

Saturday, July 29, 2017 - Do Our Choices Matter?

Have you ever heard someone say, "What difference does it make?" Depending on the subject matter, the choice one makes may not make a difference. When contemplating the choices we make in our spiritual lives, the difference has eternal consequences.

Have you ever considered the ramifications if our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, had taken a, "what difference does it make" attitude? Consider the following:

1. Philippians 2:3-8 - Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.
  - 1.1. Jesus came to earth because of His unselfish love for us. What if Jesus didn't love us so much that His concern involved doing what was best for us?
  - 1.2. What if Jesus Christ decided not to come to the earth as a man?
  - 1.3. What if Jesus Christ decided He was not going to die for sinners (enemies of God)?
2. Matthew 21:1-11 - Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.'" So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' Hosanna in the highest!" And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?" So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."
  - 2.1. Jesus enters Jerusalem knowing that he will die at the hands of those He was sent to save. Friends will deny Him, friends will run when He's taken into custody.
  - 2.2. What if Jesus had decided not to go to Jerusalem? Why not go to Damascus, Nazareth, Beersheba or Capernum?
3. Matthew 26:20-25 - When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve. Now as they were eating, He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me."

And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, "Lord, is it I?" He answered and said, "He who dipped his hand with Me in the dish will betray Me. The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born." Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, "Rabbi, is it I?" He said to him, "You have said it."

3.1. What if Jesus decided to tell the other disciples that Judas was going to betray Him and encouraged them to stop him?

3.2. What if Jesus decided to escape Jerusalem once Judas left?

4. John 18:1-12 - When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?" They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am He." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. Now when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground. Then He asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way," that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none." Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?" Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him.

4.1. What if Jesus decided not to go to the garden at Gethsemane where He knew He would be betrayed, taken and led to His death?

4.2. What if Jesus had decided to run when he saw the light from the soldier's torches?

4.3. What if Jesus had decided to escape as Peter produces a sword to fend off those sent to bring Him to His death?

There are so many other examples I could provide to show us the choices Jesus could have made between the time of His arrest until His last breath on the cross. Suffice it to say, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was, as the scriptures say:

"...being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."

In your life as man, are you obedient to the Lord in all things? Do you submit to His will or give in to selfish (what's best for me) desires? The answer to these questions has eternal consequences associated with it.