



FEARS, TEARS & JEERS:

Staying positive
in a negative world, Lesson 4

GOOD MORNING!

- Thanks for choosing to join us today. Wise choice!
- God will reward your faithfulness...just listen for His still, small voice! ***“And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”***
Revelation 22:17
- Let's open in prayer.

Thus far in this series...

- First, we covered SALVATION. The biggest fear is not knowing your eternal destiny. ***You can KNOW YOU'RE SAVED, ONCE AND FOR ALL!***



- Next, we covered the fear of **DEATH**.
Death is not termination or extinction, but *change!*
- As Christians, we may fear the process of dying but we need not fear death itself. That's the core blessing of Christianity!



- Last week, we covered the **FEAR OF FAILURE**.
- One clear way to "fail" is to deny God, ignore Him, to walk in the world's ways.
- Even when we think we fail, if we are seeking Him, the Lord has a supernatural way of working all things out for our good and His Glory.



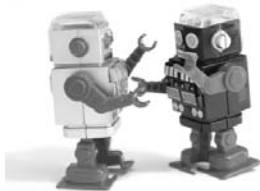
- Failure + humility + time + God's hand = Success.

This week's topic...
The *FEAR OF CHOOSING.*



**We have the awesome power
of freewill.**

- God could have made us robots. Instead, He chose to give us the ability to choose. It's part of *creativity!*
- The first Biblical evidence of human choice appears in Genesis 2:19-23.



**Some choices are good,
some are bad. *Really* bad.**



- The worst choice any humans have made were the choices made by Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:6-7.
- Mankind has suffered ever since, to this day.

The Bible is not sugar-coated!



- For our benefit, it contains examples of thousands of choices that humans have made...the good, the bad, and the downright ugly.
- Even “good people” have made really dumb choices! Think of Samson, David, and Solomon.

Given our extreme dysfunctionality

- The most awesome choice God made was to come to earth in the form of Jesus, to pay the price for our sins and to give us a way back to peace with God...and to eventual restoration for eternity.



No one forced Jesus to do it!

- He didn't “have” to come in human form.
- He didn't have to put up with mockings, criticisms, beatings, and crucifixion.
- But He did because He loves us!

Mankind has a choice...



- Life...or death!
- Blessing...or cursing!
- Belief...or unbelief!
- Obedience...or disobedience!
- God...or Satan!

Some Scriptures...

- *“See, **I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgements, that thou mayest live and multiply; and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it...**”*

- *“But **if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shall be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it...**”*

• *"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore **choose life**, that both thou and thy seed may live. That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him; for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.* Deuteronomy 30:15-20

• *"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, **choose you this day** whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell, but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."* Joshua 24:15

• *"What man is he that feareth the LORD? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall **choose**."* Psalm 25:12

• *"Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets...but ye have set at naught all of my counsel...for that they hated knowledge, and did not **choose** the fear of the LORD..."*

• **“...but *whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.*”**
Proverbs 1:20, 25, 29, 33

How does freewill affect everyday living?

- Your relationship with *yourself*.
- Your personal walk with *the Lord*.
- Your *marriage and family life*.
- Your *church, ministry, and community life*.
- Your *work and career life*.
- Your *emotional, mental, physical, financial health*.
- **You have freewill “control” over much!**

Good stewardship requires good decision-making.

- It's true anywhere, anytime, any place.
- If you can be trusted with little, you can be trusted with much.
- If you can be trusted with mammon, you can be trusted with true spiritual riches.

We're overdosing on "choice!"

- Everywhere we look, we see "options."
- Many people in our culture today are gun-shy about making life's most important decisions.



Even no decision is a decision.

- There's a balance between being impulsive and being incapable of choosing. Beware the paralysis of analysis! Let the Holy Spirit guide you.
- *"He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap."*
Ecclesiastes 11:4

Some people don't want to (or can't) think and choose!



- Internally, they want all decisions made for them by others. They're passive.
- Externally, they don't have the freedom to choose due to oppressive environments, cultures, governments.

The other extreme!

- Some people are so quick to make choices that they throw wisdom, discernment and evaluation out the window! They're emotional and impulsive, and they don't take the time and energy to "count the cost."
- In general, *the bigger the decision, the less impulsive we should be.*

All choices have consequences.



- As you age, the cumulative crop of your decisions becomes the harvest of your life.

There are several types of choices.



FOOLISH
WISE
NAÏVE

The more "wise"
decisions you
make, the better
the harvest!

**If you're dysfunctional
in decision-making today...**

- How do you improve your capacity to make wise decisions?
- How do you come back on-track after rabbit trails?



- Prayer.
- Wise counsel.
- The Word.
- The Holy Spirit.
- Let's close in prayer.

Next week:



Fear of *strongholds*.
