, follow Me. Follow Me. Jesus, walking by Peter and John, there, mending their nets by the Sea of Galilee, looked their way and said, Peter, John, follow Me! And they dropped their nets and they left their boats and they left their father there and they started following Jesus.

Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom, and Jesus walks by and the eye of His heart touches the heart of Matthew and He says, Matthew, follow Me, Matthew. Folded up His money box and left her set there and walked away. That's what He did.

We read those stories and we say, wow, what an exciting blessing! How about writing a few? Look at the rich young ruler. He came to Jesus. He was so excited.

I want to follow You, Lord. Just tell me what to do. I'll do it.

I'll go. I want to follow You, Lord. And Jesus looked at him and said, You get rid of the idols that are in your life that are hindering you from having a personal relationship with Me and then follow Me.

And He had the same life-changing choice that many of us have. He looked at His riches and He looked at Jesus and He looked at His riches and He looked at Jesus and He went away sorrowful. Well, He made a life-changing choice whether He realized it or not, didn't He? He made it in the wrong direction.

I guess we have to face the fact that's the way life-changing choices are. Die to your own goals. Die to your own ambitions.

Die to your reputation. Die to it all! Luke chapter 14. We know these words very well.

A great multitude is following Jesus. I just love this every time I read it. And there went a great multitude with Him and He turned and said unto them, He's going to thin out the crowd.

Jesus did that from time to time. He just thinned out the crowd. And He turned to them and said unto them, If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.

Now we know what that means. It doesn't mean you're supposed to hate your mom and dad. Honor thy father and thy mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it shall be well with thee, and thou mightest live long on the earth.

We know that it doesn't mean that you're to hate your father and mother, but it does mean this. It means that your love for God shall come above your love for your father and mother. And there may be in some situations where your father and mother will even look at you and say, You don't love me.

You will have to push it aside. Say, Lord, I'm going to love you and I'm going to follow you. That's what it means.

Jesus was thinning the crowd. Verse 27, And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me cannot be My disciple. For which of you intending to build a tower sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he hath sufficient to finish it, lest happily after he hath laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all that beheld it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish.

Or what king going to make war against another king sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand, or else while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an envisage and desireth conditions of peace. What Jesus is saying here is, Count the cost. And then after you looked at the cost and you've counted it real good and you've taken a good long look at it and you know what is involved in it, then you make a life-changing choice and you decide to follow Me.

So likewise in verse 33, Whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple. And then He finishes with an unusual statement here. He says, Salt is good, but if the salt hath lost his savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned? That's good for us to ponder, you know.

That's kind of like that Christian that we talked about in the beginning of the message, who had the blessing and the joy and the heaven was open over their life and then all of a sudden they came up to some decisions that God was saying, I want you to make. And they said, I don't believe I can make that one. And the salt has lost its savor and no longer are they a cutting edge to the people around them and no longer are they that influence that they were in the beginning and no longer does the blessing come upon them and no longer do they see their life touching other people's life because the salt, which was salty, has lost its savor.

It is neither fit for land nor yet for the dunghill, but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Those of you that are being baptized today, most of you have no idea what the future holds for you.

But let me tell you what I know that it holds. It holds sacrifice. It holds self-denial.

It holds making some choices that others may not understand. It holds living where maybe you never thought you'd live. It holds maybe going somewhere where you never thought you'd go.

Who was it? I can't remember in my mind. But somebody on the trip said, they were afraid to meet me. He didn't want to meet that Denny Keniston.

He was afraid if he met Denny Keniston, Denny would send him to Africa. That's the last place he ever wanted to go. Well, Denny doesn't send anybody to Africa anyway.

But God might. He just might. You may not know what it is, but I would just encourage each one of you that are going to get baptized today, go deep.

Go deep in your commitments today. Go deep. And for the rest of us that are in this room, God has some life-changing choices that need to be made.

And there are price tags on those. And I want to encourage you, the dividends are great. The dividends are great for the price that you must pay.

God yields great dividends. What are the dividends? It's fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. What are the dividends? Strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.

What are the dividends? That you may know the love of Christ which passes knowledge. That you may know the height and the depth and the length and the breadth. And that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Yes, there are price tags on the choices that need to be made, but the dividends far outweigh the price tag that you have to pay. May God just stir us this morning. May God challenge our hearts.

You're here this morning. Maybe you have some choices you need to make. We're not going to give an invitation this morning.

But you don't need an invitation. You don't need one. You just need to say, Okay, Lord.

Long enough. I've wrestled with this one long enough. I'm paying the price.

I'm walking the road. You said it was straight. You said it was narrow.

And it is narrow. And I'm going on. That's what you need to do.

That's what I told the Lord this morning. Okay, Lord. I'll go wherever you want me to go.

I'll do whatever you want me to do. I'll walk wherever paths you want me to trod. Lord, I'll do whatever you want me to do.

That ought to be the posture of every Christian. Lord, here I am. Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee.

But oh, the dividends. But you never can prove the delights of His love until all in the altar is laid. For the favor He shows and the joy He bestows are for those who will trust and obey.

Obedience is the path to continuous revival. Let us go on. Let us go on today in all that God has for us.

Shall we kneel together in prayer? All to Jesus I surrender. All to Him I freely give. I will ever love and trust Him in His presence daily live.

I surrender all. I surrender all. All to Thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all.

Father in Heaven, that's our cry this morning, God. We submit ourselves to You, Lord. Each one of us here, we're upon our knees.

Lord, we're asking You, God, this morning for some life-changing choices, God. Some that will bring the blessing back down upon some of the hearts and lives of the people that are in this room. Some of them, Lord, that will open the heavens back over their lives again.

Father in Heaven, we just thank You for the clarity of Your Word. Lord, You leave us with all of our questions answered. Dear Father, we also pray for the dear souls that are going to be baptized today.

Let this be their commitment before You, Lord. We ask You to add Your blessing to the words. Father, may it carry on in the hearts of all of these people for however long You need it to.

So You bring them to that place where that choice can be made. We ask it in Jesus' precious name. Amen.

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If you have received that blessing, please share it with others. Really ye have received, really give. Matthew 10a.

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