

I Choose

By Steve & Carol Ryerson

Billy went so fast down the bike path into the little gully that he didn't see the rock in the way. "Un oh, what have I done now?!" He thought for the fraction of a second before his front tire hit the rock.

Sammy could see that his little friend was about to take a tumble, but it all happened so fast that he just stood there frozen, unable to move.

Billy lost control, flew over the handle bars, and into the ground on the upside of the gully.

"Why did you go down there so fast, Billy?" Blurted Sammy.

"Oh, I dunno...I just thought it would be fun."

All of us make choices in our lives each day. Some are of more consequence than others. We might be choosing what to fix for dinner, or we might be praying and choosing whether or not to take a job opportunity in a neighboring state. Maybe we're following the Lord's leading, and maybe we're not.

Some choices we make are rational and well-considered. Others are made purely on emotion (What kind of ice cream should I get?). Others are totally irrational. Even supposedly well-educated people can make some irrational decisions. Think about this one:

While reading a book recently, I was struck by the following quote made by Harvard's Nobel prize-winning biologist George Wald: "There are only two possible explanations as to how life arose: Spontaneous generation arising to evolution or a supernatural creative act of God...There is no other possibility. Spontaneous generation was scientifically disproved 120 years ago by Louis Pasteur and others, but that just leaves us with only one other possibility...that life came as a supernatural act of creation by God, but I can't accept that philosophy because I do not want to believe in God. Therefore I choose to believe in that which I know is scientifically impossible, spontaneous generation leading to evolution."¹

Chew on that one for awhile. What a powerful statement! This is a Nobel prize-winning biologist saying that evolution is scientifically impossible. Why does he still believe in something that cannot possibly be true? The only alternative is to believe in God. What is his response to that? "I do not want to believe in God. Therefore I choose to believe in that which I know is scientifically impossible."

Mr. Wald's belief is an act of his will. It is impossible, but he chooses to live in a fantasy world rather than face the fact that there is an Almighty God before Whom he will bow someday. (Philippians 2:10-11)

A woman living with a man to whom she was not married was caught up in drugs and alcohol. One day she came in contact with some people offering to sit down with her and study the Bible in her home. Having tasted and seen that the Lord is good (Psalm 34) when she was a young person, this woman, now in her forties, was hungry for God. She took them up on their offer. She was just

¹ George Wald, *Frontiers of Modern Biology on Theories of Origin of Life*, (New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1972), p. 187 quoted in Rex Russel, M.D., *What the Bible Says About Healthy Living*, (Ventura, California, Regal Books, 1996), p. 273

curious when the studies began. But, she felt her faith rise as she began to see some things for the first time. God began to do some wonderful things for her as He was drawing her back to Himself. For a time, she enjoyed the freedom that came as she recommitted herself to Jesus. But, her commitment was challenged, and after a while, she started going back to the drugs. One day she said, "Oh, well, it'll all come out in the wash." Translated: "No matter what I do, I'll be saved." That was quite the opposite of what the Lord had been showing her. In her struggle, she was deceiving herself into believing that what the Bible said was not really true.

In fact, we were the ones who worked with that woman, and I was the one who had our final contact with her. It will be a long time before I will forget the last time I saw this dear woman. I had stopped by her home to plead with her to not give up on God, but to continue seeking His complete deliverance from the drugs that she had gone back to. After a very cordial conversation, she looked me straight in the eye and said, "I love my drugs more than I love God."

I left that woman's house that day with a very heavy heart. How could she turn away from God like that?

Yet, as I think about it, how many of us are similar to these two people? Maybe our beliefs are more socially acceptable, but still unscriptural.

You fill in the blank: "I love _____ more than I love God." What is it for you? Your family? Home schooling? Your home? Your lifestyle? Food? Your job? Your car? Your hobby? Whatever it is that you do in your church?

Is there something in your life that you have chosen to place above God?

The first commandment states, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:3)

A quick perusal of Isaiah chapters 42-48 reveals God declaring his sovereignty:

I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. (42:8)

Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the LORD: and beside me there is no saviour. ...I am God. (43:10b-13)

Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God....Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God' I know not any. (44:6, 8b)

I am the LORD; and there is none else. (45:18b)

Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return. That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. (45:22-23)

God has declared that He will not allow any others to rise up alongside or above Him. It is part of His nature that ultimately He will not share the devotion of His people with anyone or anything else. If there is something else in our lives more important than Him, then we must repent of that idolatry while we have Grace to do so.

While Jesus walked on earth, He made it clear that He wants our hearts. Recall this question and Jesus' answer: "Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands? He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.'" (Mark 7:5-6)

Paul in his letter to the Church at Rome states: "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. ...For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Romans 8: 6, 14)

Think about that: We belong to God if we are allowing Him to lead us. ...everyday, in everything we do.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Matthew 6:21)

Are you storing up treasure in Heaven? Or, are you caught up in something of this world? Even something such as home schooling can lead us astray if we make home schooling our god. We should home educate in obedience to God.

How could we make it our god? Suppose you are in a group having friendly chit-chat with various people whom you do not know. You strike up a conversation with someone about the weather, and you proceed to family matters. It becomes apparent quickly that the person sends his children to the government school (which you identify mentally as an evil place). You begin to call into question everything the person says because, since you have made the righteous, spiritual decision to home school your children, you are on a far superior plane spiritually than the other person. You start making a plan as to how to evangelize the person for the cause of home schooling. As the person is telling you about his son's sports accomplishments, you are not listening because you are mentally reviewing the advantages of home education so that you can move into an explanation of why that person should home school.

But, you are missing the fact that the person needs God. You are missing the fact that the person can't see what you see in the government school because his eyes are not open to the true spiritual nature of anything in the world. He needs the Spirit of Jesus in his life. (Philippians 1:19) You need to evangelize him for Jesus, not for home schooling.

Couldn't the Lord use home schooling to bring the person to Himself? Yes, our great God and Savior Jesus Christ can work many different ways. Our point is that the focus is on winning the person for the Lord, not to anything that we have mistakenly placed above the Lord.

You may see that something in your life is not quite in line with the Word, but you really like that particular thing. You may, in essence, be saying with Mr. Wald, the Harvard biologist, "I do not want to be totally obedient to God. Therefore I choose to believe that I will be saved, even though God's Word tells me otherwise."

Peter reminded the Church to "be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walkth about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith." (I Peter 5:8-9b)

The enemy of our souls is slick. Just when we think things are going smoothly, he slips in unnoticed, trying to take our attention off of God. He knows he will not seduce most Christians into becoming involved with such things as drugs and alcohol. So, he takes things that should be good and twists them to try to deceive us. The things we are doing may be good, but our attitude toward them may become ungodly. Stand firm. Be steadfast. Keep your eyes on the One Who is your salvation. Choose this day with all your house to serve the Lord.

Joshua 24:15 ~ ...choose you this day whom ye will serve; ...but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.