

The Challenge of Having to Choose

Rich Nathan

August 4-5, 2007

1 and 2 Kings: Facing Life's Challenges

1 Kings 18:16-39

Given all the buzz about the new Simpson's Movie, I decided to go to that fount of wisdom, Homer Simpson, concerning one of the key differences between human beings and animals. You've heard all of those different sayings about what separates us from the animals. It is our ability to laugh. It is our knowledge of our own mortality. Or it is the fact that we cover our nakedness.

Well, Homer has the real truth. Here's what Homer Simpson taught his children:

"Weaseling out of things is important to learn. It's what separates us from the animals...except the weasel."

People a lot smarter than Homer Simpson have weighed in on what makes human beings unique. For example, Bill Cosby said:

"Human beings are the only creatures on earth that allow their children to come back home."

Albert Einstein said,

"Two things are infinite: the universe and human stupidity; and I'm not sure about the universe."

We are constantly trying to figure out what makes us human beings different than gorillas, or chimpanzees. You don't have to be a biologist, or an anthropologist, to see how close apes are to people. They even resemble us. That's why children like staring at apes in the zoo. Their faces are so expressive. They seem to be showing a range of emotion. If you look at a gorilla in the zoo and see his pot belly, you could say, "Hey! He looks like Uncle Vinny." If you watch a gorilla scratch himself, you could say, "That reminds me of grandpa!"

We know that human beings and chimpanzees share 99% of the same genetic material. We also know that there are really significant differences. Most of us, other than a few friends of mine, have less hair on their bodies than a chimp or a gorilla. Our brains, in general, are much larger. Our faces are different. The size of our teeth are different. Our jaw shape is different. We have opposable thumbs. We have many more sweat glands.

So what makes us essentially different than chimps or gorillas? On the negative side, there was a recent study done in Germany. They had two chimps in a cage separated

by a piece of glass. They had a table between them that held peanuts. One of the chimps, who could not access the table, had the power to deprive the other chimp of food by pulling on a rope in his cage and collapsing the table that the other chimp's food was on.

Now, they discovered that a chimp would pull on a rope in order to get food. A chimp will pull on a rope, if the other chimp steals his food. But a chimp would not pull on a rope simply out of spite, just to be mean to the other chimp. So the researchers said that one of the things that distinguish human beings from any other animal is spite. Human beings will be mean to each other just out of spite, even when there is no benefit to themselves. Human beings will hurt other people just for the perverse joy of seeing another person sad.

Let me suggest a very different way for us to understand what makes us distinctively human. It is not just spite. It is not just our opposable thumbs, or that we have more sweat glands than any other animal. It is not the size of our brains, or the shape and strength of our jaws. I believe that one of the main distinctives of being a human being is the power to choose. I think that the gift of free will is part of what it means to be created in the image of God.

In creation God placed men and women in a garden with a multitude of choices and opportunities for pleasure. We also read in Genesis 2:15-17 these words:

Genesis 2:15-17

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will certainly die."

The capacity to choose for God or against God, the capacity to choose the road we're on, and the ability to significantly choose our destinies, are what makes us human.

Choice: It's What Makes Us Human

Pastor Erwin McManus, in his book titled *Seizing Your Divine Moment*, made this really interesting observation. He said:

"The most spiritual activity you will engage in today is making choices."

See, the most spiritual activity we engage in is not those activities that we commonly call spiritual – prayer, worship or communion. We could do all of those activities for the wrong reasons – to make ourselves look good in front of other people; to gain brownie points with God; because we think religious activity impresses God. No, what is really spiritual is our choices. We have the choice to say something or not to say something. We have the choice regarding how we are going to spend our time watching television, or visiting someone in the hospital. We have the choice regarding how we are going to

use our money – to buy one more shirt for our already over-stuffed closet, or 5 mosquito nets to keep 5 kids in Africa from getting malaria.

Choice is the essential issue in spirituality. It is choice that determines how full a life you are going to live, not circumstance as is commonly believed. It is choice. Circumstance determines the size of the box that you are going to be placed in. We don't always get to pick our own opportunities. We don't get to pick our gifts. We don't always get to pick how healthy we will be. But in the box that life and God brings to us, choice determines how much of the box you are going to occupy. Are you going to retreat into a corner of the box in fear? Are you going to explore the whole box that you are placed in faith? Are you going to close yourself off to life and new relationships in bitterness and unforgiveness regarding your past? Are you going to open yourself up to new possibilities through forgiveness and faith?

The richness of our lives almost always comes down to choice – not circumstance, choice. Some choices that we make are more momentous than others. Our choice of what color socks we're going to wear; or what we're going to have for lunch will probably not affect very much in your life. On the other hand, the choice of a spouse; the choice of saying yes or no to an affair; the choice of a church; your choice of what you are going to do with God – these choices will determine the road you get on for decades, or even for eternity.

I've been doing a series from the Old Testament book of 1 Kings, a series that I've called, "Facing Life's Challenges." Today I want to talk about that which makes us most essentially human, The Challenge Of Having To Choose.

1 Kings 18:16-39

So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him, and Ahab went to meet Elijah. 17 When he saw Elijah, he said to him, "Is that you, you troubler of Israel?" 18 "I have not made trouble for Israel," Elijah replied. "But you and your father's family have. You have abandoned the Lord's commands and have followed the Baals. 19 Now summon the people from all over Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel. And bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table." 20 So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. 21 Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." But the people said nothing. 22 Then Elijah said to them, "I am the only one of the Lord's prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. 23 Get two bulls for us. Let Baal's prophets choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. 24 Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answers by fire—he is God." Then all the people said, "What you say is good." 25 Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire." 26 So they took the bull given

them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. "Baal, answer us!" they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made. 27 At noon Elijah began to taunt them. "Shout louder!" he said. "Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened." 28 So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed. 29 Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention. 30 Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, which had been torn down. 31 Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, "Your name shall be Israel." 32 With the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs of seed. 33 He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, "Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood." 34 "Do it again," he said, and they did it again. "Do it a third time," he ordered, and they did it the third time. 35 The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench. 36 At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: "Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. 37 Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again." 38 Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. 39 When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, "The Lord—he is God! The Lord—he is God!"

Now, what we see in verses 16-18 is the choice to confront.

The Choice to Confront

1 Kings 18:16-18

16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him, and Ahab went to meet Elijah. 17 When he saw Elijah, he said to him, "Is that you, you troubler of Israel?" 18 "I have not made trouble for Israel," Elijah replied. "But you and your father's family have. You have abandoned the Lord's commands and have followed the Baals.

King Ahab, who is the King of Israel, and who is leading the people of Israel in the worship of one of the Canaanite gods, Baal, sees Elijah. And he says in verse 17,

1 Kings 18:17

"Is that you, you troubler of Israel?"

Elijah, you are, by your constant criticism and critique of Baal worship, making trouble for everyone.

Baal, by the way, in the ancient world is the god of the rain clouds; he was the storm god who gave rain to the earth. And as a result, he was the god you had to satisfy if the land was going to be fertile and produce a crop.

Well, Elijah is going around telling people to not worship Baal and Israel was suffering through a drought.. So, Ahab is saying to Elijah, "Elijah, you are making a mess for all of us here by criticizing Baal. Baal is angry; he is withholding rain; everyone is starving. You are the troubler of Israel."

Elijah responds in verse 18 saying this:

1 Kings 18:18

"I have not made trouble for Israel," Elijah replied. "But you and your father's family have. You have abandoned the Lord's commands and have followed the Baals.

When I read King Ahab's accusation against Elijah, I can't help but think of the push-back someone gets when they decide to speak up in a dysfunctional family.

The notion of dysfunctional family came out of the recovery movement. It has to do with a family system that is traumatized by alcoholism, or substance abuse, or some other parental addiction. Sometimes the family is traumatized by a parent's mental illness. So therapists came up with a picture of a family. They said that families are a lot like mobiles hanging from the ceiling. When one part of the mobile moves, all the other parts move because all the other parts are connected to one another. So the individual parts may move in different directions according to their size, shape and location, but they all move.

Mobiles may move very gently with a breeze. Or mobiles may move violently when there is a major disturbance like the presence of an alcoholic, who will shake up the entire family. Often the family, in an attempt to get some sort of stability, will accommodate the alcoholic, or the substance abuser, or the mentally ill parent. So, a spouse might lie for her alcoholic husband. She may call his office and say, "Jim is sick today. He has the flu," when he actually has a hangover. A parent will repeatedly bail their alcoholic son out of jail for repeat drunk driving charges. A family member will clean up the vomit, help the alcoholic out of their car; repair all the damage from where they drove on the lawn at night; tell the kids to be quiet because "mom has a headache." Dysfunctional families get used to cover-ups and telling lies.

Every once in a while, a child, a spouse or a parent gets tired of all the lies. Every once in a while, a child, a spouse, or a parent gets tired of all the cover-ups, and they begin to speak truth into that dysfunctional family system. They start saying things like: I'm not going to call into your job any more. I'm not going to bail you out of jail. I'm not going to pretend with the kids that you aren't a drunk. Every once in a while in a dysfunctional family system, someone chooses to confront the lie.

And do you know the response they get? They get the same response that Elijah got from King Ahab. “Why are you making trouble for us? You are the problem. Everything was fine in our house until you decided to get that pastor involved; until you started to go to that church and that group; to do that intervention; to blow the whistle; or to call children’s services. Everything was fine until you decided to shoot off your mouth; to make trouble for everyone else.”

The problem is not my alcoholism, my physical abuse, my substance abuse. The problem is your confronting. Why are you making all these problems for us? The problem is never the problem.

And, of course, societally, the person who points out the government’s lies, or society’s lies; the person who points out societal cover-ups is going to get the same reaction as the confronter in a dysfunctional family. They are going to get the same reaction that King Ahab gave to Elijah: Confronter, you are the problem! Isn’t this true with every protest? The problem was not the Vietnam War; the problem was the protests to the Vietnam War. The problem is not with Iraq and us going to war in Iraq. The problem is all of the dissidents who are raising questions about the wisdom of us going to war. If we could all just get on the same page, we would win this war!

Every time someone protests, someone dissents, the charge is, “You, protestor, are the problem.” During the Civil Rights Movement, when there were protests against all of the racial segregation laws in the American South – there were sit-ins, and bus boycotts, and marches – lots of Southerners took the attitude saying, “everything down here was fine. We all got along great until these agitators from the North came down. They are the problem. The problem is not with our racism. The problem is not with segregation. The problem is these race agitators.”

When Bull Connor, the police chief in Birmingham, Alabama, and a member of the Ku Klux Klan, turned his fire hoses on to the marchers in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963 and he set police dogs loose on children, who were marching with the protestors, Dr. King was arrested and thrown in a Birmingham jail. It was there he wrote his famous “Letter from the Birmingham Jail.” And among other things, Dr. King said this:

“I think I should give the reason for my being in Birmingham, since you have been influenced by the argument of ‘outsiders coming in.’ I am in Birmingham because injustice is here...I am cognizant of the inter-relatedness of all communities and states. I could not sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens here in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial ‘outside agitator’ idea. Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider...”

You see, Elijah stands near the beginning of all tradition of dissenters and protestors to the status quo that supports lies, injustices, cover-ups and violence. People like Jeremiah, the Old Testament prophet and John the Baptist, and Jesus, and William Wilberforce, and Mahatma Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr., and Nelson Mandela, and Natan Sharansky, who protested in the old Soviet Union. There is a whole tradition of boat-rockers, of non-conformists, of questioners and disturbers of the peace. People who won't go with the flow; people who challenge power.

Every time, whenever abusive lying power is challenged, the power will say: Everything was okay here until you began protesting. Until you came along, we all got along great.

There is a wonderful book that I would highly recommend to any of you who are readers. It is the autobiography of Nelson Mandela called *Long Walk to Freedom*. Mandela, of course, lived in South Africa under the apartheid regime. In the late 1940's and 1950's with the help of some former Nazis, who lived in South Africa, South Africa passed a series of laws separating the races by law. Consider what it would have been like to have been Indian, or classified as colored (a mixed race), or being African living in South Africa after they passed the Prohibition of Mixed Marriage Act and the Immorality Act, making sexual relations between whites and non-whites illegal. Then there was the Population Registration Act, which labeled all South Africans according to race. There was the Group Areas Act, which separated urban areas by racial groups. They passed the Bantu Education Act, which called upon churches and mission bodies to turn their schools over to the government, or lose government subsidies for the schools. The white apartheid government determined that Africans could no longer receive a general education in any primary or secondary school. Instead, they had to be educated according to their opportunities in life. And so the only education that you could give to a Bantu was to train them to be menial workers in service to whites.

With the exception of Roman Catholics, which there weren't many in South Africa, and Seventh Day Adventists and Reformed Jews, all the churches turned their schools over to the government. Anglicans turned their schools over to the government; the Dutch Reformed Church supported the policy wholeheartedly. The Lutherans went along with it.

Even church people find it difficult sometimes to speak truth to power.

Even church people find it difficult to follow in this tradition of Elijah and John the Baptist and Jesus and Dr. King, and Nelson Mandela. Why? Because there is always a price to pay for being labeled a troublemaker of Israel.

Nelson Mandela was put in prison for 26 years. Can you imagine spending half of your adult life from age 46 to age 72 in prison because you have the gall to point out that a government policy is unjust, that a society is immoral, that you are not going to continue with the lie any more. You are going to tell the truth. But there is always a price to pay. You may be shunned by your family, threatened with job loss, threatened with violence, penalized with a lower grade, lose a friend, or romantic relationship.

Let me ask you a question: Is there any place, friends, where God might be asking you to tell the truth where there has been a long-term cover-up or lie that everyone else accommodates, that everyone in the family, or everyone in the classroom has just gotten used to? Is there any place, friends, where you are being called to be a troubler of Israel?

I need to immediately add a word of caution here. There are some people who like to think of themselves as modern day Elijah's when they really are – and how can I put this delicately – pains in the neck. You know, there are a lot of people who are just full of themselves, full of self-importance – they think of themselves as being prophetic, arrogant judges of everyone else, certain that their approach to things is the only moral and correct approach.

The people I respect who are dissenters and boat-rockers and troublemakers, are mainly people who had to be pulled kicking and screaming into that role. They are not pugnacious, people spoiling for a fight in every area of life. They are not filled with an exaggerated sense of self-importance. The people who are the boat-rockers that I respect are folks like Moses, who before his confrontation with Pharaoh tried every which way to get out of it. He said to God, "God, pick someone else." It was only the threat that God was going to kill him that he finally said, "okay, I give up."

The people I respect who are dissenters are folks like Dr. King. They go into protests with fear and trembling. They are people who are naturally go-along; get-along people. They don't like to make waves. But the call of God, or the force of circumstances, drags them into the fight. When I meet someone who just wants to pick a fight; they come with that morally superior tone, I don't find that heroic. I find it to be a gigantic turn-off. But when you meet a confronter, a challenger, a disturber of the status quo, who is temperamentally fearful, or is, because of God's Spirit, really self-controlled. Or someone who is very successful, doing really well, who is willing to put all of that success on the line, risk it all to tell the truth, then I think maybe God is in this protest. Some of you are in this category.

Elijah didn't just choose to pick a fight. God led him into this confrontation. Look at 1 Kings 18:36-37.

1 Kings 18:36-37

At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: "Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. 37 Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again."

This isn't all about Elijah; the whole confrontation was set up by God at his command.

And then we see in verses 21-24 the choice to surrender.

The choice to surrender

1 Kings 18:21-24

Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.” But the people said nothing. 22 Then Elijah said to them, “I am the only one of the Lord’s prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. 23 Get two bulls for us. Let Baal’s prophets choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. 24 Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answers by fire—he is God.” Then all the people said, “What you say is good.”

Elijah’s challenge to the people is found in verse 21:

1 Kings 18:21

Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.” But the people said nothing.

In the NRSV, it says:

How long will you go limping with two different opinions?

In the New English Bible, it says:

How long will you sit on the fence?

The American Standard Version reads:

How long will you straddle the issue?

The King James Version says:

How long will you halt between two opinions?

The Hebrew literally says:

How long will you hobble between two branches?

The picture could be of a bird that is standing on two branches, or hopping between one branch or the other. Hobbling between two branches might be a picture of person, who is on crutches made of two uneven tree branches hobbling down the road. It is a great picture of people sitting on the fence trying to have it both ways, vacillating, undecided, wavering, refusing to make a choice.

The people are straddling the fence between Yahweh, the Lord God of Israel, and Baal, the god of the Canaanites. So Elijah is confronting the fence straddler, the person who says, “I know I need to make a decision about Christ. I just feel like I’m hemmed in by God. I feel like God is chasing me down. I keep coming back to this place of realizing what I need to do with my life. I need to surrender my life to Christ. But I’m just stuck. I’m so afraid of the consequences. I don’t know if I can pull it off.”

And by the way, if that is you, if you say: I don’t know if I have what it takes to pull off the Christian life, so I’ve never surrendered to Christ, let me share with you this word of comfort. You do not have what it takes to pull off the Christian life. You don’t have the strength of conviction, the faith, the follow through to pull off the Christian life. I don’t have it either. No one has what it takes to pull off the Christian life. The only way for us to pull off the Christian life is to have Christ himself dwelling in us, living his life through us by his Spirit. It is only by having Jesus in your heart that you can begin to act and think and change to be like Jesus.

Hobbling between two branches. Oh, I know I should give my life to Christ. But goodness, I’m so busy now; it is such a crazy time in my life; when things settle down at school, when I get some time to really reflect – because with the kids and my sick mom, and work has been crazy... If you are stuck because you say, “My goodness, I’m in such a crazy time in life,” let me share with you this word of comfort, friends: There is never a pause button in life. There is never a better time to surrender your life to Christ than right now, today. It doesn’t get any easier. When the issues are clear to you, when you know that what you need is Christ, then you need to surrender to Christ. We need Christ in the midst of our crazy lives, not when things calm down. The best time to give your life to Christ is when everything is chaotic and you desperately need some order in your life. You need to give up.

And by the way, this is a continuing choice. There is an ongoing demand by Christ that we surrender to him now. You may have done it once, but surrender, yielding, welcoming Christ and his will is an ongoing moment by moment demand.

Hobbling between two branches, wavering between two opinions, vacillating, undecided, refusing to choose like the people in verse 21, who said nothing to Elijah’s confrontation.

1 Kings 18:21

Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.” But the people said nothing.

Does that sound like any of us at all? I think of the woman who says: I just feel caught between my boyfriend and God. I believe in God. I really do. And in my heart I know it is right to follow Jesus. I do believe that Jesus is true. And I know my boyfriend is not a

follower of Christ. And I know we should not be having sex together. But I just love him so much. I don't want to end this relationship.

Elijah is talking to fence sitters. This text is all about people who want to have it both ways. The challenge of this text is the challenge of having to choose for or against God. To do nothing is to choose against God. I feel caught between my job and God. I know that this job is making me do things that I feel bad about. I hate the environment. The people who run my office are so immoral. But the money is so good. I don't want to up and quit! I'm not going to make any decision. Elijah says "to make no decision is to decide against God."

About 60 years ago C.S. Lewis in one of my very favorite Christian books, *Mere Christianity*, spoke clearly to fence sitters in a chapter that he titled "How much of myself must I give?"

How much of yourself must you give to God? Lewis said that we sometimes view God's demands the way an honest person views paying taxes. We pay our taxes knowing that it is the right thing to do, but we hope the tax won't be so heavy that there is nothing left over for us. The problem is that God makes so many demands of us, he is constantly squeezing us for more, that after while we feel like, what about us? If you sit on the fence, if you do what Elijah confronted us about, if you hobble between two opinions, if you say, "Well, I want to serve God, but I also want to have some left over for me," C.S. Lewis said that over a period of time you will become more and more frustrated. You will never experience joy in the Christian life. You will never experience the life that Jesus promised. Your Christian life will become more and more hollow. You are going to become more of a pest and more of an annoyance to everyone than if you had just said, "forget about God; I'm just going to live in a selfish way."

Here is Lewis' advice:

The Christian way is different: harder and easier [than straddling the fence]. Christ says, "Give me All. I don't want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want You. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half-measures are any good. I don't want to cut off a branch here and a branch there, I want to have the whole tree down. Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked – the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you Myself: my own will will become yours."

The Lewis goes on to say this:

The terrible thing, the almost impossible thing, is to hand over your whole self – all your wishes and precautions – to Christ. But it is far easier than what we are trying to do instead. For what we are trying to do is remain what we call

“ourselves,” to keep personal happiness as our great aim in life, and yet at the same time be “good.” [In other words, to be a fence straddler.]

If I am a field that contains nothing but grass seed, I cannot produce wheat. Cutting the grass may keep it short: but I shall still produce grass and no wheat. If I want to produce wheat, the change must go deeper than the surface. I must be plowed up and resown.

In other words, we have to choose. We have to do that act which makes us most human. We have to do the most spiritual thing we will ever do and that is choose to get off the fence, choose for God.

So let me close with a few questions. Friend, are you straddling the fence today in some area of your life? Do you find yourself with one foot on the side of God and the other foot on the side of the world, on the side of your own desires, but feeling bad and always wanting to please God? Where do you find yourself hobbling between two branches? Is there a relationship in your life that you just won't let go of, even though you know that you can have more of God, if you did let go of this relationship? Are you locked into a job that you are not proud of, working for an executive that you just feel bad about – knowing that this is less than God has for you, but afraid to make a change?

Is there a calling in your life that God may be calling you to ministry, calling you to an activity, but you know that if you chose to obey the call of God, it is going to cost you some money? It's going to require a major change; you are going to have to sacrifice. Is there a calling that you've been wavering over in your life?

Is there a power, a system, a family member, a situation that God has been speaking to you about and saying, “I've placed you in the position of speaking the truth, uncovering the lies, rocking the boat.” But you've been sitting there saying, “I just want to lay low; I want you, God, but I don't want to pay the price of confrontation.”

The Spirit of God is speaking through Elijah today and he is challenging us to do the most spiritual thing we can ever do – freely choose for God and God's will. Let's pray.

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Rich Nathan

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1 Kings 18:16-39

I. Choice: It's What Makes Us Human (1 Kings 18.16-39)

II. The Choice to Confront (1 Kings 18.17, 18)

- A. Confronting Dysfunctional Families
- B. Confronting the Powers
- C. Confronting Unwillingly

III. The Choice to Surrender (1 Kings 18.20, 21)

- A. Surrender to Christ
- B. Surrender: Easier and Harder

IV. The Choice of Our Master (1 Kings 18.21)

- A. Choosing Who We Will Serve (Mt. 6.19-24)
- B. Choosing What Will Make Us Happy
- C. Choosing What Will Destroy Us
- D. Choosing Where Our Hearts Will Be