

Just BETWEEN FRIENDS



January 2008

Dear Friends,

In the midst of our family’s holiday at the sea (in December, mind you, as this is summer in South Africa), I am conscious of the power of choice. Will I run and play with my children in the tide pools, or will I take these few precious moments to rest on my beach towel? Should I get up early this morning so Melissa can get a little extra rest? Should we make dinner at home or eat out? Each of these choices may seem small or insignificant on their own. But they all have deeper and sometimes lasting ramifications. They both reveal and shape our values—what is important, true, or right?



Who will our decisions affect?

We make so MANY choices on a daily basis –big, small, weighty, and benign. What is lingering on my mind a lot these days is how unconsciously we make most of them.



Where will our decisions take us?

We give little thought of tomorrow, of others, of God’s ways. Instead, we generally choose that which is easy, convenient, and in our self-interests. We don’t choose these things intentionally per se. In fact, it’s often as if we AREN’T making choices. But we are.

When you are waiting at the stoplight and there is a person holding a sign asking for help, you are faced with a choice.

When you are leaving work for the day and a coworker asks, “can you help me with...”, you are faced with a choice.

When you are deciding where to buy today’s cup of coffee, you are faced with a choice.

Looking at the examples above, which of your values come into play (assuming you can identify your values)? I’ll bet that if you take just one of the scenarios above,

A Note for Arthur & Melissa Stewart

January 2008

This One Thing—
We empower
leaders

YOUR WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

will be greatly appreciated. Use this space to write a brief message to your CRM partner. We will forward your note as quickly as possible.

"It is my opinion that the Christian conception of God...is so decadent as to constitute for professed believers something amounting to a moral calamity.

So necessary to the Church is a lofty concept of God that when that concept in any measure declines, the Church with her worship and her moral standards declines along with it. The first step down for any church is taken when it surrenders its high opinion of God." —A. W. Tozer

Missionaries are, by definition, "sent ones." They are ones on mission to represent the eternal God, who took on human form in the person of Jesus and who lives and moves today through the Spirit.

Nothing is more critical to the effectiveness and fruit of such sent ones as not only their understanding and concept of God, as Tozer alludes to, but their intimacy and relationship with Him.

The best thing you could do in response to the information in this letter from the CRM staff you know is to pause and simply pray. Pray they would increasingly know—really know—God in such a deep, passionate way that His presence overflows and exudes through them into the lives of all those they encounter.

Thanks for your support and partnership.

Sam

Dr. Sam Metcalf
President



*A higher standard.
A higher purpose.*

*"And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work."
—II Corinthians 9:8*

you have several values that could/would influence your choice. If you were to stop and think, to consider your values as they apply, which values(s) would you want to take precedence? Now look at one of the other situations. How could your choice in this situation actually make you more the person you WANT to be? Could this be an opportunity to be shaped?

I believe in the power of our choices. Consequently, I would suggest that we would all do well to live with a bit more intentionality. Let's make choices that reflect who we are or want to be. Further, can we examine our lives enough (even if only after the fact) to think through our choices?

I'm doing this myself with a couple of major areas in my own life: my relationships with God, my wife, and my children. I am spending just a little time, a few times each week, asking myself questions about how I am and how I want to be. Why? Because these affect and are affected by my choices. A couple of the questions I am asking:

- How can I better work with God rather than for God?
- What of God do I need to learn/experience?
- What do I need from Melissa?
- How do we grow in the type of love we desire?
- How do/can I love and connect with my children better?

Can you see how these types of questions apply directly to the choices I mentioned in the first paragraph?

God, in mysterious wisdom, has created us with the capacity and opportunity of choice. Choices allow us to partner with God. Choices provide opportunities to love and help others. Choices can change the world. May we all think through our choices.

Arthur + Melissa

The Stewarts

CRM EMPOWERING LEADERS

1240 N. Lakeview Ave. Suite 120 • Anaheim, CA 92807-1847
USA Phone: 714.779.0370 • Fax: 714.779.0189
E-mail: crm@crmladers.org • Visit our Web site at www.crmladers.org

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