

**DECISIONS DETERMINE DESTINY**  
**Joshua 24:14,15**

**Introduction:**

1. **God's man, Joshua, led Israel in the conquest of the Promised Land.**
  - a. **He had now grown old and knew he would soon leave this earth.**
  - b. **He assembled all the tribes of Israel to Shechem to give his farewell address.**
  - c. **He ended with a challenge to Israel to "Choose for yourselves whom you will serve."**
2. **At high school and college graduations, speakers challenge graduates to make right decisions as they embark on adulthood and a profession.**
3. **A decision is a turning point which determines direction.**
  - a. **H. Leo Boles was a brilliant student,**
  - b. **He originally planned to become a lawyer.**
  - c. **He decided to become a preacher of the Gospel instead.**
  - d. **He served as president of David Lipscomb College and editor of the Gospel Advocate.**
  - e. **He baptized thousands of people in Gospel meetings.**
  - f. **He trained 1500 men to preach the Gospel.**
  - g. **He wrote several valuable books still used by Bible students.**
4. **A single decision can change one's life and destiny and influence that of many others.**

**Discussion:**

- I. **UNWISE DECISIONS CAN COST US EVERYTHING.**
  - A. **Lot selfishly chose the best part of the land (Genesis 13:5-13).**
    1. **He "pitched his tent even as far as Sodom" and lost everything as a result.**
    2. **His married daughters perished in the destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19:14).**
    3. **Lot's wife looked back and was turned to a pillar of salt (Genesis 19:26).**
    4. **Lot's two unmarried daughters got him drunk and committed incest with him (Genesis 19:30-38).**
  - B. **Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of beans (Genesis 25:29-34).**

1. He was a “profane person who for one morsel of food sold his birthright” (Hebrews 12:16).
  2. To satisfy a temporary need, he forfeited the headship of his family and therefore being a part of the lineage of the Christ.
  3. Many sell their eternal souls for a moment of pleasure.
- C. The rich young ruler rejected Jesus and eternal life to hang on to his worldly wealth (Matthew 19:16-22).
1. Even if he enjoyed his wealth to the end of his life, he had to leave it behind.
  2. He has now been dead for 1900 years; how often must he have regretted his decision!

## **II. WISE DECISIONS PAY DIVIDENDS NOW AND IN ETERNITY.**

- A. Moses gave up power, prestige and wealth in Egypt to cast his lot with a nation of slaves.
1. He took a long range view and chose the spiritual over the material, the eternal over the temporal.  
  
“By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward” (Hebrews 11:24-26).
  2. He appeared on the mountain with the Lord (Matthew 17:1-8).
- B. Ruth’s decision to follow her mother-in-law made her an ancestress of Christ (Ruth 1:16,17; 4:17-22).
- C. The Prodigal Son made a wise decision to return to his father (Luke 15:17-24).

## **III. LACK OF DECISION CAN BE COSTLY, EVEN FATAL.**

- A. The Israelites couldn’t make up their minds whether to follow God or Baal (1 Kings 18:20,21).
- B. Felix waited for a convenient time which never came (Acts 24: 25).
- C. Agrippa was “almost persuaded to become a Christian” (Acts 26:28).

**IV. EVERYDAY DECISIONS WILL DETERMINE OUR HAPPINESS NOW AND IN ETERNITY.**

**A. What kind of job will I pursue?**

- 1. Some jobs require lying or other forms of dishonesty (Colossians 3:9).**
  - a. An accountant discovered her company had over-billed a client several thousand dollars.**
  - b. She was fired for insisting the mistake be corrected.**
- 2. Some jobs require forsaking the assembly (Hebrews 10:25).**
  - a. A Christian had worked for years for a company.**
  - b. She refused a change of shifts because it meant she would miss midweek Bible study.**
  - c. The president of the company commended her.**

**B. Whom shall I marry?**

- 1. Is he or she a Christian (Matthew 6:33)?**
- 2. Is he or she eligible to marry (Matthew 19:9; 5:32)?**
- 3. Will I be able to spend the rest of my life with him or her (Romans 7:1-3)?**
- 4. Will he or she make the best parent for my children (Ephesians 6:4)?**
- 5. Will he or she help or hinder me in going to Heaven (1 Peter 3:7)?**

**C. The greatest decision one will ever make is to accept or reject Jesus Christ.**

- 1. The way of obedience is clearly spelled out (Romans 6:16-18).**
- 2. One must count the cost (Luke 14:27-32).**
- 3. To begin and not to finish is worse than not beginning at all (2 Peter 2:20-22).**

**Conclusion:**

- 1. We cannot escape making decisions throughout life.**
- 2. We have to live with the consequences of our decisions.**
- 3. Decisions determine destiny - in life and in eternity.**

