**Mike Hipes – Facebook Lesson, August 12, 2020**

Good afternoon!

Making the right choice in life sometimes can be tough! We make choices each and every day that impact our lives and future. In politics, choosing a president in November. In marriage who to choose as a lifelong partner. What profession to peruse, what location to live, where to go to college, where to retire. The list goes on! All these choices and more impact our lives in a very significant way!

I had a friend who lived in Texas who made a radical decision one time to up and move on the spot to Florida. Due to his family situation and the health of his kids he moved. I visited him some years later in Florida and asked him how he felt about the choice he made. He said it was the second-best decision of his life! Naturally, I responded, what was the first best decision? He said obeying Jesus! I guess out of all of the choices in life that we need to make the one that should top the list is the spiritual choice that has eternal implications!

Listen to these three rich men who each made a spiritually rich wrong choice.

1. The Burdened Man: For him, the right choice was simply “too much” to do. Mark 10:17-31

Here was a rich young ruler who came running to Jesus and then knelt before Him asking, “Good teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” The man rattled off a list of good things that he was already doing. For him, religion was all about doing deeds that would earn his way in. But he believed the big lie! That salvation was all about depending on what he could do (“what shall I do”) rather than what Jesus does! So, Jesus tells him to sell all his possessions and give them to the poor and come follow Him and he shall have treasure in heaven. The story says that Jesus felt love for him! What was Jesus asking? He wasn’t asking him to do something, but rather to become something! Become fully dependent on Him and not on his own riches for security. To become vulnerable, to crucify self and take up his cross and follow Him! Sadly, the man-made a choice to walk away from the Lord for he owned much. He made the wrong spiritual choice! He chose to settle for doing good deeds hoping it would save him, rather than becoming completely dependent on Jesus and knowing it would save him. Can you name one thing in your life that you need to choose to let go of? Choose to let it go of it before it won’t let you go!

2. The Business Man: For him, the right choice was “too hard” to do. Luke 12:13-21

Here was a very successful man who became rich. The text says, “The land of a certain rich man was very productive. And he began to reason to himself...” He had so much at one point that he needed to build bigger barns to store all of his grain. He says all through the story over and over again, what shall I do! I will do this and do that etc. Then when he is done, he makes the decision to take a life of ease. To eat drink and be merry! Yet that very night he suddenly died! The story ends with the statement from Jesus, “now who will own what you have prepared? So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” This man was all about getting and not about giving. He had an “I” problem! He also never saw beyond this world! He made the wrong spiritual choice! What would you do today if you knew you were going to die tomorrow? What would be left undone? What would be neglected to have been given? In life, there are those who want to give and others who believe that they deserve to get! Choose to be a giver of yourself over and above being a one who feels entitled to get for themselves!

3. The Buried Man: For him, the choice was “too late” to do. Luke 16:19-31

In this story, a rich man dies about the same time a poor man named Lazarus dies and they both go to Hades. The rich man is in agony and the poor man is with Abraham at his side. There is a dialogue that takes place between the rich man and Abraham where the rich man is asking for water to cool his tongue. Abraham explains that there is a barrier between them and that there is no crossing over at this point. The man then begs Abraham saying, send “him (Lazarus) to my father’s house for I have five brothers – that he may warn them lest they also come to this place of torment. But Abraham said, They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.” What does God want? He wants us to be more concerned about being right with Him than being rich in this world! He made the wrong spiritual choice! Don’t wait or it may be too late! What is something that you have been putting off doing? Do it today or tomorrow could be too late!

Blessing all,

Mike