

It's a Choice

Parents know what is best for their children. Right? So, if a parent hopes their child will develop an interest in music and forces a child to take piano lessons, what are the odds that child will develop a real passion for the piano? It is possible the child might even resent the requirement of taking piano lessons because of all the practice required to master it. Now, compare that to a child who *asks* their parent to take piano lessons. Which child has a better chance of developing a life-long passion for the piano? Which child is more likely to eagerly practice daily in an effort to master the instrument? There is a big difference in our commitment to things we “should do” or “want to do.”

Perhaps you have often wondered why God, our Creator, did not make being a person of faith a requirement for all who lived on earth. Would that be easier on Him? Why did He give us the option whether or not to follow Him? I think He wanted being a person of faith to be a choice, not a duty.

God has given us the free will to accept or reject Him. Free will is important to our motivation and commitment. If you blindly accept there is a God it might have less significance than if it was a choice you willingly made. If it was “expected of you,” you might just carry out your “religious obligations” and then do what you wish as if being a person of faith didn’t make a difference at all. Making God the center of our lives is an honor and not a duty.



Being a follower of Jesus involves a change of heart. Believers seek to live a life much different than the rest of the world. *I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I have set my heart on your laws (Psalm 119:30)*. And, because of Jesus dying on the cross, we have forgiveness for when we fall short.

Many people acknowledge there is a God but are not committed to living the faith. The world encourages us to challenge what is right and acceptable. The world’s values are far different than God’s. Merely saying there is a God would have little meaning for the person because it doesn’t change who or “whose” they are.

What do you choose? Following Jesus is a conscious choice to build a relationship with God. Relationships go two ways with meaning and responsibilities for both you and God. The Bible says: *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Peter 1:3)*.

At the center of our relationship with God is mutual love. You can’t “command” love. It is a feeling that grows inside us and grows stronger over time. God loves us because He created us. But, do we love God in return?

God has plans for people of the faith. God wants us to encourage others to come to faith. *You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit--fruit that will last--and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you (John 15:16)*. He equips us to do good things in His name.

There is a big reward for having faith and trust in God. Jesus said: *“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. ... Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” (John 14:15-21)*

Not everyone makes the choice to love and follow God. Those who do are making a decision to seek eternal life in Heaven because of our partnership with Him. Like the child taking piano lessons because he wants to, being a child of God and diligently following Him is a wise choice. What choice are you making?

Prayer: Heavenly Father. We sometimes take You for granted because you give us the choice whether or not we will follow You. It is an honor to be a child of God. You are committed to us. We pray that we will choose to be committed to you. Amen.