

## MAKING GOOD CHOICES

### JONAH 1:3

#### INTRODUCTION:

1. Sometimes we ignore God and make bad choices.
2. In the first chapter of Jonah, one man made a bad choice.

#### I. BREAKING DOWN THE TEXT

- A. The Choice: What did Jonah do?
  1. **Jonah 1.1-3:** *“But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish”*
  2. Jonah ran *“from the presence of the LORD”*
- B. The Consequence: How did Jonah suffer?
  1. **Jonah 1.4-6:** *“But the LORD sent out a great wind”*
  2. God caused the storm because of one man’s decision.
- C. The Confession: What did Jonah say?
  1. **Jonah 1.7-10:** *“...because he had told them.”*
  2. Jonah was forced to admit his mistake.
- D. The Crisis: What did the mariner suffer?
  1. **Jonah 1.11-16:** *“please do not let us perish”*
  2. They threw Jonah into the sea.
- D. The Cry: How did Jonah survive?
  1. **Jonah 1.17-2.2:** *“I cried out to the LORD”*
  2. God saved Jonah by a great fish.

#### II. THE PROBLEM OF BAD CHOICES

- A. Bad choices come with consequences.
  1. **Jonah 1.4:** This is punitive providence.
  2. Other examples. (Num. 16.31,32; 21.6; cf. Rom. 11.22)
- B. Bad choices hurt the people around us.
  1. **Jonah 1.5,7:** The mariners suffered because of Jonah.
  2. Other examples. (Ex. 12.30; Josh. 7.11,25)
- C. Bad choices will be discovered.
  1. **Jonah 1.5:** Jonah’s choice was discovered.
  2. Other examples. (Gen. 3.8; 1 Kings 22.34; Num. 32.23)

CONCLUSION: Learn to make better choices. (Ps. 1.1,2; Heb. 5.14)

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OCTOBER 18, 2026

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## TO THE UNHEALTHY AND AGING

### PROVERBS 16:31

#### INTRODUCTION:

1. We are an aging congregation. And with aging comes concerns about our mental and physical health.
2. Jesus still sees you as valuable.
3. What does the Bible say to those who are unhealthy and aging?

#### I. TO THOSE WHO HAVE POOR PHYSICAL HEALTH

- A. How did Jesus treat Bartimaeus?
  1. **Mark 10.46,47:** Bartimaeus was blind and begging.
  2. **Mark 10.48,49:** The crowd vs. Jesus.
- B. Four observations to those who have poor physical health.
  1. Jesus cares for each individual. (Mark 10.49)
  2. Jesus has feelings for your pain. (Matt. 20.34)
  3. Poor health does not mean poor faith. (Mark 10.52)
  4. We are to treat everyone with respect. (Mark 10.52)

#### II. TO THOSE WHO HAVE POOR MENTAL HEALTH

- A. How did Jesus treat the demon possessed?
  1. **Mark 5.15:** He was “*sitting*” No longer out of control.
  2. **Mark 5.15:** He was “*clothed*.” He regained his dignity.
  3. **Mark 5.15:** He was “*in his right mind*.” Mental health.
- B. Four observations to those who have poor mental health.
  1. Mental health is a real health issue. (Matt. 5.15)
  2. Mental health may require medical care. (Matt. 9.12)
  3. Jesus cared for those with poor mental health. (Heb. 4.15)
  4. You can still be useful in the kingdom. (Mark 5.19)

#### III. TO THOSE WHO ARE AGING

- A. Passages that address aging. (Ps. 92.12,13; Prov. 16.31)
- B. People who were elderly.
  1. Zacharias and Elizabeth. (Luke 1.6,7)
  2. Paul the aged. (Phile 9)
- C. Personal applications for the elderly.
  1. Reminisce: Tell others what you learned. (Ps. 37.25)
  2. Remind: Teach others what you know. (2 Pet. 1.12,13)
  3. Rediscover: God is still with you. (Ps. 71.9,18)
  4. Refuse: Never retire from serving God. (Rev. 14.13)

**CONCLUSION:** Jesus is our Savior. But He will be our Judge.

## Going on to Perfection

When a builder pours a slab, he does so with the intention of framing walls, putting on a roof, and finishing a house. Yet when it comes to our spiritual lives, too many Christians are content to pour the foundation and stop building. In Hebrews 6, the inspired writer addresses Jewish Christians who were spiritually stagnant and gives them a clear command: “*Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection*” (Heb. 6.1). What does the Holy Spirit want us to know from this passage?

First, there is a foundation that must not be abandoned. When the writer says to leave “*the elementary principles of Christ*,” he is not suggesting that first principles should no longer be studied. In fact, he immediately identifies this foundation with six essential doctrines: repentance from dead works, faith toward God, the doctrine of baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment (Heb. 6.1,2). These are the foundational truths that anchor our faith. You never tear up the foundation of a house in order to build the walls. Rather, you build upon it.

Second, there is a frustration with remaining in spiritual infancy. If you back up to the end of the previous chapter, you will see why this command was necessary. The writer rebuked these brethren because, “*though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God*” (Heb. 5.12). They had been Christians long enough to teach others, yet they were still surviving on spiritual milk instead of solid food (Heb. 5.12,13). It is a sad thing when someone has been in the church for twenty years, but only has one year of spiritual knowledge.

Third, there is a forward movement required of every disciple. The text says, “let us go on to perfection” (Heb. 6.1). The word translated as “perfection” does not mean sinlessness. It comes from the Greek word *teleiotes*, which means completeness or full maturity. Of interest, the phrase “*let us go on*” is in the passive voice, literally meaning, “*let us be carried forward*.” As we study the word of righteousness and exercise our senses to discern both good and evil (Heb. 5.13,14), God’s word carries us forward into maturity.

Obedying the gospel and being baptized into Christ is essential, but it is the starting line, not the finish line. Are you still sitting on the foundation, or are you building upon it? Let us go on to maturity. CLP