

To all those who are marching to Zion, the beautiful city of God,

SCRIPTURE:

Joshua 24:14-15 (CEB) – Larger reading: Joshua 24:11-22

14 “So now, revere the Lord. Serve him honestly and faithfully. Put aside the gods that your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt and serve the Lord. 15 But if it seems wrong in your opinion to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Choose the gods whom your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you live. But my family and I will serve the Lord.”

STORY:

A lazy student was looking through a microscope watching minute animal life pass through one generation after another. Suddenly the boy stood up, saying: “I see it now. I am a single link between the generations before me and those who may come after. I will not be rotten link in that chain.

OBSERVATION:

Life is made up of the sum total of all of our decisions linking us to all that come after as well as those who have proceeded us in the chain of human existence. Those decisions – good, bad or indifferent – come into play at every turn in our life’s journey. At any one point the decisions that we do make are usually made with the best judgment we had at the time given the circumstances and the interpersonal dynamics present. What makes it somewhat complicated is that there are decisions being made by others that either, positively or negatively, directly impact our lives.

Such was the case as I listened to a person speak to decisions that she and her spouse made. The process went something like this, “Well, when ‘Jack’ goes off to play college basketball we will ...” or “When ‘Jack’ gets older and is out of the house we will ...” Well, ‘Jack’ is off to college now and out of the house. He isn’t playing basketball any longer because of the negative influence of the high school basketball coach. Plus, her “spouse” has cancer and is slowly dying. As they say, “the best laid plans of mice and men” are all for naught now.

We all make decisions that place our plans and hopes on “hold” until the future arrives, but, just as the above illustration indicates, all too often other things impact those plans and hopes ... they simply never get realized. The speaker above isn’t regretting making the decisions that she and her husband made, but is finding it laughable, in a sad way, that all of their plans cannot be realized because of circumstances beyond their control.

Margaret and I have made changes in our plans to “travel across America” so that we can be present in the lives of our grandchildren. We did this willingly and with absolutely no regret. We wouldn’t have changed the last eleven years for anything and look forward to the years yet to come. But, after listening to this mother and wife share her insights, I’m beginning to think that just maybe we need to be a little more creative with our time so that we can experience some of our hopes and plans within the context

of still being involved in the grandchildren's lives. If we don't, then time will have passed us by and just possibly, those dreams will become nothing more than just dreams.

And to be honest, this Coronavirus isn't helping the matter at all. This pandemic has only caused us to place some of our plans on hold. Previously, while helping to raise our grandchildren and serve the church part-time, we've been able to travel, usually with friends and/or our granddaughter, as was our intent this past July. Those opportunities will still make themselves available. And so, the dreams are still being dreamed and hopes is still out there just waiting to be grasped.

As the saying goes, "don't put off until tomorrow that which you can accomplish today." That goes for the decisions surrounding our hopes and dreams for our lives. Either we make those decisions or others, as well as circumstances (and a pandemic), will be making them for us.

QUOTE:

The best way to make your dreams come true is to wake up. - J.M. Power

PRAYER:

Thank you Lord for placing in our spirit the dreams that shapes our souls. As we face the decisions before us, as individuals and as a church, be present to guide and to mold for you are the potter we are the clay. Hold over our being absolute sway. May the best of your Kingdom become our reality as you wake us up from our dreams. Amen.

And the faith journey continues, Pastor Jim
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Please pray for us as we record Sunday's service this morning.

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