

CHOICE WORDS

January, 1989

This is the first of what is hoped will be a series of commentaries. They are not intended, in the usual sense, to be inspirational or emotional talks. They are, rather, meant to be thought-provoking, perhaps disturbing, or even nagging. In each of these little messages we will be given something to think about. Whenever possible, we will attempt to look beyond the "popular" interpretation of events, maybe to find a surprise slant on things. And at the end we will be faced with a decision.

This is what these commentaries will be about: the choices, large and small, which we might prefer to ignore in our frenetic, habituated, and "thoughtless" lives, and the importance of our starting principles in every judgement and deed. These are *CHOICE WORDS* in that special sense.

For all of us, every moment is a moment of decision. And there are no little decisions; none that we can glance over because it doesn't matter very much. Every choice, however small, is an echo of our deepest convictions. Every thought and action has cosmic significance, because it is a reflection of our faith (and everyone has faith in something).

We Christians begin with this pervasive affirmation: God is real; all things and all time belong to Jesus; all words and all deeds are sacred. This Lord of all, wants all of us, every bit of us. There is no time-off from God's standard of righteousness, and nothing we can do which does not concern Him. There is no place to hide.

Now, the world is not accustomed to taking God so seriously. When considered at all, God is typically relegated to the least consequential of practices – which compartment is dubbed religion. In the formation of opinion and the selection of action, God is either actively dismissed, some kind of atheism, or passively ignored, some kind of agnosticism, then replaced, knowingly or otherwise, by one of the world's many philosophies.

It is therefore of this that the one fundamental choice consists, of which all choices are but reverberations or variations: God or not God. This is why the next thing we do, or the next word we speak, can never be trivial: it will either affirm or deny God.

If we Christians really believe what we profess about the Lordship of Christ, then we can make no excuses for buying the least shares of the world's stock of ignorance. We cannot blame our hectic pace, or current fashion, or habit. We cannot say "the boss made me do it", or "the experts said it was best", or "I didn't think it was important". We must comprehend choice in all things, and be ready to meet an irrational and rejecting world with discernment and superior reason. While we may from time to time err, it is essential that we translate our affirmation of God, first into sound judgement, and then into urgent action. And we must actually speak the truth, exactly like we believe what we are saying - with humble and prayerful reliance upon the Word of God, but without disclaimers that betray in us a lack of conviction.

So take care when you choose that next can of soup, or rearrange the furniture, for there is no choice so small that God will not be either glorified, or vilified, in it.