March 14th

Scripture Reading: Joshua 24 to Judges 2

Memory Verse: Joshua 24:15 And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers 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."

Song: "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus"

The Israelites had settled Palestine, living in houses they did not build and eating from vineyards they did not plant. Moses feared the people would prosper and become complacent, forgetting what God had done for them. This complacency left them vulnerable to the gods of the nations around them. When a person does not wholeheartedly fill his life with the Lord, he will inevitably fill it with it something. His choices in prosperity and complacency are often critical to his eternal soul.

Dependent people have few choices, and often stay with the Lord. But when people become prosperous, when they are empowered to do as they please, they can choose whatever they wish. David fell to temptation with Bathsheba because he thought he could. King Uzziah fell to temptation in the temple, because he thought he could.

The Calvinist view that God makes our choices for us cannot be reconciled with passages such as Joshua 24:15, which puts the responsibility to choose on the individual. Christianity is ultimately a choice of the heart (Luke 8:11-15); each one must choose whom he will serve (Romans 6:16-18). God did not arbitrarily choose who would be saved and who lost. He offered salvation to all (Titus 2:11-14), but men must choose to follow the instruction of grace. We are each day deciding whom we will serve. We must remain faithful to our calling.

Prayer: "Oh Lord, I thank you for the gift of salvation through the blood of Jesus, given to me when I was baptized. Now that I am yours, Father, help me each day to keep choosing to bear my cross.

Forgive me when I have forgotten you. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen."

Thought Questions:

Are you choosing to bear your cross with the Lord today?

What about yesterday?

What will you choose tomorrow?

Are you allowing the temptation of the world to weaken your resolve to serve the Lord?