

Choosing What To Do

March 31, 2019 ~ Marching Orders ~ 1 Corinthians 10.1-13

Sermon Series ~ “Marching Orders”

- Today’s message is the 3rd of a 5-part series
 1. “**Knowing What To Do**” / Be reasonably certain of a goal or direction
 2. “**Wanting What To Do**” / Align our hearts with chosen goal or direction
 3. “**Planning What To Do**” / Coordinate our thoughts & actions towards goal
 4. “**Choosing What To Do**” / Avoid distractions ~ Stay focused
 5. “**Do Do Do**” / Hold ourselves accountable for progress ~ No excuses
- Head / Heart / Head / Heart / Hands

Recap

- “**Knowing What To Do**” ~ Asked 8 questions to test certainty of decision
- “**Wanting What To Do**” ~ Examined difficulty of aligning heart with decision
- “**Planning What To Do**” ~ 7 aspects good plan – 7 elements good planning

Today’s Message – Tactical vs. Strategic

- Today’s ~ 4th “**Choosing What To Do**” (*avoid distractions & make progress*)
- Today’s message also about making decisions – just as “**Knowing**” msg was
- But “**Knowing What To Do**” was strategic in nature
- “**Choosing What To Do**” is tactical in nature
- Big strategic decisions are few and far between
- Tactical decisions are far more common
 - Some studies indicate adults make 35k decisions per day
 - Young children make far fewer – about 1/10th those

Achieving Strategic Objectives

- Getting past the “**Knowing**”, “**Wanting**”, and “**Planning**” stages is important
- Greatest failure to accomplish strategic objectives is here with “**Choosing**”
- I spent hours “**planning**” how to cover Hawaiian islands with pineapple stands
 - I did begin “**some**” of the tactical “**Choosing**” steps needed
 - I didn’t develop a detailed plan – Nor did I follow it through
- We must “**Choose**” to pursue our objectives every day – relentless
- Most big ideas die at this stage – not with a “**bang**” but with a “**whimper**”
- That things take time to accomplish tests our “**resolve**” to accomplish them

Xition: Important 1st step of Choosing is to test our resolve (**Know, Want, Plan**) . . .

‘Testing’ our Resolve

- “Count the cost” ~ Read Lk 14.25-27 “Now great .. cannot be My disciple”
- III: Pilgrim’s Progress ~ On my mind all week
 - Christian comes under conviction ~ Friends & family counsel rest
 - Evangelist directs him to knock at the Wicket Gate
 - Christian heads out but friends and family plead with him to stay
 - He plugs his ears and runs away crying, “Life! Life! Eternal Life!”
 - Christian seems to be behaving badly / But Jesus had counseled this
- Challenges will always test our resolve – “Do we really want this?”
- I’ll share two examples of “strategic resolutions” / Y2K and Veggie Tales
- III: Y2K Concerns ~ By late summer ’97 I knew I’d write a book
 - First printing in April 1998 / Spent year speaking – Started 99 w/radio
 - I was not alone in embracing a challenge at that time

Veggie Tales – Died in 2003

- Phil Vischer founded “Big Idea Productions” to create “Veggie Tales”
 - Company grew steadily from 1993 to 1999
 - From 1996 to 1999 their revenue grew from \$1.3M to \$44M
 - Xing from “too big to be small yet too small to be big” / “No Man’s Land”
- Read book “Built to Last” in ‘97 / Needed “BHAG” / Christian Disney
 - This started an economic and emotional roller coaster ride – ended 2003
- Phil wrote a book “My, Myself, and Bob” concerning the experience
- Phil made several errors – embraced BHAG based on book – not prayer

Knowing, Wanting, Planning, Choosing

- Topics presented linearly – as if you move forward through fixed process steps
- But it’s more cyclical / Revisit steps as often as needed
- Plans are high level at the start / Detailed plans follow / Reality intrudes
- Wanting wanes over time – “Can we sustain it?” / “Should we?”
- Knowing is always being tested – “Are you sure?”

Choosing is Informed by Review of Prior Steps

- Knowing must remain solid / Doubts must be addressed
- Wanting must be bolstered to align with Knowing
- Plans must be further defined / Modified to account for changes

Xition: Our resolve will be tested . . . Our resolve must be strengthened . . .

‘Strengthening’ our Resolve

- **“Preaching Christ”** ~ **Read Acts 5.12-13** “And through .. them highly”
- **vss 18-28** ~ Arrested, Freed by angel, Arrested again, Threatened
- **Read vss 29-32** ~ **“But Peter .. who obey Him”**
- Sanhedrin furious and plot to kill them – Gamaliel’s advice
- **Read vss 40-42** ~ **“And they agreed .. Jesus as the Christ”**
- Boldness of Peter and Apostles strengthened the faith and resolve of all
- **Acts 6.1** ~ **“Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying”**
- Jesus told Peter **“when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren”**
- **III: PP** – Pliant and Obstinate / Pliant joins him but abandons him – Help comes
- Strengthening doesn’t come from within – but from without

Avoiding Bad Choices

- Review **1 Cor 10.6-11** – starts and ends with Wilderness as our **“example”**
 - **v6** ~ **“lusted after evil things”** **v7** ~ **“become idolaters”**
 - **v8** ~ **“sexual immorality”** **v9** ~ **“tempt Christ”**
- Jews in Wilderness led a simple existence / Too simple for their liking
 - God had stripped away all distractions / But they wanted them
 - We do the same / Focused and making progress / We invite distractions
- I’ll return to **vss 12-13** later
- Each day we choose to be productive or not (*unproductive / lazy*)
- **“You cannot overestimate the unimportance of practically everything”** - Jn Maxwell

Alternatives to Being Productive (Unproductive)

- 1. Destructive 2. Wasteful 3. Lazy
- Destructiveness characterizes criminals / vandals
 - Socialism tends towards this as people lose respect for property
- Wastefulness was what the prodigal son indulged in
 - He’d tired of abiding by his father’s rules – he **“lived it up”**
- Laziness is perhaps the first step on the path to these
 - The Bible is filled with wisdom pointing out the fruit of laziness

Laziness Begins in the Mind

- It’s ultimately rooted in irresponsibility / But deceives us
 - **“You deserve a break today”** / McDonald’s
 - **“We work hard so you don’t have to”** / Scrubbing Bubbles
- We (I) joke about laziness / But it is a serious issue we must address

Xition: Let’s look at what the Bible says about laziness

Forms of Laziness

- **Prov 20.13** ~ “Do not love sleep, lest you come to poverty”
- **Read Prov 24.30-34** ~ “I went by .. like an armed man”
- **Prov 14.23** ~ “In all labor there is profit, but idle chatter leads only to poverty”
- **Prov 13.4** ~ “The soul of a lazy man desires and has nothing”
- **Prov 21.25** ~ “The desire of the lazy man kills him, for his hands refuse to labor”

By Contrast - Diligence

- **Prov 21.5** ~ “The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty”
- **Prov 27.23** ~ “Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, and attend to you herds; for riches are not forever, nor does a crown endure to all generations”
- **1 Cor 15.58** ~ “.. be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord”
- **Heb 12.1** ~ “let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us”
- **Rev 14.13** ~ “.. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them”

Labor to God's Glory is Rewarded

- **Col 3.23** ~ “.. whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men”
- **Col 1.29** ~ “To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily”
- **Col 4.5** ~ “Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time”
- **Eph 5.15-17** ~ “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

Resisting Temptation

- **Read 1 Cor 10.12-13** ~ “Therefore let him .. able to bear it”
- For years I looked to this verse in hope but came away disappointed / bitter
- Scripture is inerrant / How could this verse be true / Wasn't my experience
 - “God .. will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able”
- More hedges – more habits – more disciplines / NO – more love of Jesus

Affections / Will / Intellect – LOVE of God is at core of our being – not WILL

Jude 24-25 ~ "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy; To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen."

Choosing What To Do - Handout

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1. Knowing and Choosing relate to making decisions. The nature of the decisions is different though with Knowing being _____ and Choosing being _____.
2. Which of the 5 stages accounts for more failure in achieving goals? _____
3. What two examples of strategic resolutions were shared pertaining to the late 90's?
_____ and _____.
4. Though these topics have been presented linearly, they're actually _____.
5. Our resolution will be _____. Afterwards we must _____ it.
6. What scenes from Pilgrim's Progress were used to illustrate these two steps?
_____ and _____.
7. What example(s) from the Bible were used to illustrate the same? _____
_____, and _____.
8. Laziness is rooted in _____. We must take it seriously.
9. Write out some of the proverbs portraying the dangers of laziness
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
10. Good habits (hedges) alone will not prevent us from falling to temptation. What must be in place to allow 1 Cor 10.13 to succeed in having us overcome temptation? _____
_____.