

WELCOME 29 July 2018 – 10 Pentecost '18 B

Joshua 23:14-16 & 24:14-15

Good morning! Welcome to worship today! It is great to have you here this morning. Please stay with us for morning tea after worship so we can get a chance to know one another better...

We conclude our worship/teaching Courageous Faith series this morning...Fish or cut bait. That was how my dad told my sister or me to hurry up & make some decision. It was blunt. But it was true. At some point you have to decide...you have to make a choice. When I learned to play pool, the adage was, "If you think long you think wrong." At some point you have to put the ball in play.

God freed his people from slavery in Egypt. Lead them safely for 40 years in the wilderness & built his love for them into their hearts & lives & then gave them the land He had promised. But eventually they had to be a nation devoted to him OR to their own desires: *"So fear the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord alone. But if you refuse to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord."*

Joshua stakes his life on the God who in grace called Joshua to be his own...He sets his heart fully on the God who is love & hope & joy & strength...who has kept every promise & offers even more. But he can't make that choice for anyone else. It's that moment...Whom will you serve? To whom will you be fully devoted, give your complete devotion/allegiance/worship?

Deep in your hearts you know that every promise of the Lord your God has come true. Not a single one has failed! The call to faithful response is built on the steadfast love & faithfulness of the Father.

Know this...*Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.* Knowing that God in Jesus Christ has come personally to rescue & rebuild all creation in love through Jesus' death & resurrection...and has set his heart in love on you... Whom will you serve? To whom will you be fully devoted, give your complete devotion/allegiance/worship? It's time to choose...We're blessed because today we have a living witness to just that sort of choosing in response to God's love. Graham Harden whom we support through our GBO is here today & we'll hear some of his story...AND special piece for our young saints today...so...great full day!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Living God, give us faith to be sure of what we hope for & certain of what we do not yet see. By your Spirit turn our hearts to believe that you are with us & that you bless those who truly seek you. Strengthen our trust that as we serve you we will receive what you have promised through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

10 PENTECOST '18 B – COURAGEOUS FAITH – TIME TO CHOOSE

FAITH CHAT:

1. What's a really hard choice that you've had to make? What happened?
2. What strategies do you use in making a decision?
3. Is there one decision you are trying to make now that you'd like to glorify God?

Interview with Graham Harden...Interserve missionary in Central Asia.

- How did you & Beth decide that you would as a family be part of this kind of ministry?
- What sort of family faith dynamic are you able to experience given the specific place where you live?
- Are your kids able to see what they are doing as mission just yet or is it all still sort of a big adventure?
- Will you ultimately come back to Australia and continue in ministry in some way as a family?
- What are the costs, risks, joys, blessings you experience as a family? Individually?
- Every promise has come true...How does that assurance shape you as a family?

A final thought...

Pastor John Piper wrote in one of his books: "The universe exists so that we may live in a way that demonstrates that Jesus is more precious than life."

Let's pray with that in mind...**Lord Jesus, you have kept every promise and in you every promise of the Father is "Yes." Draw our hearts to trust you more fully, to rely on you more confidently, and to share your love more boldly. In every moment, use your Spirit to guide our thought and our hearts so that every decision we make reveals your rule in our lives. Jesus in your Name we pray... Amen.**