

DAY 3 CHOOSE



Deuteronomy 30.19-20

"This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

This text comes at a moment in Israel's history when Moses is trying to lead the nation into its identity as the people of God. They are wandering the desert on

the way to the Promised Land. At that moment, they were in process. They had left Egypt and were navigating life toward a new end. It was in this liminal space that they were struggling with identity and struggling with obedience.

In some way, these words come as a sort of parental moment for Moses. I often have conversations with my daughters about the importance of our choices. Our choices matter because the choices we make give shape to our lives and the lives of those around us. We all possess the freedom of choice, but the consequences that stem from those choices are beyond our control.

And this is the message, the choice, that Moses is laying out in front of the nation of Israel. "Choose life" or "choose death." The consequences of Israel's choices will set the course for their own life as well as the life of future generations. Therefore, Moses is provoking them to choose life.

In many ways, this is what the practice of Lent is all about. It is the intentional slowing down and evaluating of our choices. So many of us approach life void of intentionality in our choices, living haphazard unexamined lives. Lent forces us to confront the reality of who we are and what we choose to do.

"In almost every moment of our lives - in our thoughts, our imaginations, our actions, and even our inactions - we make choices that lead either toward life or death. Choose life involves awareness of those tendencies within us that sabotage our lives and of those that nourish them." - Trevor Hudson.

This isn't about earning salvation; this isn't about any sort of works-based faith. But it is about the recognition of how we are formed by the choices we make. And we go on to see this tension throughout the scriptures. The people of God constantly choose life and often choose death. We are a mixed bag of life-giving and life-taking decisions. The grace of God abounds, but may the grace of God lead us in this season of Lent to take up the challenge of Moses to Israel as we learn to "choose" life.

Daily Practice

Make two lists today: "What brings me life?" and "What takes life from me?" Add to the lists throughout the day. At the end of the day, reflect on these two columns and ask God for guidance in choosing life. Give thanks to God for new life offered through Jesus Christ.

The below reflections are written by congregants & staff of CPC. All reflections are following Trevor Hudson's book *Pauses for Lent* and are both heavily influenced and borrowed from his work. Any quotes without attribution should be credited to him.