

The Challenge of Choice

In life, God has given us two choices – two “menus” if you will. The first menu is simply scripture. We have to order everything on the menu and we have to clean our plates. Think of this menu as what God requires, commands, etc. In other words, love Jesus by keeping His commandments... all of them! (John 14:15).

But there is a second menu in life – let’s think of it as the dessert menu. There are many, many things on the dessert menu and we can order all we want, or order nothing at all. We can eat chocolate cake or key lime pie, or both! This menu represents God’s allowable options for life’s choices. We can become a school teacher or an engineer, a postal worker or a rocket scientist. All are within God’s allowable will.

Within this menu life choices abound. We can choose to be married or single, live in Kansas or Oregon. We can choose to live in the city or the countryside. We can choose to go play golf, go fishing, hiking, camping, or visit a museum.

So... what’s the point? We must be deeply wise in life as we discern which things are on which menu! When we treat God’s first menu (the commands) as if they are optional, we can commit grave error by losing what God has not loosed. Likewise, when we treat optional menu items as things that are commanded, we bind where God has not bound.

The realities of these differences between the two “menus” become even clearer when we remember that numerous times God has commanded us not to add to the scriptures nor take away from them; (Deut. 4:2; I Cor. 4:6; Prov. 30:6; Hab. 1:3,4; Matt. 23:23; Rev. 22:18, 19).

Should we be careful not to place stumbling blocks in the paths of others? Certainly. Should we live in such a way as to be wise in the manner in which we represent Christ to our friends and neighbors? Of course (see I Cor. 9:22; I Peter 2:11-20).

When we get those two menus clearly defined and carefully delineated, we are more pleasing to God and also more free to enjoy the dessert menu of life. Praise God for His word and the freedoms He gives us – the freedom from sin and the freedom to enjoy life’s proper desserts. And the greatest choice of all is to choose Him, as we see in Joshua 24:15.

*If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, **choose for yourselves today** whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; **but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.***

-Ray Wallace