

October 27, 2024

# Identity: Choices

Bill Crowder, contributor to *Our Daily Bread*, writes that according to *The Daily Mirror*, “the average person will make 773,618 decisions over a lifetime, . . . [but] we will come to regret 143,262 of them.” Crowder writes that he didn’t know how the paper came up with those specific numbers, “but it’s clear that we face countless decisions throughout our lifetime. The sheer quantity of them might become paralyzing, especially when we consider that all our choices have consequences, some far more momentous than others.”<sup>1</sup>

Joshua was near the end of his life and had assembled Israel’s leaders for a final “company meeting.” He asked them if they wanted to continue on the team. If so, they must serve God with sincerity and integrity, but it was the leaders’ decision: “So now, revere the LORD. Serve him honestly and faithfully. Put aside the gods that your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt and serve the LORD. But if it seems wrong in your opinion to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve” (Joshua 24:14-15). If they did not think the relationship was a good fit for them, they should come clean and make the break, but Joshua would not be swayed no matter what the other leaders decided. He said, “But my family and I will serve the LORD.”

When Joshua issued this challenge, he knew the stakes were high. If the people chose to worship and serve other gods, their covenantal relationship with God would collapse. If they failed to serve God wholeheartedly and faithfully, their nation could self-destruct. But Yahweh is a God of freedom, not of slavery. The Israelites were not forced to choose God. The Israelites quickly decided to serve God, but Joshua warned them not to rush into making a commitment they did not intend to keep. God was not interested in their empty promises. If they decided to serve God, they had to carry through in the way they lived (verses 16-24).

“As we begin each new day, possibilities stretch before us, leading to scores of decisions. Taking the time to ask God to guide us will influence the choices we make. By the power of the Spirit, we can choose to follow [God] every day.”<sup>2</sup>

1. What does it mean to you that God has chosen you?
2. How does that affect your decision to choose God?
3. What other choices are you facing? How can you make wise decisions that will align with God’s will?

<sup>1</sup>From “Choosing to Follow God,” by Bill Crowder, *Our Daily Bread* (January 17, 2024).

<sup>2</sup>From “Choosing to Follow God.”