



New Beginnings, Volume 31, 2008
Pastor Jim Verkest, Mosinee UMC

Joshua 24:15a

“But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.”

When it gets right down to it, life is all about choices. From the very beginning of time, humans have had to make choices. Whether we like it or not there are consequences to every choice we make. The first human story about choice can be found in the Book of Genesis. Here we find Adam and Eve in the perfect garden prepared for them by God. God gives the two of them everything they could need and denies them only the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Unfortunately for them, and all humanity since, they chose to disobey God on His one request. The consequences of their disobedience are still experienced today as sin and brokenness in the human condition. Humankind was expelled from this perfect paradise prepared for them and countless descendants have suffered because of their choice.

Adam and Eve were provided everything that they needed by God but that apparently wasn't enough. But before we come down too hard on Adam and Eve let's ask ourselves how many of us are satisfied with what we need. The truth of the matter is, most of us want much more than what we need, we want what we want. Not only do most of us seek more than what we need for ourselves, far too few recognize that all that we do have comes from God. Ask most people, they will tell you that they deserve what they have because they “earned it”. Far too few recognize the grace

of God who always provides for us much more than what we earn. Thank God, we do not get what we deserve for our sinful human nature deserves only punishment from the holy God, who instead chooses to love us.

In the passage from Joshua we are all called to consider whom or what we will worship as god. In our culture today, many people, even those who would claim to be Christians, in reality worship at the alters of money, sex, and power. Their gods are the gods of their lusts not the God of love and life. When we look at their (and ours) lifestyles and choices what does it reveal about where our hearts are. The truth is that it's only when we love God and love one another, that we have chosen to worship at the alter of the one true living God. It's when we are content with our needs and use the excess to bless others whose needs are not being met that we “worship” God. Choosing to worship at these worldly alters has its consequences and sadly, they are eternal consequences brought upon us by our own choices.

I encourage you this day to look at your life and your life choices. Is your priority list one that reads: 1.) God, 2.) Family, 3.) Friends, 4.) Work or worldly purpose. If not, you need to have a new beginning for your life. Choose this day priorities that will bless you for all eternity.