

Weighing Our Options

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple sources)

Introduction:

- A. A moment's wisdom on options
 - 1. "Life is not a matter of chance...it is a matter of choice." (Ka)
 - 2. "It is our choices that show what we truly are far more than our abilities."
 - 3. "I discovered I always have choices, but sometimes it's only a choice of my attitude."
- B. Discernment and good judgment are important for children of God.
 - 1. Proper priorities are critical for a successful Christian life - Matt. 6:33
 - 2. Discerning between good and evil is crucial - Heb. 5:14
 - 3. Going a step beyond that and discerning between what is good and what is better is one of the marks of growing toward spiritual maturity.
- C. How does one choose between two "goods"?

I. TO OBEY IS BETTER THAN TO SACRIFICE

- A. 1Sam. 15:19-22 - Note the important question: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD?"
- B. One cannot atone for disobedience by doing good works - Isa. 1:11-17
- C. One cannot substitute good works for obedience - Prov. 21:3; Jer. 7:22-23

II. THE LITTLE THE RIGHTEOUS HAS IS BETTER THAN RICHES OF THE WICKED

- A. Psalm 37:16
- B. Even if riches were morally neutral - Prov. 15:16, 16:8; 1Tim. 6:6; Luke 12:15
 - 2. Abundance is seldom morally neutral - Luke 16:19-31; 1Tim. 6:9-11

III. IT IS BETTER TO BE DROWN IN THE SEA THAN TO LEAD ONE TO SIN

- A. Matt. 18:6-9 - Saving our own lives is less important than saving the souls of others
- B. Rom. 14:7, 15:1-3; Heb. 11:4

IV. IT IS BETTER TO HAVE NEVER KNOWN THE TRUTH THAN TO TURN FROM IT

- A. 2Peter 2:21 - This is not a defense of ignorance, but an emphatic rejection of apostasy
- B. Heb. 2:3; Luke 12:47-48 - Those who abandon the faith will be tormented more keenly by the eternal remembrance of the opportunity they cast aside

V. IT IS BETTER TO TRUST GOD THAN TO PUT CONFIDENCE IN ANY MAN

- A. Psalm 118:8-9; Ecc. 7:5
- B. We must begin with the premise that we are utterly dependent on God; otherwise, it is inevitable that we will fail at some point
 - 1. Jer. 10:23, 30:11 - We must trust that God works unceasingly for our spiritual well-being

VI. IT IS BETTER TO SUFFER FOR CHRIST THAN TO BE PRAISED BY MEN

- A. Suffering for Christ glorifies - 1Peter 3:17-18, 4:12-16
- B. Praise from men diminishes - Matt. 6:2; John 5:44

VII. IS IT BETTER TO MARRY OR REMAIN SINGLE?

- A. I call this the “Happy wife; happy life” principle (Jeff Allen)
- B. Prov. 25:24; 1Cor. 7:9

Conclusion:

- A. Illustrating the standard
 - 1. Amusing, but it illustrates the point: Discerning between good and better, while occasionally and partially dependent on circumstances, is a function of spiritual maturity.
- B. Choosing good over evil shows that one is in Christ
 - 1. At some point, those in Christ must choose between the good and the better
 - 2. Those who choose the good over the better show that they have yet to grow up in Christ
 - 3. Those who choose the better over the good show that they have matured in the faith