

Willingly We Choose

Why do people choose to follow God?

God is like. BAYER ASPIRIN - He works miracles.

God is like. A FORD - He's got a better idea..

God is like. COKE - He's the real thing.

God is like. HALLMARK CARDS - He cares enough to send His very best.

God is like. TIDE - He gets the stains out others leave behind.

God is like. GENERAL ELECTRIC - He brings good things to life.

God is like. WAL-MART - He has everything.

God is like. ALKA-SELTZER - Try Him, you'll like Him

God is like. SCOTCH INVISIBLE TAPE - You can't see Him, but you know He's there.

God is like.. DELTA - He's ready when you are.

God is like. ALLSTATE - You're in good hands with Him.

God is like. VO-5 Hair Spray; - He holds through all kinds of weather

God is like. DIAL SOAP - Aren't you glad you have Him? Don't you wish everybody did?

God is like. The U.S. POST OFFICE - Neither rain, nor snow, nor sleet nor ice will keep Him from His appointed destination.

God is like. Chevrolet. . . .the heart beat of America

God is like Maxwell House. Good to the very last drop

*God is like. B o u n t y . . . He is the quicker picker upper. . Can handle the tough jobs...
And He won't fall apart on you*

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It can be shown in scripture that God chose us and we didn't choose Him.

Ephesians 1:3-6

³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, ⁴ just as **He chose us** in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

He did all this for us and all HE asks of us to then choose to walk in obedience to Him.

This mornings message “Willingly We Choose” is brought with the full knowledge and understanding that our walk of faith includes having an attitude of voluntary servitude to the Lord of all, for the benefit of all, in the presence of One, (God, our heavenly Father.) What we do get to choose is whether or not to obey Him. We need to willingly choose to obedience.

On July 17th, next Sunday, we will have a Baptismal Service at the “Springvale Rec.” following our Sunday morning service. So far we have one person, Dustin Chambers, who unfortunately was scheduled to work this morning at McDonalds because the person scheduling didn't know he was to have Sundays off (which, by-the-way, is the right of every believer.)

So, next Sunday July 17th will be the first of two scheduled Baptismal services. The second will be on August 14th which will be after our last Friday Night @ The Movies and that Service will be followed by our first **Church Family Summer Pot-Luck-Picnic!**

The reason behind this focus on baptism, that is also the focus of this message, is that to serve the Lord with our gifts and talents we must first be fully surrendered to Him and His purpose in our lives. Baptism is an outward expression of the inward commitment of **total surrender** to

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the will of God as well as a picture of cleansing from all sin and it is symbolic of our death with Christ, our resurrection with Christ and the beginning of a new life in Christ.

Without the attitude of complete surrender to the will of God in our lives we are extremely limited in what we can actually do for Him. Jesus actually says in John 15:5, “...for without Me you can do nothing.” We have a big enough battle with our flesh and the “powers and principalities” (Ephesians 6:12) - to do His will - without also having to fight our own will. We have our flesh and the evil in the world to deal with for the rest of our lives but our will ... we can surrender it right here, right now ... to Jesus.

So, these two opportunities for baptism take on an even deeper meaning for us individually and for us as a church. As we move into discovering our spiritual gifting and personal calls to ministry it is important, even crucial that we do so emptied of our own personal preferences and agendas and open to what God has for us, ready to respond. My personal prayer for each believer in Jesus Christ is that His perfect will would be realized in each Christians' life so that the fullness of joy, that He promises us, would be experienced more and more as we each continue on the path He has prepared for us.

After the total surrender of our will to Him, demonstrated in the practice of water baptism, when ever you do it, our purpose should be to seek and discover His purpose for saving us; once discovered through prayer, reading and meditating on His word, and doing other forms of research like spiritual gifts tests, we must then seek His power to help us fulfill His purpose.

There is a worship song that is familiar to most of us “Come, Now Is The Time For Worship” that has a second verse that is not so familiar.

Willingly we choose to surrender our lives, willingly our knees will bow

With all our heart soul mind and strength we gladly choose You now

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This song points out that not only do we surrender our lives but we must do so willingly.

Romans 6:13 (NIV)

¹³ Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.

Here Paul is telling the believers in Rome to keep every part of them selves away from any form of sin and to give them selves completely to God. He states it again in the famous:

Romans 12:1

¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but **Christ lives in me**; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Over and over in the New Testament we are shown and told that it's not about us it's about Jesus and surrendering to His will so He can do through us what we can't do on our own. When we do the battle is His, the power comes from Him and the course of our lives is set by Him!

The full surrender we experience in water baptism also opens us up more than anything else to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit who Jesus promised us would lead us into all understanding; understanding who we are in Christ, what we are called by Christ to do (the good works prepared for us) [Ephesians 2:10](#)

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Here we are, in the middle of summer 2011, and the Lord is preparing us to do His will in a more deliberate way, and in order to do that He wants us to know the tools He has given us that are referred to in scripture as “gifts”, and see how we, together with others He is sending, can use these power tools in a way that will transform our lives, our church, our families and our communities; one person at a time, one day at a time. This is our call. We need to answer with a resounding, “Yes, Lord. Use me!”

When September comes and school starts and vacations end I will be asking some of our members to take on roles of leadership to share the vision and direction of our church “to be.”

I invite all that are here and those that are a part but have only read this message unable to attend today, to join as members, taking another step toward partnering with Raquel and I and the other members in this church plant graduating to it’s next step to be a full church, with leadership in place and visions for the future. We have laid the foundation in Christ and it is time to build on it.

As the song says, “We who are many are of one body in Christ.” Of course there is always the greater body of Christ but we are a part of it. Come and be a part of this part of the body of Christ. Then we will grow together. This is Jesus’ desire for our lives as His disciples. You can’t “love one another” unless you are connected with one another. Membership connects you with others with more common bonds.

Water baptism, membership classes, Tuesday night Women’s’ Prayer, Wednesday Night bible studies, get we’re starting to sound like a real church!

So, we invite one and all to willingly choose to surrender our lives to Jesus and join the family we call, God’s House On The Hill.