

"THE RECKONING"

1 Corinthians 9:16-17

1 Corinthians 9:16-17 ¹⁶For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! ¹⁷For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship.

I. MISTAKEN OPTIONS

- A. We look at life in terms of options: *I can do anything/choose anything I like. What do you want to be...?*
 - 1. We apply the option mentality to the will of God
 - a. The will of God in service: *We are all called to serve God/His will in some way (in church)*
 - 1. Some don't feel the need to get involved
 - b. The will of God in preaching: **Mark 3:14** *he appointed 12...that he might send them out to preach*
 - 1. The wrong idea: *Preaching is just one of many possible options in life*
 - 2. Because we think we are able to choose anything we like – we tend to look only at personal benefits
 - a. Will I enjoy it at all times? Will I be wildly successful? Will I be famous? Will I be appreciated?
 - b. Will everyone appreciate my efforts? Will I make lots of money?
 - 1. The context is Paul's preaching and his money decisions
 - 3. If you think that you are able to choose from a buffet of options – you will most likely choose for yourself
 - a. What's comfortable for me? What's most advantageous for me? Most financially secure for me?
 - B. The result: We can wind up turning away from our calling
 - 1. RYR went away sorrowful: He chose for money. 2. **2 Timothy 4:10** for Demas has forsaken me...

II. THE TRUTH OF WOE

- A. Our text gives an accurate picture: *The truth of stewardship*
 - 1. An owner chooses to entrust things with another: *They are expected to act in the owner's interests!*
 - a. **Matthew 25:14** *KOH is like a man...who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them.*
 - b. God is the true owner of our lives; we are merely stewards: **1 Cor 6:19-20** *not own/bought w/a price*
 - 2. God makes choices for our lives! *He decides in advance what He wants us to do*
 - a. **Jeremiah 1:5** *before you were born.* b. **1 Corinthians 1:1** *called to be an Apostle thru the will of God*
- B. Paul says an amazing thing: **V16** *woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!* A grieving denunciation
 - 1. We will answer to God for our calling – whether we did God's will!
 - a. **Matthew 25:19** *the lord came and settled accounts: Checked the books!* b. **Romans 14:12**
 - 1. Woe is used of Jesus telling people he is not pleased! (Pharisees)
 - 2. Woe b/c you didn't love God enough to obey. 3. Woe b/c you're not grateful enough to obey
 - 4. Woe b/c people's lives/eternal souls hang in the balance
 - a. There are people God has chosen for you to reach: If you don't – they won't be saved!
 - 1. I have asked converts: If we didn't come then/but years later: Would you be saved? NO
 - 5. In eternity God can show us what might have been!

III. From Woe to Go

- A. The better option is to do God's will – willingly! **17** *For if I do this willingly... Gladly - because we want to!*
 - 1. Willingly b/c we are grateful to God: **Romans 12:1** *therefore...by the mercies of God/living sacrifice*
 - 2. Willingly b/c we care about people: **Matthew 14:14** *moved with compassion...*
 - a. Care about their suffering now. b. Care about their souls. *Ask God for it!*
 - 3. Biblically we don't have an option – except to obey: *Line our decisions up with God's will*
 - a. *A retired general: as soon as he opened his eyes in the morning, prayed: "Your orders today, Lord!"*
 - 1. *What can I do today to bring me closer to your will?*
- B. God says there is a reward for those who obey willingly: **V17** *if I do this willingly, I have a reward;*
 - 1. **The reward of lives changed:**
 - 2. **The reward of helping others enter their destiny:**
 - 3. **The eternal reward:** **Matthew 25:21** *well done!* The pleasure of God!
 - a. The only thing we can take into eternity are the souls we have helped be a part of saving
 - 1. **Daniel 12:3** *those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.*