



**DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS**

**Carstairs-Bancroft United Church**

*January 19, 2024*



Photo: Our Daily Bread

## CHOOSING TO FOLLOW GOD

*Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve . . . As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.*

Joshua 24:15

**READ Joshua 24:14-18**

“The average person will make 773,618 decisions over a lifetime,” claims the Daily Mirror. The British newspaper goes on to assert that we “will come to regret 143,262 of them.” I have no idea how the paper arrived at these numbers, but it’s clear that we face countless decisions throughout our lifetime. The sheer quantity of them might become paralyzing, especially when we consider that all our choices have consequences, some far more momentous than others.

After forty years wandering in the wilderness, the children of Israel stood at the threshold of their new homeland. Later, after entering the land, Joshua, their leader, issued to them a challenging choice: “Fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness,” he said. “Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped” (Joshua 24:14). Joshua told them, “If serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve . . . But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord” (v. 15).

As we begin each new day, possibilities stretch before us, leading to scores of decisions. Taking the time to ask God to guide us will influence the choices we make. By the power of the Spirit, we can choose to follow Him every day.

**By Bill Crowder**

### **PRAY & REFLECT**

**Father, sometimes life can feel overwhelming" and so can the many choices that confront me. Please guide my steps and my decision-making so that I honor You in the choices I make. Amen**

What choices have you regretted making? How might you have handled those situations more wisely?

### **SCRIPTURE INSIGHT**

The challenge from Joshua to the people of Israel who are about to take possession of the promised land (Joshua 24:14-15) gives us insight into their religious history during their time of slavery in Egypt. While some continued to worship Yahweh during their captivity, as seen in the fear of God displayed by the midwives Shiphrah and Puah (Exodus 1:15-17), today's passage indicates that worship of Yahweh was only one form of their worship.

To the second generation that had come out of slavery (the first generation had died in the wilderness), Joshua proclaimed these words: " Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. . . Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve" (Joshua 24:14-15). This shows that the descendants of Jacob who were in slavery in Egypt had adopted various religious practices. – By **JR Hudberg**

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