

The Choice of Life

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Date: 02 December 2023

[0 : 00] We're going to worship God and prepare our hearts by singing to God's praise in Psalm 27. We're in the Scottish Psalter, Psalm 27 on page 236. We'll sing from verse 1 down to verse 5, the tune is Lingam. Verse 1, the Lord's my light and saving health, who shall make me dismayed, my life's strength is the Lord of whom, then shall I be afraid.

We'll sing from verse 1 to 5 to God's praise. We stand to sing. The Lord's my light and saving health, who shall make me dismayed, who shall make me dismayed. My life's strength is the Lord of whom, then shall I be afraid. When I be afraid, then shall I be afraid. When I be afraid, then shall I be afraid. When I be afraid, then shall I be afraid. When I be afraid, then shall I be afraid. Most wicked persons all, most wicked persons all, To eat my flesh against me rose.

[1 : 39] They stumbled and did fall. They stumbled and did fall. They stumbled and did fall. They stumbled and did fall.

They stumbled and did fall. They came to know and lost and come. My heart yet fearlessness, my heart yet fearlessness.

Though war against me lies I will be confident in this.

Be confident in this.

One thing I hope the Lord desire, and will seek to obtain, and will seek to obtain.

[2 : 47] That thought is of my life, my day, within God's eyes remain.

That I, the beauty of the Lord, behold me and admire, behold me and admire.

I am glad I am in this holy place. In reverently and one, in reverently and one.

What he in this pavilion shall, me hide in evil days, me hide in evil days.

And seepelt of this centry night. And all our rocky days.

[4 : 18] And all our rocky days. And all our rocky days. Let's bow our heads together in a word of prayer.

Let us pray. Lord our gracious God, our Father in heaven, we rejoice to be able to gather together, to come and worship you, to sing our praise to you.

Thankful for even these words that we've sung, and how the many of us here can echo them, and have experienced them, perhaps in many different ways, but yet experiencing the same God.

The one who has been with his people down through all the generations. The one, as we read in your word, that you have led your people, that you have been with your people, and that you have been a light of saving health to your people.

So that in the midst of days when we may feel dismayed, Lord, we can sing with the psalmist, Who shall make me dismayed? For my life strength is the Lord, of whom then shall I be afraid?

[5 : 29] For you are the Lord who gives life and gives it abundantly. You are the one who brings from death to life. And we thank you, Lord, for your grace that so works in our hearts.

The grace that leads us from darkness to light. The grace that we come to receive anew this evening and each day. And we thank you, Lord, that it is by grace that we are saved.

Not anything of ourselves or else we would boast. But by faith we come through your grace. And so may you bless us as we gather this evening, as we come preparing our hearts and our minds to receive your word and to prepare our hearts for receiving the Lord's supper tomorrow, God willing. We thank you that we come in the name of your Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. The name above every name. The name to whom every knee will bow and tongue confess that he is Lord one day.

But we thank you, Lord, that your call to all of us here this evening and all who tune in online as well, is that we would come even this evening, bowing the knee before you and acknowledging you as our Lord and as our God.

[6 : 47] As we think of your word and how it speaks to us and reminds us of ourselves so often. We think of the Gospels and how Jesus met with his people then.

And how he met with Thomas, one who had been absent when the Lord appeared in the room with many of his disciples and followers. And yet he was not there.

But when he met with the risen Lord, when he saw the hands and his side that was pierced, he came and saw a risen Saviour.

And he bowed before his Lord and said, My Lord and my God. And as we prepare our hearts this evening, help us to fix our eyes on Jesus, the one who was pierced for our transgressions, the one who bore our sin on the cross.

For when we look at ourselves, Lord, we see how unworthy we are. But we thank you that you do not tell us to come feeling our own worthiness, feeling ready, feeling that we can receive it because of anything we've done ourselves, but that we come because of what has been done for us.

[8 : 01] When Jesus said, even on the cross, it is finished. We thank you that it is all done for us and that we can come and receive and be blessed.

And so we ask that you will bless your word to us this evening as we read together, as we share from it. Bless our hearts, O Lord, as we offer our praise and prayer to you. May you encourage us and strengthen us, each one.

May you, O Lord, help us, whatever else is going on in our lives, whatever else has been going on even in this past week, when we come with so many different emotions and experience even in these last days, that we would come recognizing the one who is the author of life, the one who is able to give life unto the full and life eternal.

And we pray, Lord, that you will lead us in all our ways and guide our paths. And we do pray, Lord, for our congregation and for our community. We pray, Lord, that as we gather this evening and God willing tomorrow, that you will surround us with your presence, that you will bless us, Lord, together around your word and sacrament, that you will help us all, Lord, to come, rejoicing in you and strengthened through you.

We pray, Lord, for any here this evening, whether they're present or whether they're tuning in online, whose hearts desire is to be at the Lord's table.

[9 : 33] Perhaps there are some who want to come for the first time, and we pray for them, Lord, that you will encourage them and strengthen them. We know, Lord, that fear of so many things keeps us away, fear of ourselves, fear of man, fear of what people will say.

But we pray, Lord, that at the forefront of our minds will be the fear of the Lord, and that in the right sense, not of feeling we cannot come because of who we are, but coming because we know who you are.

We know that there is no one else who is able to help, no one else who is able to give life. And we pray, Lord, that you will take all our fears away and help us to lean upon our beloved, upon our Saviour.

We pray for those who perhaps are unable to come for different reasons, those who have maybe come over the many years gone past and unable to come now. We pray, Lord, that you will strengthen their faith and encourage them in their hearts too.

And may you do that for us all, Lord, whether we are coming for the first time or after being at for many times, Lord, we still need your grace and your strength.

[10 : 47] Humble us, we pray, Lord, and keep us leaning upon you. And we pray too, Lord, that as we receive, we will also go from this place to give, to give help, to give guidance, to give encouragement to those around us, to pray for those in need in different ways, to remember those who are mourning and grieving at this time, Lord.

It's been a week of sorrow in our midst, and we continue to pray for families who are mourning the loss of loved ones. We pray for the family of Paul Smith as they continue to mourn his passing and prepare for the funeral service on Monday.

Oh, Lord, we just pray that you will surround and uphold as only you can and that you will bless them, Lord, and be near to them. And so many friends and families who knew him and loved him, Lord.

We pray for your grace to touch lives, for your word to be blessed, for prayers to be heard for them. We pray for those who are unwell at this time as well. We remember them in homes, in hospital, and in their own homes as well, Lord.

Surround and be with all who need you in different ways. And we do pray, Lord, that you will look down upon us in mercy. Remember our land, oh Lord, and those who rule over us.

[12:09] We pray for our leaders in every aspect of life, be it local, national, or international. In these days, oh Lord, how we long to see your blessing poured out.

We long to see people turning to you and seeing their need of you, Lord, seeing the choices that you put before us in this life. And so often we take the wrong paths, we choose the wrong things. And yet, Lord, your word is so precious in that it offers us the way to life. And may your word become precious to our land and to the nations of the world.

May you become precious to people far and wide, that you would bring peace where there are troubles, where there are conflicts, where there are persecutions, where there are famines, where there are all of the things that your word speaks of.

May you come, oh Lord, in a day of your power and revive us as your people. So, Lord, we thank you that we can come looking to you, offering up our prayers to you and through the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

[13:17] We can come confessing our sins. There are many, Lord, and none hidden from you. But we thank you that there is great forgiveness with you as we come, repenting and turning to you.

So, Lord, hear our prayers and continue with us in this time. And go before us, we pray, as we ask all things. In the name of Jesus, our Lord, for his sake and glory.

Amen. Amen. Let's again sing to God's praise, this time in Psalm 1, in the Scottish Psalter version, page 200 of the psalm book, Psalm 1.

You can sing the whole of this psalm to the tune, the bass of Harris. Psalm 1 at verse 1. We'll sing from this psalm, the whole of this psalm, to God's praise.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Blessedness, who all have taught us free, In counsel of the Godly reign, Lord, shall sit in our shame, Lord, sit a faithless, cornish cheer, A place of faith's delight, Upon the slow and rigid days

[15:26] Vor mere slow day and night. Isshaniiai catastrophic és quo, Mir pat Sea pale guard, Which in his season yields his fruit, and his defateth never.

And all he does shall prosper well, the wicked are not so, but like the ark unto the child.

In his season he Espero, havewydd his great Shabelase.

Such as the God we are God in his heavenly altar just Shall with his name appear For by the way of God he led Up to the Lord his soul Where else the way of wicked men Shall wide be on our throne Well we turn together to read God's word in Deuteronomy

In the Old Testament, the book of Deuteronomy Taking up our reading at the very end of chapter 29 And reading into chapter 30 down to the end of that chapter So Deuteronomy chapter 29 Reading at verse 29 Reading into chapter 30 Deuteronomy 29 at verse 29 The secret things belong to the Lord our God But the things that are revealed belong to us And to our children forever That we may do all the words of this law When all these things come upon you The blessing and the curse Which I have set before you And you call them to mind among all the nations Where the Lord your God has driven you And return to the Lord your God You and your children And obey his voice

[18:59] And all that I command you today With all your heart And with all your soul Then the Lord your God Will restore your fortunes And have compassion on you And he will gather you again From all the peoples Where the Lord your God Has scattered you If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts Of heaven From there the Lord your God Will gather you And from there he will take you And the Lord your God Will bring you Into the land that your fathers possessed That you may possess it And he will make you more prosperous And numerous than your fathers And the Lord your God Will circumcise your heart And the heart of your offspring So that you will love the Lord your God With all your heart And with all your soul That you may live And the Lord your God Will put all these curses On your foes And enemies who persecuted you And you shall again obey

The voice of the Lord And keep all his commandments That I command you today The Lord your God Will make you abundantly prosperous In all the work of your hand In the fruit of your womb And in the fruit of your cattle And in the fruit of your ground For the Lord will again Take delight In prospering you As he took delight In your fathers When you obey the voice Of your Lord Of the Lord your God To keep his commandments And his statutes That are written In the book of the law When you turn To the Lord your God With all your heart And with all your soul For this commandment That I command you today Is not too hard for you Neither is it far off It is not in

heaven That you should say Who will ascend to heaven for us And bring it to us That we may hear it and do it Neither is it beyond the sea That you should say Who will go over the sea for us And bring it to us That we may hear it and do it But the word is very near you It is in your mouth And in your heart So that you can do it See I have set before you today Life and good Death and evil If you obey the commandments Of the Lord your God That I command you today By loving the Lord your God By walking in his ways And by keeping his commandments And his statutes And his rules Then you shall live And multiply And the Lord your God Will bless you In the land that you are entering To take possession of it But if your heart turns away And you will not hear But are drawn away To worship other gods And serve them I declare to you today That you shall surely perish You shall not live long In the land that you are going Over the Jordan To enter and possess I call heaven and earth

To witness against you today That I have set before you Life and death Blessing and curse Therefore Choose life That you and your offspring May live Loving the Lord your God Obeying his voice And holding fast to him For he is your life And length of days That you may dwell in the land That the Lord swore to your fathers To Abraham To Isaac And to Jacob To give them Amen And may God bless That reading From his word Before we come To look at this passage Together We'll sing again To his praise In Psalm 86 In the Scottish Psalter Page 341 Psalm 86 And at verse 11 We're singing down To verse 15 And the tune is Bethesda Psalm 86 At verse 11 Teach me thy way And in thy truth O Lord Then walk will I Unite my heart That I Thy name May fear continually O Lord my God With all my heart To thee I will give praise And I the glory Will ascribe And to thy name Always We'll sing from Verse 11 To 15 To God's praise Teach me If I Will Teach me If I Will And in Thy truth O Lord Then walk Will I Unite My heart That I Thy name I May fear For

II
[24 : 03] O Lord my God with all my heart to thee I will give praise and I the glory will us cry unto thy name always because thy mercy toward me in witness doth excel and deliver past my soul out from the lowest hell and the end of the end of the end that that for my soul have sought and not said but the

Lord to the Lord are gracious long suffering and in thy truth and mercy the and the and the and the and the and reading and chapter 30 and reading through chapter 30 life and death and death and death and death blessing and curse therefore choose life that you and your offspring may live loving the Lord your God obeying his voice and holding holding fast to him for he is your life and length of days and so on.

As we prepare our hearts together this evening as we look to ourselves but above all as we look to the Lord and we come this weekend to remember his death all that he has done for us as a people. And we recognize in these words that we read in verse 19 a choice that is a choice for every one of us and all people in this world because the Lord puts this choice before each and every individual. He gives the choice between life and death. Why did Jesus come into the world? And what is it that we come and remember together this weekend?

[28 : 07] When we read in the Gospel of John in chapter 10 verse 10 where Jesus is describing himself as the good shepherd. He says in verse 10 the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.

The thief comes to take life away. But Jesus says I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

That is why Jesus came into this world. Because there is one who seeks to kill and to destroy but he has come that we might have life and have it abundantly.

And that's the theme we're going to be looking at over the course of this evening and tomorrow as well, God willing. This theme of life and the life that we have through Christ and the choice that is put before us.

So the first thing we're going to look at together this evening is this choice that we have and the choice for life. God willing tomorrow morning we'll then look at the source of life.

[29 : 17] The source of life that we have in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And then tomorrow evening we'll look at the way of life. How we are to live in light of what the Lord has done for us.

But we begin this evening by looking at this choice that is put before us each and every one of us. The choice between life and death. Now when you turn to the book of Deuteronomy, you turn to a book that has so much to teach us to this very day.

There's so much to say to us about so many things in our own lives. Not just the lives of the days of Moses as he was leading the children of Israel out of Egypt and to the border of the promised land. It's such an important book. Significant not just for the Old Testament but for the New Testament as well. One theologian, Gordon Wenham, he describes the book of Deuteronomy as the linchpin of the Old Testament.

How it seems to hold everything secure. Everything that came before it and comes after it. We almost find just this linchpin in Deuteronomy that speaks about God's people.

[30 : 31] How they've been brought out of slavery. How they've been brought to the border of the promised land. How we see here the Lord knows the choices that they are going to make in the future.

And yet God is faithful to his people. That there's this linchpin that is all about faith and obedience to the Lord. And this choice that we have before us.

The choice of life and death that the Lord puts before his people. And people often think about Deuteronomy and Exodus as all about the law.

When God gave the Ten Commandments. And here in Deuteronomy, Moses is reiterating again the place of the law. But all through this book as well you see grace.

And one book written about Deuteronomy actually has the title, The Triumph of Grace. Because we see that life is not all about law.

[31 : 31] Do this, don't do that. Yes, there is that part of our life. But too, there is all of the grace of God. Which we see running through the book of Deuteronomy.

And especially maybe in the passage that we're looking at together this evening. We see the triumph of grace. Because God is able to give life. And as we see this coming into the New Testament.

What we see is all of these things fulfilled. Through the person of Jesus Christ. Deuteronomy is one of these books. We've been looking at Psalm 69 in the prayer meeting recently.

It's one of the most quoted Psalms in the New Testament. Well, along with the book of Psalms, Genesis and Isaiah. Deuteronomy too is one of the most quoted books in the New Testament. It's important. It's seen it's not just for the days of Moses. It's for the days of Christ. And it's for our day today as well. And yet so many people will look at this book and say it's just confined to the past.

[32 : 39] Its significance has waned. But not so. Because the truths that we find here. They were relevant and important in the there and then of Moses' day.

But also it's for the here and now. The same choices that were put before them. Here are the choices put before all of us as well in our day.

This very day. And here Moses had led the children of Israel to the border of the promised land.

And chapter 29, it speaks of the covenant being renewed in Moab.

The promises of God being reiterated once again to the people of the children of Israel. They had come so far. They were on the border.

But now their promises are being reiterated once again. That God is a God of covenant. That he is a God of relationship with his people.

[33 : 39] In Deuteronomy, the very beginning, chapter 1, verse 1, it says, These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel on this side of the Jordan in the wilderness. And he goes on again to remind them of all that they've come through and all that lies ahead of them.

And what Moses is asking of the people is to renew their allegiance to the Lord. To remind themselves of what the Lord has done for them.

And how they are to look to and trust in the Lord. In the Lord's. It says there in verse 19, Choose life that you and your offspring may live.

Loving the Lord your God. Obeying his voice. Holding fast to him. For he is your life and length of days.

And as we prepare ourselves to come to the Lord's table tomorrow. As we hear these words. Is that our, what we are thinking ourselves this evening?

[34 : 47] Have we made this choice? Have we committed ourselves into the Lord? Are we loving the Lord our God with all our heart?

Are we obeying his voice? Are we holding fast to him? Is he your life and length of days? Well, Moses is putting this choice before them.

Because as they go into the promised land. They are going to be surrounded by many temptations. To worship false gods. To turn away from God.

And again, it's a challenge that we face on a daily basis ourselves. If you were sitting at the Lord's table when we gathered back in August. How many challenges have you faced since then?

How many temptations have you come up to worship other gods? To worship idols? To turn away from God? It's the ongoing battle.

[35 : 49] Because there is that thief who comes to seek. To destroy. To kill and destroy. But we have to come looking to Jesus.

Who is the one who has come. That we might have life. And have it in abundance. We make choices every day. Some are easier and we do them without thinking.

Other choices, they take more time and we pray over them. But when we are presented with a choice in this verse before us this evening.

The choice between life and death. You think to yourself, it's simple. We want to live. Who would want to die?

And yet from the days of Moses to this very day. People still choose wrongly. People still turn away from God.

[36 : 46] And so God is putting the choice before us this evening. Whatever situation we are in in life. Whatever we are at. He is reminding us that as we prepare our hearts.

As we examine ourselves. That we can only come to the Lord's table relying on Him. And trusting in Him. Loving the Lord our God.

Obedying His voice. Holding fast to Him. Recognizing Him as our life and length of days. That that is how we are to come.

Looking to God and trusting in Him. And so there's three things in this passage. Three reminders to us of how great our God is.

That we might choose Him. And the three things are this. That He knows. That He knows. He's near. And He cares.

[37 : 46] He knows. He's near. And He cares. And so the first thing we see here is that He is the God that knows. And He has a knowledge that is beyond anything that we have.

When God is renewing His covenant here with His people. It's because He knows them so well. He knows everything about them. He knows their needs.

He knows their hearts. He knows their minds. He knows all the choices that they will make. And when we began our reading in verse 29. It tells us of the knowledge that God has.

And how much more it is than ours. The secret things belong to the Lord our God. But the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever.

That we may do all the words of His law. His law. He knows everything. And there are things that secret things, hidden things that only He knows.

[38 : 53] And yet it's our natural inclination to want to know everything. Everything in the mind of God. But we can't. But what He says here is, there is enough revealed to you already.

You don't need to know all the answers. You don't need to know everything. But I have given you enough. I have shown you, as we see here, the choice that you have in front of you.

The choice to live or the choice to die. God knows everything. And for the people of Israel, the children of Israel here.

As it goes on into chapter 13, verse 1 to verse 10. The Lord is showing there just the knowledge that He has of them. Because He knows the choices that they will make. He knows even the wrong choices that they will make.

Because He speaks here about the children being scattered among all the nations. When your God has driven you. When your God has driven you, it says at the end of verse 1.

[40 : 02] So He knows that they are going to make the wrong choice. He knows that through their sin, they are going to be scattered to all ends of the earth. But it also speaks there in verse 3.

Then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you. He knows that He is a God of grace. And that He is able to restore.

And a day will come when He will restore His people. And He reminds them that He is the one who is able to bless them and to prosper them.

And to prosper them abundantly. He knows everything about them. And the same is true today. You don't hide anything from God.

There is nothing that God doesn't already know. Whatever has gone on in the past, He knows. Whatever is going on in your heart tonight, He knows.

[41 : 07] And whatever is in the future for you, God knows. And yet we want to be the ones in control, in charge of all these things.

But what He is saying is to love Him. To trust Him. To hold fast to Him. To recognize that He is our life and length of days.

The hidden things, the secret things belong to Him. But that we are to make use of what He has revealed to us. Through His word.

Through His providence. Through everything that He does in our life. That we are to lean on Him. He knows everything. And it is amazing as you look at the experience of God's people throughout the scriptures.

How God knew everything about them. And yet God was so gracious, compassionate towards them. Moses himself. David, whose psalms we so often sing.

[42 : 12] When you look throughout the scriptures, you find men and women through all the generations. Peter in the New Testament. You find with Esther and Ruth in the Old Testament.

You find it all through there. People whose lives were touched by God. Who felt in their own hearts. Just read Hebrews 11, that chapter of faith.

Who was perfect on that list? Nobody. But God knew their hearts. And God had compassion on them. And so it is to this day that God speaks into our lives in these ways as well.

Charles Spurgeon, a famous preacher of the past. He was used powerfully by God in so many different ways. But it was amazing how often he had a word in his sermons that spoke to a particular person.

At that very moment in their life. And there are so many accounts told of people giving their testimony and sharing their experience of having come into church with no interest in the gospel.

[43 : 22] They were only choosing death in their life. But through the word that came through from God through Charles Spurgeon, they left that place alive. It is a story of one man who, he was on his way out this night.

He was going out for a drink. He was desperate just for a bottle of gin. That was his life. But he saw this crowd in the church this night.

Spurgeon's church. And he was wondering what was happening. Why there was such a crowd. So he pushed his way through. And just at that moment when he appeared up on the balcony, Charles Spurgeon was saying that there was someone there with a bottle of gin in their pocket.

Who had come just to cause trouble. And the man was stunned. He was stopped in his tracks. And he began to listen to the rest of what Spurgeon was saying in his sermon.

And he was transformed by the gospel. God knew that man's heart. And he changed that man's heart. Another evening it happened with a woman who was a prostitute.

[44 : 33] She was at her wits end. She was walking along the street. She was preparing to take her own life. And she saw the church open.

And she stopped to go in hoping to hear something that would prepare her to meet her maker. That was her intention going in. What was Spurgeon preaching on that night?

Luke chapter 7 verse 36. The story of the prostitute who wiped Jesus' feet with her tears. And his text was verse 44.

Do you see this woman? And that woman started to come into the church. Started hearing this. And she saw herself in what Spurgeon was preaching.

She saw her own life. But she saw the grace of God. And she trusted in Christ as her Savior.

[45 : 35] Now if anyone had looked at that man or that woman coming into church that night. They would have just been like the ones who you see the Pharisees looking down on in the New Testament.

Just like the woman in Luke 7. Why do you bother yourself with her? But God knows. God searches hearts.

There are some things best left in the hands of God. Because he knows. But there are things revealed to us. That make us ask.

Well what choices are we making in life? What are we listening to in life? What impact our choices have in our life? We have to look at the uncovered things in Scripture.

The things that are laid before us. The choices that are put before us. Because here Moses is giving the people enough to live.

[46 : 34] Not all the answers. But enough to live. And that is what we have before us as well. The revealed things that belong to us.

And to our children. Forever. That we may do all the words of this law. He gives us enough to live. Because he knows what we need.

The second thing we see here is the God who is near. The God who is near to his people. He knows all things. And that there are things hidden from us.

And things revealed. And the question that naturally comes to our mind is. Well how can we find him? How can we come to know him? Well if you look at verse 11.

The Lord is near. For this commandment that I give. That I command you today. Is not too hard for you. Neither is it far off. So it's near. Because the Lord is near.

[47 : 34] It's not too far away from us. And the Lord is near to his people to this day. We are challenged in Scripture to trust God.

When we are challenged to do that. We are not asked to do something that is beyond any of us. Because the Lord is near. He has given every one of us the means to believe and to trust in him. And that's the wonder of his word. When you read in Psalm 145 verse 18. It says there. The Lord is near to all who call upon him.

To all who call upon him in truth. He is near. He is there for us. And when you look at Moses' day. How near he was to his people then.

He was with them in the pillar of cloud. And the pillar of fire. Leading them day and night. Providing for them day after day. Just in the previous chapter. Verse 5. Chapter 29.

[48 : 39] It says. And I have led you 40 years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you. And your sandals have not worn out on your feet. God knows.

And God sees everything. And God cares for his people. And that is still true to this day.

We can all I'm sure testify. To the care of God. To the compassion of God. Because how else would we go on? How else could we do as is being asked of us here.

To choose life. Loving the Lord your God. Obeying his voice. Holding fast to him. Because he cares for us. We've known it.

We've experienced it. And the worries and the anxieties of this world. That come our way. On a regular basis. Yet God is near. God is near to all.

[49 : 42] Who call upon him. Who call upon him. In truth. And this is one of these verses that we see. It's quoted again in the New Testament. In the book of Romans. Chapter 10.

In verse 8 it says. But what does it say? The word is near you. In your mouth and in your heart. That is. The word of faith that we proclaim. Because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord. And believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead. You will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified. And with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

It's a truth for Moses' day. It's a truth for the New Testament days. It's a truth for our day as well. It is not too hard.

The word is near. That we may hear and live. The matters put before us here.

[50 : 41] The choice of life and death. They are serious choices. In our eyes they seem such a simple choice. And yet we find it so hard to make that choice.

Death through sin. Life through Christ Jesus. And this is what is near to us.

This is what the Lord's care for us looks like. Because he knew the sin of this world. That's why he sent his son into this world.

As we look at God willing tomorrow morning. The source of life. That is the Lamb of God as John the Baptist describes him. Who takes away the sin of the world.

He is the source of life. The word of God is for us all. For every one of us.

[51 : 46] It's not hidden. It's not too far away. It's not too high in the sky. It's not over the sea. It's here. It's here before us this evening.

The very choice that he gives us. Is here for us all to hear. And to respond to. To choose life. That we might live.

God cares. God cares so much. That he gave his own son. That we might live. You have those beautiful words.

In Psalm 116 verse 7. I'm quoting from the Singed Psalms version. Rest. Rest. Oh my soul. God has been good to you.

For you, oh Lord, have saved my soul from death. My feet from stumbling. And my eyes from tears. That I may live for you.

[52 : 45] While I have breath. Rest. Rest. Because God has been good to you. You have saved my soul from death.

My feet from stumbling. My eyes from tears. That I may live for you. While I have breath. The Lord cares for his people.

The Lord knows his people. And the Lord is near to his people. And the last part of this chapter just shows you almost all of these things together.

His knowledge. His concern. His compassion. For all of his people. How near he is. God is with us people.

He does not leave them. Even when they sin against him. And when we receive the word of God in our heart. The love of God is what commands our life as well.

[53 : 56] As well. It says. At the end of verse 29. In chapter 29. That you may do all the words of this law. What he has revealed to us.

And then as we conclude in this chapter. In verse 19 onwards. As he calls heaven and earth to witness. Setting before us life and death. Blessing and curse. Therefore choose life.

That you and your offspring may live. Loving the Lord your God. Obeying his voice. Holding fast to him. That you may dwell in the land.

That the Lord your God swore to your fathers. We have this wonderful promise. This is not a description. Of a God who is distant.

Of a God who doesn't care for his people. Who doesn't know his people. A God who is angry against his people. When we see this. When some people read through this.

[54 : 55] And it talks about blessings and curses. Life and destruction. God is sometimes seen from people as a cruel tyrant.

Who has no time for his people. No mercy towards his people. But God is a God of great mercy. A God of great patience towards his people.

And you see it here again. When he puts the choice before us. What do our sins deserve? They deserve death. That's what the scripture tells us.

The wages of sin is death. But what has he done. To make a difference for us. He gave his son. The gift of God is life.

Through him. And so that is what we are to look to. The blessing that God has poured out upon us. Does God delight in the death of the wicked?

[55 : 56] No. Ezekiel tells us that in chapter 18 verse 23. Do I have pleasure at all that the wicked should die? Says the Lord God. And not that they should turn from his ways.

And live. God longs for his people to come to him and live. That is why he puts the choice before us. That is a God who cares.

He calls his people here. Choose life. Because he loves his people. C.S. Lewis.

He speaks about the return of the Lord in this way. He says. When the author walks onto the stage. The play is over.

And God is going to invade all right. But what is the good of saying. You are on his side then. When you see the whole natural universe melting away.

[56 : 58] Like a dream and something else comes crashing in. This time. It will be God without disguise. Something so overwhelming.

That it will strike either irresistible love. Or irresistible horror. Into every creature. It will be too late then to choose your side.

That will not be the time for choosing. It will be the time when you discover. Which side we really have chosen. Whether we realized it before or not.

Now. Today. This moment. Is our chance to choose the right side. It's not to leave it. Till it's too late. And to realize the consequences. Of the choice that you have made. To choose this day. And to choose life. There are many who will say.

[57 : 59] I have no choice. In my salvation. It's not about me. Only God can do it. And that is true. But you go back to verse 29.

The secret things belong to God. Yes. There are things that only God knows. There is an elect that only God knows. But it's not an excuse.

To do nothing. Because there are revealed things. That belong to us. There are revealed things that God has given to us.

To make the choice. And much of what the Bible says to us. Is about choice. How many scriptures speak of choosing?

How many scriptures speak to us. About our responsibilities. As well as God's sovereignty. Just later on in the book of Joshua.

[58 : 59] Chapter 24. You have Joshua. Challenging the people there. In verse 15 of chapter 24. Where he says to him. If it is evil in your eyes. To serve the Lord.

Choose this day whom you will serve. Whether the gods your father served. In the region beyond the river. Or the gods of the Amorites. In whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house.

We will serve the Lord. You see there. Choose this day. Whom you will serve. The Philippian jailer. In Acts chapter 16.

Verse 30. He's brought. He brought them out. And said. Sir. What must I do to be saved? Believe. Believe.

In the Lord Jesus. And you will be saved. You and your household. There is a choice. What must I do to be saved? Believe. In the Lord Jesus Christ. Final one. Just to show.

[59 : 56] That there is a choice. Put before us. Revelation chapter 3. Verse 19. When Jesus is writing to the churches. And he's telling them. About all the things that are right. And wrong about them. He says. To the church. At Laodicea.

Those whom I love. I love. You and your household. You and your household. There is a choice. There is a choice. What must I do to be saved? Believe. In the Lord Jesus Christ. The final one. Just to show.

That there is a choice. And he's telling them. About all the things. That are right. And wrong about them. He says. To the church. At Laodicea. Those whom I love. I reprove.

And discipline. So be zealous. And repent. And then he says. Behold. I stand at the door. And knock. If anyone hears my voice. And opens the door.

I will come in to him. And eat with him. And he with me. That is a choice. That is a choice. Put before us. As well. Tonight.

[60 : 52] He knocks. At the door. If anyone hears my voice. And opens the door. I will come in to him. And eat with him.

And he with me. Is there any greater. Encouragement to us. In terms of the choice. That we make. Ahead of the Lord's Supper.

And to open the door. That he would eat with us. And we with him. Behold. I stand at the door. And knock. There are choices. Put before us. All the time. And they tie back. Into the choice. That we are given. In verse 19.

Here. I call heaven and earth. To witness against you today. That I have set before you. Life and death. Blessing and curse. All before us.

[61 : 49] And we all have a choice. To make. And the Lord says. Therefore. Choose life. That you and your offspring. May live. Loving the Lord your God.

Obedying his voice. And holding fast. To him. When you have a choice. To make. And you don't make it.

That in itself. Is a choice. The Lord puts it before us. Tonight. We can see. He is.

Our life. And length. Of days. What a blessing. And a privilege. It is for us. To come. And do this. In remembrance. Of him. The choice. Is before us. He says. Choose life. That you may live.

[62 : 48] Let us pray. Lord our gracious God. We thank you. For your word. For all the instruction. It gives to us. Reminding us. That you are sovereign.

But reminding us. Of our responsibilities. To. That we as a people. Have things revealed. To us. That show us. The paths. Of life. That show us.

The way of salvation. So teach us. Lord. That we may walk. In them. That we may choose life. That we may know. And love the Lord. With all our heart. And we ask it all.

In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. We're going to conclude. By singing. To God's praise. In Psalm 66.

In the sing. Psalms version. Psalm 66. Page 84. Of the psalm books. Psalm 66. At verse 16. Come all who.

[63 : 44] Sorry. Come all who. Come all who. Sorry. Come all who fear our God. I'll tell what he has done. I cried to him. With my mouth.

His praise. Was on. My tongue. If I had cherished sin. The Lord would not have heard. But surely. When I prayed to him. God listened. To my word.

We'll sing from verse 16. Down to the end of the psalm. To God's praise. Please. From all who. Hear our God. I'll tell what he has done. I cried unto him.

With my mouth. His praise. I cried unto him. With my mouth. His grace was on my tongue.

[64 : 46] If I had cherished sin, the Lord would not have heard.

But surely when I pray to Him, God listen to my word.

Whatever God be praised, who hears me from above, He has not turned away my prayer, or kept from me His love.

After the benediction, I'll go to the main door. We'll close with the benediction. Now may grace, mercy, and peace from God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit rest upon and abide with you all now and forevermore.

Amen.