

The Choice Week 3:

Well Good morning RLA Family! I am so excited to be back on stage this week to share what God has laid on my heart this week to share. I tell you what church... There is some pressure, Jocelyn brought the HEAT last week am I right?! Man, when she asked me to switch I should've said no... Nah, shout to Jocelyn for doing so well in leading us last week you did fantastic.

Before we get started with what I got prepared is Bob Heath here this week? Bob.. I have a dad joke for you, "Knock Knock", Owls, Yeah they do.... That's terrible y'all but I got more.. Chuck Pursell are you in the building? What's the best thing about Switzerland? I don't know, but the flag is a big plus. Last one I promise, Jon Janke where you at?! Air used to be free at the gas station, now it costs 2.50. You want to know why? Inflation.

Man I am so sorry for that church, these are just so corny. I wanted to start off with Dad jokes this morning because this series is called "The Choice" and spoiler alert, we are going to be talking about choices today. 1. I couldn't help myself and 2. I felt like such a dad this week as I sermon prepped this week talking about choices. Like I feel as I was

preparing I would step back and say “Bailey you sound like a such a dad... which I am not.. Lets get that out of the way. Not for 10 years”

We’re are continuing our series called “The Choice” where directions over intention leads to your destination.

Every week so far we have posed a questions to you. Pastor Jim asked you if you have ever had an “I told you so moment”, Last week Jocelyn asked if you have ever had a “crash burn moment” Well today church I want to ask?

Has there ever been a moment in life where you wanted a do-over?

Now if you know anything about me, YALL ALREADY KNOW, I got a story.

Picture this, 16 year old Bailey, which for reference... I looked like this. Yeah.... The LORD has worked over the years people.

I am 16, and what’s the one thing that every 16 year old wants?! DRIVERS LICENSE... Now here’s a fun

fact that none of probably know.. I failed my drivers test 4 TIMES before I got it on the 5th try.

NOW PARENTS.... You probably won't believe me but I am a good driver... So don't hold this against me for youth trips... We can drive around the parking lot if you want...

I wish that I had a do over for all four of those tests but there was one time that I especially wish that I had a do over. See 2 out of the 4 times I failed parallel parking.. understandable right? It's the hardest part of the test. And My instructor wasn't the most friendly from what I remember. The 3rd time I was "going too slow" not sure how that happens on a test so I sped up and he failed me for speeding. Make up your mind dude. The 4th time is the time where I truly wish I could get a do over. The 4th time I got a new instructor. I was pumped. This new instructor gets in the car and all I can think is "lets go cuzzo, your boy is getting his license today" WRONG.

I passed parallel parking, easy, it's in the bag. Get on the road part, We're driving, chatting it up and laughing. All I can think is "ya buddy I will have my license this afternoon." The instructor says "Alright Bailey let's start heading back, make a right up here" I gotchu captain. So I go to make this right

and as I am getting ready to stop for this yield, the car hits ice and I slide across the road and right into a ditch. It's not as bad as you think, I was going approximately 2 miles an hour. It was in super slow mo. AND the greatest part of this was the instructor un-clicks his pens and says "I had a feeling that was going to happen. You need to slow down earlier in those conditions" and me being my 16 year old self said the most Bailey thing ever "So does this mean I failed?" Yeah.....

We all have instances or things that have happen in our lives that we want a do over in life. Because chances are good the second time around is going to be way better Than the first time. If I would've gotten a do over you best believe I would've passed, I would've started stopping as soon as we turn onto that street.

-DO OVERS-

The sense of do overs is nice in theory, but unfortunately we don't really get do overs in life.

Since we don't get do overs we must really take the time to make the right choices to keep us on the right path.

Scripture tells us:

Proverbs 27:12- The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty. (NIV)

The prudent or wise, will see danger and take refuge. While the simple will keep going and pay the penalty.

The wise will know to slow down during the snowy conditions while the simple, well the simple will continue on and end up in a ditch.

When it comes to making decisions or choices, we must be the prudent, When we see danger we must take refuge. Or else we will pay the consequences of being simple.

To break it down even farther there was a quote from a Pastor that has resonated with me since I was a teenager.

“The choices we make will bring us closer or farther from our Destinations” - Rev. James Grove II

The choices we make whether we like it or not..
Have a direct on where we end up on the path.

If your goal this year is to lose 10 pounds, and you're a frequent flyer at the McDonalds guess what? Chances are good you gaining 10 pounds instead.

Oh we say man, I need to save money this year. And you're going to Starbucks everyday to get the mocha jocha java 3 times whip espresso that cost 25 bucks.... YOU AINT SAVING MONEY.

No matter what the severity of the decision is, our choices will either bring us closer or farther to where we want to go.

This is where proverbs is telling us to prudent while on the path. Because we see the dangers, we take into consideration the consequences. We see that if we do THIS it will turn into THAT soo therefore I must stay away. The wise will see the danger and take refuge. But what about the simple? Well the simple will just keep going and pay the penalty. The simple basically will not take anything but the now into consideration. They won't see the repercussions of their actions. They are focused on

the now of decisions. We have all been here before. We have been walking down the pass and have seen warning after warning, red flag after red flag, but what do we do?! We keep going!!

See this is tricky because half the time we don't even know that we're doing it right?! Normally it's just little things that keep piling up and piling and next thing you know we're stuck or suffering as the Bible says. I didn't see the danger, I didn't see the red flags going in.

I didn't see that me buying all the newest and greatest stuff to impress people would be a problem and now I am broke. I didn't think that this would turn into a big thing.

I didn't see that if I don't feel like coming to church and I just watch online that it would turn into a habit and now I am disconnected from the body and I feel alone. Ouch.....

Some of us today are on a path today that is leading to danger, or maybe some of us are in the danger now. We ignored the danger and here we are.

The questions gets raised. PB what can I do?! I didn't see the danger and now I am stuck.... HOW DID I GET HERE?!

WHAT DO I DO...

OHHHH BUDDY if that you today you came to right place.

If you are on this path today I just want to encourage today that there is hope, and there is redemption for you. AND That's just not me telling you.. This is what scripture tells us.

Let's dive into some scripture.

Luke 15:11-32. This is a story that most of us are familiar with. This is the Parable of The Lost son or Prodigal Son. This right here is a story of someone who made bad decision after bad decision and it gives us a live look at the answer when we find ourselves down an undesirable path.

One day the younger of the two sons demanded that he have his inheritance right now. He was driven by greed and foolishness this young son

basically tells his dad “I can’t wait for you to die, give me what is due to me now.”

Bad decision #1, this younger son and it just keeps going downhill. He takes his money and what does he do with it? He invests it in nice Roth IRA and plans for the future to live on the dividends.... SIKE. The bible says He moved out too far away land and spent ALL OF IT on wild living. My mans took his money, moved out, went to the Miami of Israel and blew all of his money being crazy... That’s like bad decisions galore right there.

That’s the tricky part, when it comes to making decisions on the pathway, we don’t see the danger ahead and we just keep walking. When we are on the this path we don’t see the end results of our actions, we don’t see the long term affects.

Put ourselves in his shoes, because chances are good we have been before.

He’s living it up, on his dads dime, and he has all these friends, he probably eats like a king every night, He does whatever he wants whenever he wants, it a big ole party....

What he doesn't see in the danger ahead. The bible tells us that He ran out of money and a great famine swept over the land and he began to starve. He talked a farmer into letting him help on the farm.

The bible says he was starved, so starved that he is looked at the pig food and was tempted to eat.

“PAUSE” Do you y'all know what pigs eat? Pigs will eat anything. Let me tell you, Tori and I worked at the Second Harvest Food Bank, we both at some point in our career worked in the volunteer department. Where we'd sort through donated foods and at the end of a project we would take a tote of expired donated food and what would we tag it? “PIG FOOD” There were farmers in the area that would take it and feed to their pigs..

THIS YOUNG SON WANTED TO EAT THAT.. He was so starved he was tried to squeeze in on the pigs meal here.

And then he came to his senses and basically got this bright idea. Yo why would I eat this?! Surely the servants back at home have better food than this. I've seen what they eat and they eat pretty good if

I'm being honest. I bet if I go home go and beg my father, I bet he would let me into the servant house..

How many know When we read the Bible we can put ourselves right there.

The son as been off on his own doing crazy stuff.. He said dad I wish you were dead.... I can't wait for you to die.... Then I can have all that is promised me. BTW I'm just going to head out. You have nothing left to offer me and I'm out.

Blinded and simple heading towards danger..

At the lowest of lows... Getting ready to eat pig food leftovers... Comes to his senses...

“Man, I messed up BIG TIME. I can't believe it got this far out of control. I can't believe I let it get this far. I am broke, starved, and all alone. I should go back to my FATHER and surely he will let me be servant.. I know I can't be his son anymore, I am messed up way too much for that.”

This right here church, is step one of getting out of the danger, this is the step of getting unstuck today.

We must realize that we are IN THE danger for us. Its not an easy task, why? Because we have to tell ourselves that we are simple, that we were wrong, and that our actions are inevitably the reason for us being here..... OUCH

Step two is you have to have a direction change. You have realized that you're in the danger, NOW its time to get out of the danger. And how do we do that?! We change our direction. THATS TOUGH. Why?

We begin to think that: I have messed up too much, that I am too damaged, I'm lost cause, I've been out of church too long its going to be weird, DO You know long it's been since I've picked up a bible or even Prayed?! God has probably forgotten about me....

If that you today, I just want to tell you:

Those are the lies of the enemy and it's time to come home.

I am going to start wrapping up, so if the band can help me close us out that would be perfect.

— — — — — — — — — — BAND — — — — — — — — — —

You want to know how I know that is lie?!

Verse 20

NIV

So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

Don't miss this today church. How many know that scripture is written a certain way for a REASON!

WHEN HIS FATHER SAW HIM.... The bible doesn't say the the servant went to get the master and the master greeted his son... NAH IT SAYS WHEN THE FATHER SAW HIM. Don't believe me?

NIV “But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him

NLT “So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming

NKJV

“And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him

BOTTOM LINE GOD NEVER STOPS LOOKING FOR YOU.

Doesn't matter what you have done, doesn't matter how bad you messed, when you decide to change your direction and come BACK to the FATHER he will be waiting for you.

And that's not even the best part.

Verse 22

22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate

When we come back to the father WE ARE RESTORED. The father said, quick give him the finest robes, give me a ring, get this boy shoes. MY SON, MY DAUGHTER has come home to me.

GOD WANTS TO RESTORE YOU AS HIS OWN. He wants you to come home and he wants to celebrate! Quick Let me clothe them in my redeeming love for this my child has returned. That's not enough, let me give them my grace.

The decision we make today church, will either lead us closer or father from our destination.

BUT the biggest choice for us today,

Is whether or not we need a direction change. If you are the young son today, it's time to come home.

—————PRAY—————

Life Group Questions:

1. What is your do over moment? How did you feel?!
2. Read Proverbs 27:12, Do you feel like you are more prudent or more simple at times?
3. What are some decision that have lead us closer or farther from our destination?
4. If you have ever been the young son in the parable what has been your “pig food” moment, where you realize it’s time for a direction change.
5. What are some action steps for us to take in order for us to stay on the right path?