



WOW: Word Of the Week

TODAY

September 18, 2024

Today's WOW—today! Simple. Important. Words to guide and encourage as we live here, words to help us prepare to live in eternity.

"Choose today whom you will serve, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Most of us have heard Joshua 24:14-15, even if we do not know where in the Bible the verse is located.

To orient us, I share a few observations. about the passage. In both the Old Testament and New Testament, the word serve is often parallel to or synonymous with worship. Serve the Lord (Heb. abad, Grk. latreuo). Serve = worship, especially describing temple service. "Today" is often understood as meaning "every day," but the reference can also be to a one-time event—do it today, once and for all! That is what Joshua was saying. Decide this matter once and for all. Get it settled. Quit changing your mind.

Sometimes "today" means daily. What should we learn? What would happen if every Christian began every day with this commitment? *"Today, this day, my number one priority will be my service to the Lord."* I will take advantage of every opportunity to worship. I will serve. I will not miss an opportunity to worship, that is who I am, that is what I am about.

Many times, "today" is specific. Make a choice. Mark it down. Live by it. After making the choice, live it out every day, consistently, without wavering. A one-time choice controls all of life going forward.

When our boys were growing up, making once-for-all decisions was an important part of our family culture. "These are the choices I/we have made, for me/us, and for our family."

One example of a choice that did not have to be continually renegotiated was that our sons knew there would be no Sunday extracurricular activities.

Looking back over my life, I believe I can count on one hand the number of Sundays I have not assembled with the family of God. In November, I will complete 76 years, times 52 = 3952. Within another year, 4000 Sundays. 4000 Lord's Days, worshiping God with the family of God. (The pandemic changed many things; worship was temporarily moved online; but I was still present in the virtual assembly.)

I will share this. That history is not the result of making 3952 Sunday morning decisions. That history is the result of a decision my mother made before I was born. And when I became responsible for my own spiritual life, that continuing history is the result of one decision! I decided to be a Christian. On Sunday morning, I did not have to decide if I was going to church that day. My family did not have to decide if we were going to church—even on vacation when I did not have a preaching assignment. There was no family council, family powwow, questions asked. There were no exceptions (except illness).

Today! "Choose this day, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua was not suggesting the need to decide again tomorrow, or next Sabbath day. Joshua's "today decision" was not repeated daily. Joshua was urging upon God's people a once-for-all decision. That kind of decision helps much of life fall into place.

No other decision is worthy of our Lord! Take up your cross. Deny self. Choose Christ above all else. He is everything. Focus on things above, make Jesus your "one thing."

Today! Make good choices today! Then live according to those choices—regardless, always!