

Choosing to Choose

Joshua said to the people, "Choose this day whom you will serve." (The Revised Common Lectionary includes Joshua 24.1-3a, 14-25. The longer story is verses 1-28.) I've been thinking about all the choices we make every day without even thinking about them, and the way those choices – or our passive inaction - determine what's important to us.

Tony Campolo, a well-known author and speaker once said: "Frankly, the argument against believing in God or against placing one's trust in Jesus is every bit as persuasive as the argument for it. So I chose to choose to believe and trust. And that choice has made all the difference."

"I *chose* to choose." There's something powerful, something active and engaged and lively, about that kind of choosing. Nothing to let us off the hook. No passivity. No 'going with the flow.' No rote declarations. No 'my life is just so busy.' Instead, a deliberate, thoughtful decision that involves both heart and mind and changes the way we do things. In the context of faith and our life together as a community of faith, it means choosing to rearrange our priorities and requires a determination to honor choice to follow Christ.

"Choosing to choose" may seem awkward and redundant, but this is not splitting hairs or playing word games," writes Howard E. Friend, Jr. "Choosing to choose is different from merely choosing. It evokes a sturdy intention, flexes against doubt and resistance, hones resilience, and sends down hearty roots. It has stamina and longevity, poised for a long-distance run. It is resolute and determined. Merely choosing can be unreflective and impulsive, while choosing to choose is reasoned and measured."

A two-word imperative—"choose life"—concludes Moses' final speech on the banks of the Jordan (Deut. 30:19). After a long season of divine patience, Elijah announces that a time of choosing is at hand: "How long will you go limping with two different opinions?" Elijah asks. "If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him" (1 Kings 18:21). "You cannot serve God and money," Jesus proclaims succinctly; a choice must be made. Be hot or cold, but not lukewarm; hear the knock and open the door (Rev. 3:15–16, 20). It is a matter of choice.

Choose to choose.
Choose God over all else.

Peace and joy,
Vicki
