

As For Me And My House

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Joshua had taken the Israelites as far as he could go. He confessed that he was “old, advanced in years” (Josh. 23:2) and “going the way of all the earth” (23:14). He had served his time and purpose, leading God’s people across the Jordan into the land sworn to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Joshua knew his end was near.

One of his last acts of service to a people whom he had led and loved was to gather them at Shechem for a farewell address (24:1). This was the same site where God promised Abraham the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:6-7), where Jacob put away the foreign gods of his family (Gen. 35:1-4), where Jacob’s bones were later buried after the exodus from Egypt (Josh. 24:32). How appropriate that on this same stage, Joshua made the statement that ought to be written in every heart and home, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (24:15).

Good homes are not a matter of chance; they are a matter of choice. “Choose for yourselves” indicates that if you want a godly family, you’re going to have to make some decisions along the way. A household that takes the approach of “let’s just try this out for a little while and see if it works” is building on a foundation of sand.

We certainly have no trouble making decisions for the wedding ceremony. We choose the right place, the right colors, the right flowers, the right music. But all too often, we do so with little or no thought as to what kind of home we will have once the honeymoon is over. If the marriage fails, what good does a beautiful wedding do?

“Choose for yourselves today whom you will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” What choices will you make concerning you and your house?

Will you decide to let the Lord in? It amazes me how people try to divorce God from the home. A friend of mine was once asked by a family member who was not a Christian to perform their wedding ceremony. Their only request: “we don’t want you to say anything about God during the service.” For obvious reasons, he refused.

God is the creator of the home. It is not a human invention. It is not a secular creation. It is a divine relationship crafted in the mind of man’s Creator (Gen. 2:18-25). It was God who saw that it was not good for man to dwell alone. It was God who fashioned into a woman the rib which he had taken out of Adam. It was God who joined them together to become one flesh. Rightly the Psalmist said, “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it” (127:1).

Regardless of what culture decides, choose to invite the Lord into your home. It won’t happen by chance.

Will you decide to value family values? Some choices we make are on the individual level; “as for me.” And some effect the whole family; “as for me and my house.” Joshua, the military leader of a nation, did not neglect his primary responsibility as a husband and father. He neither sent his family on ahead without him nor left them behind, but he vowed that they would serve the Lord together.

When you don't value the owner's manual for the home, you leave behind the important and necessary roles given to the family (Eph. 5:22–6:4). Each member has their own decisions that must be made.

Husbands are to see the worthiness of their wives and choose to love them as Christ loved His church. Wives are to recognize the authority of their husbands and submit to them as the spiritual head of the house. Children are to appreciate the wisdom and experience of their parents and decide to honor and obey them. Fathers are to treasure the young souls entrusted to them and show them the way home to the Father.

We serve the Lord when we serve in the place we have been assigned. When each person values their part, it makes for a happy home. You can't put a price tag on that.

Will you decide to make home improvement a priority? “Choose for yourselves today.” Joshua certainly knew that time was of the essence in his own situation. But that same urgency extends to every home of every generation.

Making the home what it ought to be takes time and hard work. And it comes by first choosing to place family matters over every other household chore. If the time to do that is not right now, when will the moment come? When there is no communication left in the marriage? When the kids are out of the house and raising their own families?

If you keep waiting for a good time to bring it up, you might miss the door of opportunity. Choose today. No one will do it for you.

What legacy will you leave your family when you go the way of all the earth? Let it be your decision to serve the Lord, with hopes that they will make the same choice for them and for their house.