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Deuteronomy 30:15-20
9/7/25

“Choices”

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. In our Old Testament reading today, God gives the Israelites a choice: life and good, evil and death.

And our first reaction might be, isn't it obvious? Life, of course. We all know about choices. We live in a time with too many choices.

More choices should make us happier. But the opposite often happens. The more options we have, the less satisfied we are. And we know this. Think of standing in front of 31 ice cream flavors. After you pick one, you can't stop wondering what the others would have been like instead of enjoying what you have.

When you go on vacation, was this the right vacation? What if somewhere else is better? Or you buy a car and find the one small flaw and then you aren't completely happy anymore. How about when you have time to watch one movie at home, how do you choose the right one which will make everyone happy? Choices, choices, choices. We know about them.

We struggle to choose and even when we do, how often is it even the right one?

And then we hear God say to these Israelites, “I place before you, life and good, evil and death. Choose Life.” We know that life and good is the right answer. It should be easy. But how often do we choose what is pleasurable, what's easy? I need to do some chores, but I will just spend five more minutes scrolling. “I know I should practice, prepare, do my homework, but I want to have just a little fun. I will definitely get to it soon.” Everyone else is doing that thing why shouldn't I? We know what the right thing to do is, but so often the wrong answer is tempting.

That's the way it was all the way back in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve knew God's will: do not eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. But Eve saw that the fruit was desirable for eating, and thus death entered into God's good creation. The struggle of making the right choice has been with us forever!

But, it's not actually about our choices. We struggle to choose and will fail. But It's about God's choice. God is not speaking to strangers, these are his beloved children, the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whom he's taken out of Egypt,

rescued, given life, provided for all their needs for 40 years in the wilderness, and claimed them. And God not only chose them, he choose you and claimed you as his child. Our choices will fail, but God's will not. Through Baptism he makes us his own.

God's Choice does not stop there. He choose to come and live among us in Jesus. His choice to live and die for you. Because we choose poorly, God chose to redeem us through his blood on the cross. I choose to take your place. I suffer for you. By my blood I purchased you. And I made you mine through baptism. You were washed clean. In love I adopted you as my children through Jesus Christ. I choose you to live as one of my children. I see you not as the world does, but I see you in all your beauty. I choose you and I made you mine, so that I could give you life. You are a child of God.

Its not about our choices, it is about our identity in Christ. Our choices don't change our identity. They simply reflect it. God is telling the Israelites to live as his children by choosing Good and life by following his commands and living by his word. And today he says the same to us.

You didn't choose your family, where you are born, your sports team, or to be God's child. But we choose how we live out our identity, choosing good and life. God gives us his word to show us what is good and where the life is. But when we fail we return to God as any child does to their parent to ask forgiveness and seeking help. We know our identity is in Christ, and when we fail we return to God to be forgiven and set upon the narrow path to walk in his ways. You are a child of God, one chosen to have good and life!

Now May the LORD our God be with us, just as he was with our fathers. May he never leave us or abandon us. May he turn our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways. For He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.