

Misty Ann Weaver made a tragic decision. The Houston-area licensed vocational nurse was charged in the burning death of three people after she started a fire in her six-story office building. She started the fire because she was behind on an audit for her plastic surgeon boss, and she feared being fired. She hoped the fire would buy more time. Obviously, her actions had unintended consequences.

When we delay in doing right- that can have unintended consequence- as men of God obedience in doing the will of God both in small choices and large choices will impact our destiny

Genesis 37:19-22—19 Then they said to one another, “Look, this dreamer is coming! **20** Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, ‘Some wild beast has devoured him.’ We shall see what will become of his dreams!” **21** But Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands, and said, “Let us not kill him.” **22** And Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit which is in the wilderness, and do not lay a hand on him”—that he might deliver him out of their hands, and bring him back to his father.

I. REALITY OF LIFE

- A. Foundation of life is build upon choices we make
 - 1. Choices determine who we are
 - 2. Choices determine where we are going
 - 3. Choices determine what we become - Decisions you make today will effect your future/destiny
 - a) Choices you are making today- do they bring you closer or take you further away from the will of God?
- B. God gives each of us the opportunity to obey Him
 - 1. Free Will
 - a) Free moral agents - can make the decisions to do what is right - to choose what is good or bad

Deuteronomy 30:19—19 I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; **therefore choose life**, that both you and your descendants may live;

2. In the Calling of God

a) Many men here you have heard from God and believe you are called to preach the Gospel

Mark 1:17 Then Jesus said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”

b) Critical part in being a man of God/ disciple of Jesus is following him

3. In living a Christian Life

a) Truth is whether you are called to preach or not- as a believer you are expected to make right decisions

1 Kings 18:21—21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word.

C. Mistaken Idea in choices:

1. The option to choose right will always be available to me

a) Ruben like many people today had every intention to do the right thing but made the decision to wait/delay

Genesis 37:21-22 But when Reuben heard it, he rescued him out of their hands, saying, “Let us not take his life.”

22 And Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him”—that he might rescue him out of their hand to restore him to his father.

2. Intention is more important action

3. Failure to choose right does not ultimately effect who I am

a) False thinking is that Choices I make don't determine my destiny and future- this is a lie

II. DANGER OF DELAY

A. We Deceive ourselves about what's in our own hearts

1. Partial obedience/ Right choices are the same as complete obedience

a) The positive side of this story is the Ruben stepped in and saved Joseph from being murdered- that's good- the negative part is that Ruben delayed in taking Joseph back to his father

b) Old saying “Good is the enemy of Best.” We have the ability to rationalize partial obedience

c) The question: Is partial obedience to God really obedience at all.

2. An outward appearance of right choices is better then an inward decisions of obedience

- a) Ruben stood up against his brothers so that they would not kill Joseph but then recommends tossing him into a pit? that makes no sense- He compromised his character in order to keep his other brother happy

Genesis 37:22 *And Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him"—that he might rescue him out of their hand to restore him to his father.*

- 3. We deceive ourselves that our relationship with God is something that it is not

- a) We deceive ourselves with partial obedience- when Gods desire is full surrender

1 Samuel 15:22 *So Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.*

- B. We influence and effect other people to make wrong choices

- 1. Brings regret and shame

- a) Ruben had to live with the guilt of letting his own brother be sold into slavery

Heard a man in his 60s just recently tell me that when he was first saved he felt called to preach -various reason chose not to pursue that calling he began to wear and say "I think about that every day."

- 2. Delayed obedience will not just harm you- it will effect other people as well

- a) See this men can see-saw back and forth on their calling - until their wives are so fed up with the back and forth they want nothing to do with the ministry.

- 3. The tragedy of our story:

- a) Ruben delayed in doing right with the intention of save his brother later but that opportunity was gone
- b) Danger when we delay- we may never get that opportunity again

Genesis 37:29–30—29 *Then Reuben returned to the pit, and indeed Joseph was not in the pit; and he tore his clothes. 30 And he returned to his brothers and said, "The lad is no more; and I, where shall I go?"*

- 4. The damage is done through delay

- a) Think of all the people who where hurt by the decision of delay/ Joseph/ Jacob his father/ family would have been hurt/ Ruben hurt himself

III. CHOOSING RIGHT

- A. The Hope in a relationship with God

- 1. You can make a decision to surrender

- a) God allows us to repent- change our mind about our actions and behavior

- b) This starts with Salvation- recognizing that you've been making the wrong choices- salvation is surrendering your will to God

Genesis 4:7 *If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."*

- 2. Our Story: We see Gods purposes and plans were still accomplished in-spite of Josephs brothers
- a) Gods invitation to you this morning is an invitation to surrender

- 3. Choose to say yes to God- This is not a matter of negotiation/ not a contract- its a surrender of ourselves

Matthew 5:37 *Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.*

- B. God will bless a life surrendered to His will

- 1. IF you have delayed in doing right- that is a fixable problem

- a) begin to make right choices again- what has God been telling you to do? Start there!

- 2. Let the Focus of your life be obedience

- a) The safest place for you to be in life is in the middle of Gods will

Matthew 10:18-20 *18 You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; 20 for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.*

- 3. Obedience to God brings men into their destiny

- a) When we choose to obey God in every arena of life - God is able to trust us and guide us in his purpose