

Slide 3. [Jos 24:14-15 KJV] 14 Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. 15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that [were] on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

Marathon Intro

Slide 4. Welcome to your Most Important Choice of the Day. John C. Maxwell famously put it — “Life is a matter of choices, and every choice you make makes you.” All choices involve consequences.

People make around 35,000 remotely conscious choices per day. Each decision carries consequences. This equates to 2,000 choices per hour if you sleep around 7 hours per day. A child makes about 3,000 per day. Not all decisions are choices of the heart.

On the website Psychology Today Dr. Eva Krockow I reached a point in her article where she was questioning the amount of decisions researchers say we humans make. She says, But didn't you make a quick judgement whether or not to carry on reading after the first sentence? (By the way, thanks for sticking with it.) Didn't you decide to ignore a smartphone notification, or take a sip of coffee, or reposition yourself, scratch your arm, suppress a yawn, pick your nose?

A study performed by Nobel Prize-winning psychologist Daniel Kahneman showed that we make financial decisions based 90% on emotion and only 10% on logic.

Slide 5. Three avenues of Decision: **Mind decisions** are rational and clinical and usually based on the facts presented. The mind plans and looks ahead, weighs up the pros and cons then follows the path which makes the most logical sense. The **Emotional or fleshly heart Decisions** on the other hand is based on emotion, you feel a choice or decision. (Oklahoma is number 5 on discourteous decisions while driving. Arizona number 1, Arkansas number 23). Spiritual heart decisions are based primarily on holy fear of God.

Evidence for Two Important Choices (God and the Bible)

Slides 6&7. God Exists

Ontological Argument: If I have a concept of a Perfect Being where did this concept come from? The origin of my concept means the Perfect Being must exist. So if I conceive a Perfect Being, namely God, it is a contradiction to not believe He truly exists.

Cosmological Argument (Beginning of the Universe): The universe is not self-existent. All events must have a cause beyond themselves. If you trace back to the first cause you will find the cause maker.

Teleological (Design) Argument: There is a breath-taking orderliness in nature. Our DNA is mind bogglingly designed. Discovered in 1953. (In the cell of the tiny amoeba, the DNA message is as much as 1,000 complete sets of an encyclopedia Britannica!) Who did that? This awe and wonder leads most serious thinking people to conclude the universe must have a designer.

Moral Argument (Design of Life): Humans everywhere have an inward sense of right and wrong. It is wrong to hate your mother and father without a cause. It is right to love your mother and father. It is wrong to take someone else's property against their will. It is wrong to kill another person. Where did these moral laws come from? Even though moral values differ from culture to culture, there is a consciousness of moral values. This leads to a conclusion of a universal Lawgiver.

The Bible recognizes God exists. In the Beginning God created ...

The Bible is God's Word

Slide 8. Old Testament

Jesus and his disciples used the term "It is written" and quoted from the Old Testament 63 times in the New Testament.

Jews have recognized the 39 books of the Old Testament as God's Word for Centuries

New Testament

Slide 8. The New Testament is Historically accurate. Criteria: 1) Evidenced by Early Testimony, 2) Multiple Eyewitness Testimony, 3) Authentic (Not Invented), 4) Trustworthy Testimony (Can we believe the testimony), 5) Corroborating evidence from archaeology or other writers, 6) Events embarrassing to the authors.

Slide 9. Overwhelming Manuscript Evidence: Over 5,800 of approximately 25,000 complete or fragmented Greek Manuscripts. 10,000 Latin manuscripts, and 9,300 various other ancient languages such as Syriac, Slavic, Gothic, Ethiopic, and others. Most of the books were written from 25 to 50 years after the Resurrection.

Quotations by Early Church Leaders: More than 36,000 Quotations of New Testament writings from the Early Christian leaders. All but 11 verses can be constructed just from quotations.

Writers of the book, "I Don't Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist", present how scholars construct the New Testament from manuscripts and quotations.

Slide 10. In contrast, Homer (Greek poet) 1,800 manuscripts with the earliest textual evidence being copied 400 years after the original. Demosthenes speeches were written in the fourth century copied about 1,400 years after the original. About 200 manuscripts are available.

Examples from the Bible.

Slide 11. [Jos 24:15 KJV] 15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that [were] on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

Choices of the heart are conscious decisions.

Slide 12. [Pro 4:23 KJV] 23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it [are] the issues of life.

Rehoboam Chose his young friend's advice over the seasoned counselors.

Slide 13. [1Ki 12:4 KJV] 4 Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee.

[1Ki 12:5-6 KJV] 5 And he said unto them, Depart yet [for] three days, then come again to me. And the people departed. 6 And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people?

Slide 14. [1Ki 12:7 KJV] 7 And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.

[1Ki 12:8-9 KJV] 8 But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, [and] which stood before him: 9 And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?

Slide 15. [1Ki 12:11 KJV] 11 And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

[1Ki 12:13 KJV] 13 And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him;

Are you running your spiritual life on what appears best to you (comfort, possible benefits)?

Jonah made a Decision to run from God based on Emotions

Slide 16. [Jon 4:2 KJV] 2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, [was] not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou [art] a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

Why do people start out serving the Lord and then turn from God? Choice?

Slide 17. Serving God Based on Emotions. Children, Preacher followers.

The eighth king of Judah (Joash or Jehoash) [2Ki 12:2 KJV] 2 And Jehoash did [that which was] right in the sight of the LORD all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him.

[Psa 78:10 KJV] 10 They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law;

[Psa 118:22 KJV] 22 The stone [which] the builders refused is become the head [stone] of the corner.

Paul Reminds Us of Our Choices

Slide 18. [Rom 8:6 KJV] 6 For to be carnally minded [is] death; but to be spiritually minded [is] life and peace.

I'm not going to talk to him or her because they hurt my feelings and I don't like them.

God Exists. There is evidence for God in creation and to say or live as if he does not exist is to deny what is inwardly known.

Slide 19. [Rom 1:20-22 KJV] 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, [even] his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

Slide 20. Faith in God is your choice. [Heb 11:6 KJV] 6 But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Believing th Bible is God's Word: It's your Choice to believe the Bible is God's Word. Christ is the Living Word and the Bible is God's Written Word. Could it be people who don't believe the Bible hate the Bible's content.

Slide 21. [Pro 1:28-29 KJV] 28 Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: 29 For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:

Slide 22. God has a choice too.

[Isa 66:4 KJV] 4 I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose [that] in which I delighted not.

[Isa 66:4 NLT] 4 I will send them great trouble--all the things they feared. For when I called, they did not answer. When I spoke, they did not listen. They deliberately sinned before my very eyes and chose to do what they know I despise."

Slide 23. [Jhn 15:16, 19 NKJV] 16 "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and [that] your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. ... 19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

All God's choices are right and just.

Closing Serving God

It's Your Choice to serve God.

Satan had a choice.

Slide 24. [Eze 28:14-15 KJV] 14 Thou [art] the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee [so]: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. 15 Thou [wast] perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

[Isa 14:12-15 KJV] 12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! [how] art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! 13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. 15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Angels have a choice. A third made the wrong choice.

Slide 25. [Rev 12:4, 9 KJV] 4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. ... 9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

[2Pe 2:4 KJV] 4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast [them] down to hell, and delivered [them] into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

Slide 26. Keep On Choosing God and His Ways.

[Heb 13:8 KJV] 8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

[Luk 8:15 KJV] 15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep [it], and bring forth fruit with patience.