

“The Final Choice”

John 6:66-71

Hello friend and welcome to *Hope for Today*. My name is J. Mark Horst; I’m your friend and Bible teacher. The program you’re listening to is produced by Heralds of Hope, an international Gospel radio and literature ministry. Each week the Bible teaching broadcasts of *Heralds of Hope* circle the globe in English and 21 other major languages. Thousands are tuning in each week to receive spiritual nourishment and blessing.

On today’s broadcast of *Hope for Today*, our Bible teaching will be focused on the idea of choice. You made the choice to join us today and we’re glad you did. If you’re already a Christ-follower, this teaching will encourage you, if you don’t know Jesus, this teaching will show you how to begin your journey of faith in Him. So, we urge you to stay tuned.

In just a few moments, Dr. Yoder will present today’s teaching from the Gospel of John. But before he does that, let’s pray.

Gracious Heavenly Father, we thank you and praise you for giving us the privilege of choice. Thank you that we can choose to follow you and we can choose to praise you. I thank you that my friend has chosen to be a part of this broadcast today.

And now, Father, as Dr. Yoder comes to open the Word for us, I pray that you will open our hearts to the truth. I pray for my listening friend to understand the importance of making the choice to follow Jesus. I pray this in His name, Amen.

All of us are forced to choose. Everyday maybe there are some very simple choices; for example, how I answer a question. There are also choices of long-standing results, such as a job, a life partner, a wife or husband. Perhaps there are many possibilities before us when we make such choices. They are, however, of long results.

Then there is a final choice where there are only two ways, just two possibilities. In John 6:66-71 from the words of Jesus I want to show you what I mean by THE FINAL CHOICE.

66 *From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him.*

67 *Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?*

68 *Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.*

69 *And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.*

70 *Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?*

71 *He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.*

In these verses we can find the **FACTORS** which make the final choice so serious.

First there is **The Particular Question**.

This text opens with the observation that many of those who had followed Jesus as disciples left Him. They went back and walked no more with Him. His requirements were too difficult. They somehow couldn't match their lives with what Jesus required of those who follow Him.

But there is no success, no hope of success apart from Him. He is the way, the only way. The only way to have real success in life is to follow Jesus. But many of them quit following Him, so Jesus turned to the twelve and said to them, "Will you also go away?" Will you be followers of the crowd or will you follow me. Will you stand against the current? All the rest are leaving me, are you going to leave me too? "Will you also go away?"

You see, these disciples had only two possibilities: either to follow Jesus and go with Him or to go with the crowd. Can you see how important this question is? Will you also go away? It is a particular question and I should add, a question you will need to answer. Will you also go away? Will you be a crowd follower or will you follow Jesus? See, that is the final choice. That is the choice I'm placing before you from the words of Jesus on that particular question.

The second factor I bring to you is **A Positive Confession**.

Peter answered Jesus with a positive confession. He said, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." No one else is here to whom we can turn. We have made our choice. Peter was speaking for the rest, but surely, they agreed with him, at least for the most part. Peter said, "Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

Those were not just mere words, my friend. That was a positive confession from Peter who was speaking for most of the disciples. They were expressing in positive confession that no one else was like Him. "We believe, we are sure that you are that Christ, the Son of the living God."

Can you understand the importance of this confession? It is a most important confession. It is one that you are going to need to make in this final choice of whether you are going to follow Jesus or whether you are going to follow the crowd. The other people left but Peter put it straight when he made this positive confession.

I want you to think about that confession when he said, “We believe that thou art the Christ.” That means Peter regarded Jesus as the Messiah, the Anointed One, the One whom God had promised would come. He further said he believed that Jesus is the Son of the living God. Now I know some people have real problems with Peter’s confession but there it is and I want to remind you that this same confession you will need to make. This is a most important confession; one that Peter made for the disciples and the one that you and I will need to make as well. We are sure that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God.

There is a third factor in this final choice. It is **The Penetrating Assessment**.

After Peter’s confession Jesus made a prediction. He said, “Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” I would surely think that Judas in Jesus’ presence would have shrunk back. By this statement Jesus clearly expressed that He knew exactly what was in the heart of man. He had absolute knowledge of people. He disclosed the truth, the bare truth, the awful truth that one of those whom He had chosen was possessed of a demon. He had absolute knowledge, absolute knowledge of life. He knew that Judas was going to betray Him and before long. He was about to betray Him being one of the twelve.

That is a most penetrating assessment. It leaves nothing to chance because Jesus knew exactly what was in Judas’ heart. He knew exactly what was in the disciples’ hearts, too, the rest of them.

Can you understand the importance of His assessment? If by this statement it is clearly revealed that He understood Judas’ heart, then we must conclude that Jesus understands your heart and mine as well. He knows you and me just as clearly and as thoroughly as He knew Judas.

The final choice lies with us, as well. I would like to make it even more direct because I have made my choice to follow Jesus. How is it with you? The final choice lies with you. I urge you to follow Jesus. He is the one to whom you can go, and you can learn of Him. Don’t turn away. He is that Christ, the Son of the living God. May the Holy Spirit help you to make your choice now.

My friend, have you identified with Peter's confession? Have you personally confessed Jesus as the Son of God? Romans 10:9 says, "If you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, YOU WILL BE SAVED! That is a promise you can count on, my friend.

Now, if you were blessed by this teaching and would like an audio CD or a printed copy of it, just write and ask for the teaching "The Final Choice." We would be happy to send a copy to you as soon as we receive your request.

The quickest way for you to contact me is to send an e-mail to mail@heraldsofhope.org. That e-mail address is mail@heraldsofhope.org. Or you may write to *Hope for Today*, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. Remember, you can request a printed manuscript or an audio CD of this teaching, "The Final Choice." I'd be happy to send one to you.

If you have questions about the Bible or how to live as a Christ-follower, we invite you to send those questions to us. We will take your questions to the Holy Scripture and find an answer. We want to help you grow in your understanding of God's Word and in your relationship with Him. So, write to us today. Here's the contact information again.

Send an e-mail to mail@heraldsofhope.org. Or you may write to *Hope for Today*, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. Remember; you can request a free copy of this teaching, "The Final Choice." It's available in print or on an audio CD.

Now, I urge you to tune in next week as Dr. Yoder continues our study in John's Gospel. And until then, keep looking for that blessed HOPE.