

"Inheriting the Promises!" 2021 Summer Series at the Village Church

#3- "The Choice Is Yours!" John 3: 36 "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."

Introduction: IL- A farmer hired a man to work for him. He told him his first task would be to paint the barn and said it should take him about three days to complete. But the hired man was finished in one day. The farmer set him to cutting wood, telling him it would require about 4 days. The hired man finished in a day and a half, to the farmer's amazement. The next task was to sort out a large pile of potatoes. He was to arrange them into three piles: seed potatoes, food for the hogs, and potatoes that were good enough to sell. The farmer said it was a small job and shouldn't take long at all. At the end of the day the farmer came back and found the hired man had barely started. "What's the matter here?" the farmer asked. The hired man responded: "I can work hard, but I can't make decisions!"

All of us make decisions daily, but some are especially important decisions in life! This morning we want to consider the most important choice possible, so our proposition is the following:

Everyone can escape the wrath of God by making the right choice between...

Receiving the gift of eternal life- "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life!"

Life as God intended it to be! IL- Drudge Report- "18% of Americans (46 million) say they have just one person or nobody they can trust!" Believe me- no, believe the Word of God- you CAN and should trust Jesus for your life day by day and for your eternal future! We don't have to wait until we draw our last breath to find out if God granted us eternal life with Him in Heaven! This present active word, "has" means it is going on now for believers! There is no reason to worry about life after death if the choice is made to receive God's gift of grace and believe that God keeps His word! John 5: 24- "Truly, truly I say to you, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me HAS eternal life and does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life!" The joyful result of believing is life- real life, not just existence- life as God planned it for our good and His joy!

Eternal life NOW and for all eternity! The true believer HAS eternal life, not "hopes/thinks he has!" Happily acknowledging God's gifts through the Spirit means that we can serve Him and bless others now to His glory. The true believer thanks God for the sure and certain hope of Heaven and basks in His love that will continue undiminished in glory forever! The believer learns to express gratitude continually, like Paul's testimony in Galatians 2: 20- "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live! Yet not I, but Christ lives in me! And the life that I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me!"

This first choice clearly leads to eternal life in the here and now! You can accept the payment in full already made by Jesus Christ on the Cross or you can reject it and YOU will pay!

Rejecting the love of God- "Whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."

God's character is at stake! Exodus 34: 6, 7- "The Lord passed before him (Moses) and proclaimed, 'the Lord, the Lord- a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...'" Love impacts His grace, mercy, holiness, righteousness. His love motivates His response to evil in man and society. YET: He is "slow to anger" and deals patiently with everyone. Example- Noah's day prior to the Flood- about 100 years to build the Ark! Romans 2:5- "Because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed." God's holiness cannot and will not ignore sin! **IL-** Jonathon Edwards- "Sin against an infinitely holy God is worthy of infinite punishment!" Rejection of God is to live a life without the purpose for which God created us- namely to glorify God for who He is by the way we live. Like Lucifer's case who became Satan. (Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28) **IL-** Albert Barnes- "The determination of God to express opposition to man's sin in a righteous way by excluding the offender from the favors He bestows on His children of faith!" The sin of unbelief makes God out as a liar and tramples on the precious work of Christ at Calvary! Wrath is not just a possibility, not a mere threat but a present reality! The WHY of God's wrath is voluntary sin and a persistent refusal of God's mercy and grace. The HOW of His wrath, like withholding favor, is up to God as the Righteousness Judge! It is not that God is some irritable being who blows up in a fit of anger- rather His wrath is "the right and necessary reaction to moral evil" (J. I. Packer quote) Only with God does punishment ALWAYS fit the crime! Man has freedom to choose, but with any and every choice there are consequences! Matthew 21: 12-13- Jesus was angry with the moneychangers in the Temple, using that sacred place for monetary gain and taking unfair advantage over worshipers who came to the Temple! His reaction was fully justified!

Judgment on sin was paid in full by Jesus Christ! God poured out His wrath on His Son who "bore our sins in His own body on that tree"! [1 Peter 2: 24] Those who blow that off are under God's watchful eye and under His righteous judgment! Satan loves to have us make the choice to do his bidding and to fall prey to his tempting and as a result not to see Jesus in all His glory. 2 Corinthians 4: 3 and 4- "Even if our gospel is veiled it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ." So, there is a blinding force behind disobedience and a determination to accuse God rather than Satan or sinful self! What occurs in sinful man is willful, active resistance, an unwillingness to believe what God says and what Scripture reveals about a loving, caring, forgiving God! No need to worry about wrath- it can be removed if the choice is made to receive God's free gift of eternal life! Romans 5: 9- "Since therefore we have been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God!" Obedience comes after confessing Christ as Savior and is proof of that honest confession and acceptance of God's gracious gift of salvation!

Conclusion: To NOT choose for Christ is a choice! **IL-** Bruce Barton- [Life Application Commentary] "Indecision is a fatal decision!" Listen intently to two verses that prompt a heartfelt "thank You" to God from the true believer- from YOU?

Zephaniah 3: 17- "The Lord your God is in your midst- a mighty one who will save. He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you by His love, He will exult over you with loud singing!"

Romans 8: 1- "There is therefore now **no** condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus!"