

## I. INTRODUCTION.

### A. Scripture text: **Joshua 24:14-21**.

“Now, therefore, fear the LORD and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. [15] “And if it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” [16] And the people answered and said, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; [17] for the LORD our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and who did these great signs in our sight and preserved us through all the way in which we went and among all the peoples through whose midst we passed. [18] “And the LORD drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites who lived in the land. We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God.” [19] Then Joshua said to the people, “You will not be able to serve the LORD, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgression or your sins. [20] “If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you after He has done good to you.” [21] And the people said to Joshua, “No, but we will serve the LORD.”

-  B. Some decisions in life are very easy, made without much effort. Other decisions are quite difficult, made only with much prayer and great concern.
- C. The Bible gives us stories of individuals who had to make decisions. Some made good choices, others did not.
- D. Tonight’s lesson is about:
  1. Bible people who decided against God.
  2. Bible people who decided for God.
  3. Knowing that your decision about God is all important.

## II. DECISIONS MADE AGAINST GOD.

### A. Lot’s wife.

1. Will she serve Jehovah or the sinful cities she longed for (Gen. 19:26; Lk 17:32).  
(**Gen 19:26**) But his wife, from behind him, looked *back*; and she became a pillar of salt.  
(**Lk 17:32**) “Remember Lot’s wife.
2. Do we love the things of the world, more than the things of God (2Tim. 4:10)?  
for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens *has gone* to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

### B. The rich young ruler.

1. He had to decide between God and his wealth (Lk. 18:18-23).  
And a certain ruler questioned Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” [19] And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone. [20] “You know the commandments, ‘DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, DO NOT MURDER, DO NOT STEAL, DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER.’” [21] And he said, “All these things I have kept from *my* youth.” [22] And when Jesus heard *this*, He said to him, “One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess, and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” [23] But when he had heard these things, he became very sad; for he was extremely rich.
2. Who is the real God in your life (Mt. 6:24)?  
“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

### C. Pontius Pilate.

1. He thought he could get by with NOT making a decision (Mt. 27:24).  
And when Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the multitude, saying, “I am innocent of this Man’s blood; see *to that* yourselves.”
2. It’s all right to need more information, but sooner or later everyone has to decide about Jesus.

-  D. Felix.
- Was his real reason for listening to Paul to hear the truth or get a bribe (Ac. 24:24-27)?  
But some days later, Felix arrived with Drusilla, his wife who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul, and heard him  *speak*  about faith in Christ Jesus. [25] And as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, “Go away for the present, and when I find time, I will summon you.” [26] At the same time too, he was hoping that money would be given him by Paul; therefore he also used to send for him quite often and converse with him. [27] But after two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and wishing to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul imprisoned.
  - Why are you Xian? For social-reasons? Because your family is? To go to heaven? You decide!
- E. Agrippa.
- Would he endure the loss of social standing and public respectability by becoming a Xian (Ac. 26:28,29)?  
And Agrippa  *replied*  to Paul, “In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian.” [29] And Paul  *said* , “I would to God, that whether in a short or long time, not only you, but also all who hear me this day, might become such as I am, except for these chains.”
  - What are the things in your life that keep you from of becoming a Xian? Pride? Popularity? Peer pressure? Social standing? Agrippa kept putting off what he knew he must do.
- F. Can you relate with any of these people in your decisions for or against X?

### III. DECISIONS MADE FOR GOD.

-  A. Moses.
- He decided to serve God and His people instead of the Egyptians (Heb. 11:24-26).  
By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; [25] choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; [26] considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.
  - Moses regarded the passing pleasures of sin as no match for pleasing God and being rewarded in eternity.
- B. Joshua.
- He decided to serve God, persuading his household to do the same. By doing this he and his family forsook idol worship (see Jo. 24:14-21).
  - Lesson: Are there any idols in your life? What do you, enjoy more than serving God?
- C. Ruth.
- She decided that her life would be one of devotion (Ruth 1:16).  
But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you  *or*  turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people  *shall be*  my people, and your God, my God.
  - Sometimes the decision to serve/worship God means leaving home, family, country, and religion.
-  D. The prodigal son.
- He decided that he could not run his own life, and that he needed his father (Lk. 15:18).  
‘I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight;
  - We are not smart enough to know what is best for us. We need God to help us (Prov. 14:12).  
There is a way  *which seems*  right to a man, But its end is the way of death.
- E. Cornelius.
- When he was taught more perfectly about the Way, he obeyed the Lord (Ac. 10:46-48).  
For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, [47] “Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we  *did* , can he?” [48] And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days.
  - Even well-meaning, religious people need to obey the truth when it is presented to them. It is more important to obey than to hang on to tradition.
- F. Can you relate to these people in your decisions to follow X?

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.



- A. You must decide. Indecision with all the facts, is a decision against the issue.
- B. Elijah made the people decide between Jehovah and Baal (1Kgs. 18:21).  
And Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long *will* you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people did not answer him a word.
- C. We must make a decision on whether or not we are going to follow X (Mt. 12:30; Lk. 9:23).  
(Mt 12:30) “He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters.  
(Lk 9:23) And He was saying to *them* all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.
- D. Story of two boys, old man, and the bird. Whether the bird lives or dies, the decision is up to you.
- E. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.