

Tuesday, September 29, 2020

**Choose life**

**- Pastor Hank French**

*I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live... (Deuteronomy 30:19).*

The choices we make matter; they matter for us and they matter for others. The choices we make are choices for good or for ill; they support a good, full, meaningful, joyful life for us and for others or they don't.

It is good to remember that, to think about it. If we don't, we are in danger of making choices by default and choices made by default usually don't lead to a good, full, meaningful, joyful life for us and for others. We need to be intentional about the choices we make.

The Quaker theologian, social activist, and writer Parker Palmer has something wise to say about this:

“All of the great spiritual traditions want to awaken us to the fact that we cocreate the reality in which we live. And all of them ask two questions intended to keep us awake: What are we sending from within ourselves out into the world, and what impact is it having "out there"? What is the world sending back at us, and what impact is it having "in here"? We are continually engaged in the evolution of self and world—and we have the power to choose, moment by moment, between that which gives life and that which deals death.”

I think he is spot on. We do have the power to choose, but in order to make choices that give life, we have to be “awake,” mindful, not mindless, aware of what's going on and not sleepwalking through life.

The two questions that Parker finds in every great spiritual tradition will keep us awake if we make them the focal point of the choices that get us from morning to night. What do our choices send out into the world and what impact does it have on us and on others? What does the world send back to us and what impact does it have on us and on others?

Good questions—questions that can prevent us from living by default and empower us to live intentionally and with purpose.

Hear the voice of Jesus: “And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake” (Mark 13:37).

Prayer: God of life, as I move through this day, may my choices reflect a deep reverence for life. Amen.