

Coach House Church BEACONS

VOICES & CHOICES

3 R D M A Y 2 0 2 1

Do you know that there is a real daily battle going on in your life? It is a battle of good versus evil. Some days it is totally obvious but other days it is subtle or not even noticeable. The Bible says that we are in a battle. It may not be one that we can see, but none-the-less, it is real. The Bible also tells us how to arm ourselves to win the battle.

There are many fronts to the battlefield. Most of us will end up engaging in emotional battles especially dealing with love, pain or disappointment. Then there are the intellectual battles of the mind and also the physical battles of what to eat, how to eat and how to stay healthy in such an unhealthy world.

But (and its a big one), clearly the most significant is the spiritual battlefield. Ultimately this is an eternal battle of life and death. Even though we (as Christians) find our security in Christ; there is a real, day-to-day battle of flesh versus spirit which affects our peace of mind and our very core.

We all struggle with the awareness of the battle. This is not a "one and done" fight. It is an ongoing daily fight. We don't get to "set it and forget it". It is really important that daily we try and be aware of the impact of the voices and the choices!

You are in a battle but you are not alone—for all of us, all God's people fight this same fight. Make up your mind, not to give up! Set your mind on things above and keep it set!

So lets see what the bible tells us..

Ephesians 6:10-12 - The Message

10-12 And that about wraps it up. God is strong, and he wants you strong. So take everything the Master has set out for you, well-made weapons of the best

materials. And put them to use so you will be able to stand up to everything the Devil throws your way. This is no afternoon athletic contest that we'll walk away from and forget about in a couple of hours. This is for keeps, a life-or-death fight to the finish against the Devil and all his angels.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 - The Message

3-6The world is unprincipled. It's dog-eat-dog out there! The world doesn't fight fair. But we don't live or fight our battles that way—never have and never will. The tools of our trade aren't for marketing or manipulation, but they are for demolishing that entire massively corrupt culture. We use our powerful God-tools for smashing warped philosophies, tearing down barriers erected against the truth of God, fitting every loose thought and emotion and impulse into the structure of life shaped by Christ. Our tools are ready at hand for clearing the ground of every obstruction and building lives of obedience into maturity.

So lets take a look at what I perceive to be the four voices that are raging in our heads on a daily basis. Another way to put it could be "The Battle of the Wills".

We've heard a lot about wills in church recently as Pastor Andy as been teaching us about prayer. And about us being obedient and following in the footsteps of the plan and will of God are vital to both our wellbeing but also how useful we can be for God in helping others.

These wills/voices are:

1.The will/voice of the enemy. We have an enemy—a thief, who comes to rob, kill, and destroy our lives, our joy, our families and God's will. He seeks death over life and has purposed to destroy all that is good and right. He is sneaky. He is real. The battle is on!

2. The will/voice of another. This could be a boss, neighbour, friend or pastor. There are often many voices in our lives telling us what to do. Or even just suggesting what to do. Most of these voices mean well, but they are still other voices that we hear.

3. The will/voice of God the Father. God designed each of us on purpose, with purpose, and for a purpose. He is the knitter and the knower of each day of our lives. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. He designed that we walk in harmony with His plan. He is knocking at the door of our heart always as He longs to speak to us.

4. The will/voice of ourselves. Then, we have to deal with our own self-will, our own selfish nature, and our own pride that wants our own way. We all have the common ground of the "human condition". We all have blind spots. We all are self-centred to some degree.

After having this battle in my life I have come to realise just how real it is. Choices have to be considered, I have determined that my will is of such a poor standing and that my way or the consequences that are attached to my choices are bad that I really need to make a positive stand. So, as a daily habit, my first thought in the morning I've started to say, "Not my will, but yours."

We know that His plan is greater than anything that we could hope or imagine. Don't you want what's best for you? Of course you do! We should want God's will and want it in God's way.

Now listen up. We must listen to the voice of the father. Be aware of the other voices and the choices as the voice you believe, will determine the future you experience.

There is a statement "Seek first to understand and then to be understood". Which origins find their way into an old worship song "Make me a Channel of your Peace" where in the lyrics it says "to be understood as to understand". Seeing things from the position of another person will enhance greater understanding and empathy. Not necessarily agreement. But certainly, more understanding!

Since God is the creator and the knower, I want to see things through His eyes.

Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us to lean not on our own understanding but to trust Him in all things.

None of us really want to take personal responsibility for our poor choices. We might be embarrassed. Often, we have a myriad of excuses all leading to blame. God knows our human condition. He died to save us from death. We simply need

to own up to our choices. We need to carry our "crosses." Most importantly, we need to hear the voice of the shepherd as he intimately cares for each single one of His sheep.

There is no blame for our lives. He knows. We know. We are sinners and by grace we are saved unto life ... and life more abundantly. All choices have consequences. Be careful, this day, how you choose. We live in a noisy world full of voices and choices. But Jesus calls us by name and leads us in the paths that we should follow. He stands at the door of our hearts and knocks waiting for us to invite Him into relationship with Him. We must quiet the noise, lean in and choose to hear the voice above all other voices.

I wish that this was an easy proposition. Our hearts are still too full of the racket of the world and its false values. Recognising the true voice of the Father is not so easy if you are not in relationship with Him. We recognise the voice of our spouse on the phone since we are in a daily relationship with them. It is a rich blessing to hear the voice of the One who knows us deeply and loves us unconditionally. He longs to speak to us personally. He speaks to us in a heart language that we can understand. Won't you invite Him to speak to you and then sit quietly and still and listen. Sometimes it is a whisper.....



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