

- **\*READ Luke 9:57-62/PRAYER\*** Most of us are probably very familiar with Julius Caesar and his ruling as the leader of the Roman empire for some years in the middle of the first century BC. The way in which he came to power is quite a story within itself. Julius was a rising power within the Roman empire and those in the Senate recognized this as being the case. In fact, they feared his influence, war skills, and power and so they commanded that he give up his governorship of the Gaul.
- At this point, Julius Caesar had some decisions to make. He could either do as the Senate said and resign as governor and return to Rome where he would most likely have to answer for some of the things he had done that had displeased some folks, OR he could make a play for the top spot within the empire. So which would he choose? Well if you know history then you know that Julius's decision hinged upon this small bit of flowing water called the Rubicon. The Rubicon was the dividing line of sorts between Julius's province and Italy. An ancient Roman decree stated that any general who accompanied an army across the Rubicon would be considered as having committed treason against Rome.
- Julius Caesar knew what Crossing the Rubicon meant, and his decision to do so continues to carry meaning even to this day. When a person reaches a point of no return, it is sometimes referred to as that person's version of Caesar crossing the Rubicon. While not every decision falls on the level of a Rubicon, we must acknowledge that there are some decisions that we make in this life that truly mean something. Some decisions are larger than deciding which pair of socks to wear each day. This is exactly what Jesus is talking about when those individuals in **Luke 9:57-92** came telling Him that they would follow Him. He told them that this decision was an important one and not one to take lightly. I'd like to take some time this evening to consider this idea of crossing the Rubicon. Really what we're talking about this evening is decision making and how we ought to approach some of the weightier decisions we might make in this life.

## I. Our decisions/actions have consequences.

- A. Caesar knew that his decision to cross the Rubicon would come with massive ramifications.
  1. He would have to go up against General Pompey who was highly regarded as an even better general than Caesar.
  2. He would become dictator of Rome and seek to expand the empire to new heights.
  3. He would be assassinated by men who he had previously pardoned, and go down in history as one of the greatest visionaries and builders to have ever led an empire. All of this only happened because Julius Caesar made the decision to cross the Rubicon.
  4. Esau's decisions
- B. There are people in Scripture who we can read about that brought about major consequences and results based upon their conclusions.
  1. Adam and Eve brought about enumerable consequences on themselves and the world because of their decision to rebel against God and eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree. (**Genesis 3:14-19**)
  2. Esau's decision to forfeit his birthright for a bowl of soup allowed Jacob to be the one through whom God's Messiah would come. (**Hebrews 12:15-17**)
  3. David's decision to sin with Bathsheba brought about some terrible consequences in his life. The child that resulted from their adultery died and David's house would continually be in distress because of what he had done. (**II Samuel 12:7-14**)
  4. But not all examples of Scripture are negative. In fact, there are many good decisions made that brought about blessings. Think about Abraham. He was willing to go exactly where God had called him to go even though he had no clue where or why. Because of this, we see his three awesome blessings of a great nation, a great land, and the lineage of the Messiah. (**Genesis 12:1-4**)
  5. What about Solomon's request for God to bless him with wisdom? This decision to ask God for wisdom when he could have asked for anything else truly pleased God and Solomon and the people greatly benefitted from his decisions. (**I Kings 3:5-14**)
  6. We too must recognize that the decisions we make will bring about certain results. Even the small ones will bring about some sort of result that other decisions wouldn't yield. How much more will the big decisions bring about more important results. So what should we do knowing these things?

## II. We must think before we do.

- A. Before Caesar crossed the Rubicon, he had to consider whether or not he would be able to handle the results of this decision.
  - 1. If he wasn't the man that he was with the power and the influence, then the Roman army would've decimated him and those few who might follow him.
  - 2. But he knew that he was a man of great power and influence. He knew that he had the smarts and the people in order to carry out the things that would be coming his way. If he had failed to consider these things and been found lacking...well...history definitely wouldn't be as it is, today.
- B. We must consider the consequences of our decisions before we do something rash or foolish.
  - 1. In this busy and hassled life, it can be a great temptation to just fly by the seat of our pants, so to say, and not put any thought into the things we're doing or the decisions we're making. The best thing we can do is to take our actions or decisions and carefully consider them with wisdom before we act or do.
  - 2. The most important thing we can do in this life is to use the wisdom of God in everything that we do so that we might be blessed in all the things that we do. **(Proverbs 3:5,6)** It also means that we are self aware enough to realize when we are in need of more wisdom from God. **(James 1:5)**
  - 3. It can also be good that we take council with people who might possess wisdom that can help us, especially in the most important of decisions. *"Where there is no guidance the people fall, but in abundance of counselors there is victory."* **(Proverbs 11:14)**
  - 4. We would do well to use great wisdom in all of our decision making, but let's remember that there are some Rubicons in our lives that we must be absolutely sure that we recognize the consequences of such and the need to give careful consideration before we make these decisions. These decisions are points of no return. We don't get do overs and we must make the right decisions from the get go.

## III. There are three major decisions that we cannot change in this life:

- A. Becoming a spouse
  - 1. Marriage is one of God's greatest blessings, but it is also decision that cannot be taken lightly. Sadly, too many today treat marriage more like dating. Just as they begin and end dating relationships, too many people begin and end marriage without much thought at all. This isn't according to the will of God, and we must use wisdom when choosing who we marry.
  - 2. Notice Jesus's teachings concerning marriage in **Matthew 19:4-6**. He says that when a man and a woman leave their parents, join themselves together, then they are to be joined for life. This is a permanent relationship that is meant to last until one or the other passes from this life.
  - 3. So what does this mean? It means that we must put a lot of thought into who it is that we will marry. Firstly, we need to consider whether or not we are even ready for marriage. We need to use wisdom to determine whether or not we are mature enough to take on the responsibilities that come with marriage. Are we willing to put our spouse before ourselves? Are we willing to fulfill the roles that God has put forth in His Word? **(Ephesians 5:22-33)** If we are able and willing to do these things then marriage is something we can pursue.
  - 4. But it also needs to be well thought through who it is that we are going to marry. We always stress, as we should, that we ought to marry a person who will compliment us in our faith in Jesus. However, might I suggest that it is important for us to consider whether we are actually compatible with that person personality wise, as well. We ought to first consider our faiths, but we must not pursue someone as a spouse simply because they are a Christian. Marriage isn't something that we must pursue, so we ought to be specially wise in who we choose because once we marry, there is no going back.

## B. Becoming a parent

1. Once we have found our spouse with whom we will share this life with, it might be that we decide with our spouse that we want to bring children into this family where through birth or adoption. Again, this decision isn't one that can be taken lightly, but we must use wisdom when deciding whether or not this is something we will pursue.
2. Like marriage, we need to understand whether or not we are mature enough to take on this all important responsibility of raising another soul in this world. Parents are charged by God to first pursue God themselves, but they are also charged with helping their children to pursue God, as well. (**Ephesians 6:4**)
3. Another point that needs to be added is that we must recognize that the physical relationship between a man and woman is only reserved for marriage (**Heb. 13:4**), and one reason is because it is only in that relationship that God wants children introduced. Once we commit that action and bring forth a child...there is no turning back from that. Abortion is not not an option. Thus, we must again use wisdom to be reminded that the physical relationship isn't to be taken lightly.

## C. Becoming a Christian

1. Our final crossing the rubicon decision is certainly the most important of them all...will we become a Christian. We must recognize that our decision either way comes with major consequences. This is not a decision we can avoid in the slightest. So what goes into this decision?
2. In **Luke 14:25-32**, many are coming to Jesus wanting to be his disciples. However, Jesus doesn't just accept them no questions asked. Instead, He says that the one who comes to Him must love Him to the extent that it seems as if he hates everyone else in his life. He must be willing to die to self. He must be willing to follow Jesus in everything He commands. All of these things, Jesus says, must be considered before the disciple actually decides to follow Jesus. He goes in to describe this with the builder and the commander of the army.
3. Jesus stresses this idea of thinking before hand so strongly because there is only one thing worse than never obeying Jesus and that is coming to Jesus and then denying Him. (**II Peter 2:20-22**)
4. On the other hand, the one who fails to never become a disciple of Jesus must also recognize the consequences of such. If we never obey the Gospel though faith and obedience then we must recognize that we will never receive eternal life. Instead, we will receive the sad reward for sin which is death. Our decisions to follow, not follow, or fall away from Jesus all come with great ramifications.

While we might never make decisions that might sway the direction of an empire as Julius Caesar did, there are decisions in our lives that can be our own Rubicons. Who we marry, having kids, becoming a Christian, & other important decisions in this life must be met and made with great wisdom and consideration. May God help us to be a wise people who think before we act, and may He be honored and glorified in everything that we do.