

Today, I Can Choose My Attitude!

By Dr. David H. McKinley

Everyday you make hundreds, even thousands of decisions that impact your life, the lives of those you love, and the lives of others who interact with you.

The premise of this new series is simple: You can make specific decisions at specific moments that result in a specific destiny in your life. While you cannot choose the pathway, you can choose the way you make the journey.

"Success in life doesn't depend on the dreams that we dream, but on the choices we make."

—GEORGE SWEETING

What kind of decisions are you making?

"Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice; it is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved." —WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

There are two groups of people:

1. Those who are **positively progressing through intentional decision making**—engaging change, taking responsibility, and moving ahead.
2. Those who are **negatively regressing in cycles of indecision**—resisting change.

"Freedom is what you do with what has been done to you."

—JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

Joe's Journey (Joseph of the Old Testament):

- Family of 12
- Dreamed of greatness

For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. GENESIS 37:7-9

- Loved by his father
- Hated by his brothers
- Betrayed and sold into slavery

CHOOSE ACCEPTANCE OVER DENIAL

To reach a desired destination, you have to start with your present location

It has been said that the greatest frustration people experience is based on failure to deal with present circumstances. You can't choose the cir-

cumstance, but you can choose how you see the circumstance.

Dear brothers and sisters, whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be strong in character and ready for anything.

JAMES 1:2-4

CHOOSE SERVICE OVER BITTERNESS

The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hand. So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. GENESIS 39:2-4a

"If your life is falling apart, it is likely that you are part of the problem. We have seen that unbelief, rebellion, and bitterness only lead to emptiness. You can continue to tear things apart by your bad attitude, or you can change your life by submitting to God and allowing Him to work." WARREN WEIRSBIE

"Things turn out the best for those who make the best of the way things work out." JACK BUCK

CHOOSE INTEGRITY OVER INDULGENCE

Do what is right rather than indulge what is wrong. Nothing so strengthens the character and resolve of the heart as one who chooses integrity.

"How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"

GENESIS 39:9

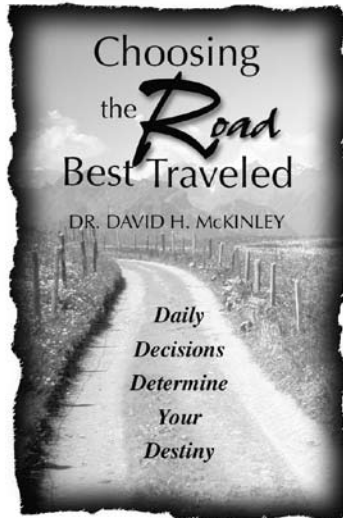
Guilt will destroy your attitude and your self image.

CHOOSE HOPE OVER DESPAIR

Outlook determines outcome, and attitude determines action."

Success in life depends on your choices.

"Words can never adequately convey the incredible impact of our attitude toward life. The longer I live, the more convinced I become that life is 10 percent what happens to us and 90 percent how we respond to it. I believe the single most significant decision I can make on a day-to-day basis is my choice of attitude. It is more important than my past, my education, my bankroll, my successes or failures, fame or pain, what other people think of me or say about me, my circumstances, or my position. Attitude keeps me going or cripples my progress . . . It alone fuels my fire or assaults my hope. When my attitude is right, there's no barrier too high, no valley too deep, no dream too extreme, no challenge too great for me." CHARLES R. SWINDOLL



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Today, I Choose to Be an Influence for Good!

By Dr. David H. McKinley

"Success in life does not depend on the dreams we dream, but on the choices we make." —GEORGE SWEETING

"Lord, when I am wrong, make me willing to change; when I am right, make me easy to live with. So strengthen me that the power of my example will far exceed the authority of my rank." —PAULINE PETERS

Influence: The act or power of producing an effect without apparent exertion of force or direct exercise of command."

3D Summary of Daniel's Story

- Decline
- Decision

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. DANIEL 1:8

- Destiny

I-M-P-A-C-T

INDIVIDUALITY

"To be *nobody-but-yourself* in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you *everybody-else* means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight, and never stop fighting."

—E.E. CUMMINGS

"No man ever yet became great by imitation." —SAMUEL JOHNSON

MANNERS

"You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you odd."

—FLANNERY O'CONNOR

Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and good will of the chief of the eunuchs. DANIEL 1:9

PRIORITIES

"The discipline to prioritize and the ability to work toward a stated goal are essential to a leader's success." —JOHN MAXWELL

3 Tests to Help Keep Edge-on-Life Priorities

- Evaluate
- Eliminate
- Estimate

ASSOCIATIONS

Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character." 1 CORINTHIANS 15:33

CHARACTER

"Character is power." —BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

"As traditionally understood, from the Hebrews and Greeks onward, character is the inner form that makes anyone or anything what it is—whether a person, a wine, or a historical period. Thus character is clearly distinct from such concepts as personality, image, reputation, or celebrity. Applied to a person, it is the essential "stuff" he or she is made of, the inner reality in which thoughts, speech, decision, behavior, and relations are rooted. As such, a character determines behavior just as behavior

demonstrates character. One's character, therefore, lies deeper than philosophies, allegiances, memberships, or accomplishments—even deeper than virtues. Just as a nation's constitution expresses its fundamental character and makeup, so a person's character expresses most deeply what constitutes him or her as a unique individual. Character, as rooted in the Greek word for the graphic symbol depicting a hallmark or other distinguishing sign, is the indelible stamp on a person beneath all masks, poses, disguises, and social veneers.

—O.S. GUINNESS, *When No one Sees*

"Try not to become a person of success, but rather a person of value."

—ALBERT EINSTEIN

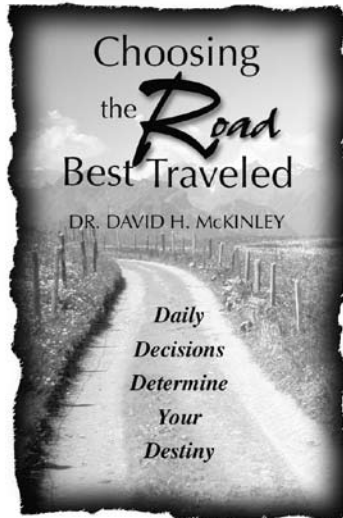
A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches. PROVERBS 22:1

"Distance tests a horses' strength. Time reveals a man's character."

—CHINESE PROVERB

TRUTH

My Influence: "My life shall touch a dozen lives before this day is done. Leave countless marks of good or ill, e're sets the evening sun. This, the wish I always wish, the prayer I always pray: Lord, may my life help others' lives it touches by the way."



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Today, I Choose to Excel!

By Dr. David H. McKinley

Average people can do extraordinary things!

"Whoever I am or whatever I am doing, some kind of excellence is within my reach."

—JOHN W. GARDNER

"... it is a wretched taste to be gratified with mediocrity when the excellent lies before us." —ISAAC D'ISRAELI, 1834

By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. HEBREWS 11:7

SECRETS TO A LIFE THAT EXCELS

Perceive More to Achieve More

"... things not seen..."

Too many are limited in life by what they see!

The secret to excellence is vision.

Put Your Heart in What You Do

"... moved with godly fear..."

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. COLOSSIANS 3:17 (NKJV)

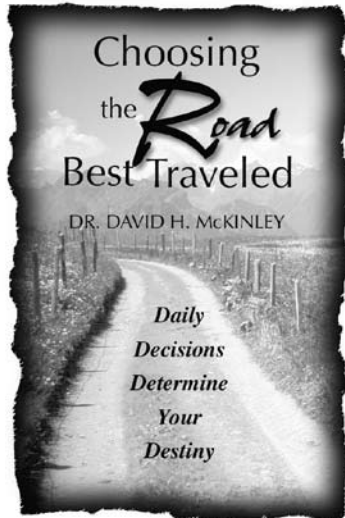
Let every detail in your lives—words, actions, whatever—be done in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way. COLOSSIANS 3:17 (The Message)

Key Word: PASSION

Prepare For Tomorrow Today

"... prepared an ark..."

Is your life strategy preparation or completion?



Life is a leaf of paper white
Whereon each one of us may write
His word or two, and then comes the night.
Great begin! Though thou have time
But for a line, but that sublime—
Nor failure, low aim, is crime.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Persevere in the Face of Resistance

"... condemned the world..."

"Excellence is never cheap. It is costly. Constant care, serious preparation, and continual application are required. Excellence involves desire plus discipline and tenacity of purpose."

—GEORGE SWEETING

You've all been to the stadium and seen the athletes race. Everyone runs; one wins. Run to win. All good athletes train hard. They do it for a gold medal that tarnishes and fades. You're after one that's gold eternally. I don't know about you, but I'm running hard for the finish line. I'm giving it everything I've got. No sloppy living for me! I'm staying alert and in top condition. I'm not going to get caught napping, telling everyone else all about it and then missing out myself.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:24-27

Purpose to Please an Audience of One

"... heir of righteousness which is according to faith..."

Pursue excellence!

Excellence in all things and all things to the glory of God!

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Today, I Choose to Forgive!

By Dr. David H. McKinley

Be careful that none of you fails to respond to the grace of God, for if he does there can spring up in him a bitter spirit which can poison the lives of many others. HEBREWS 12:14

Let all bitterness... be put away from you.

EPHESIANS 4:31

Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil? JOB 1:8

Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face! JOB 1:9-11

I. CONSIDER THE CONFLICTS THAT LEAD TO BITTERNESS

- Lose things we value
- Hurt by people we love
- Frustrated by things we can't explain
- Disappointed by things that don't work out
- Made insecure by our lack of control

Be careful that none of you fails to respond to the grace of God, for if he does there can spring up in him a bitter spirit which can poison the lives of many others. HEBREWS 12:15

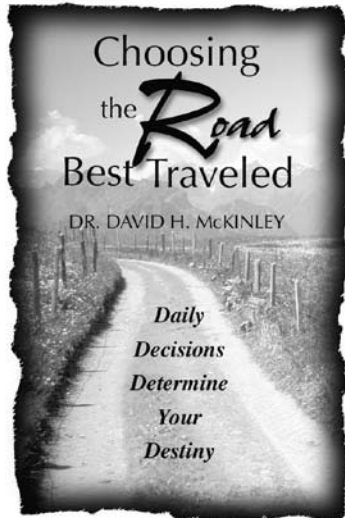
II. CALCULATE THE RESPONSES TO CONFLICT THAT INCREASE BROKENNESS

• Tantrums

A fool gives vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control. PROVERBS 29:11

"If you are angry, count to ten; if you are real angry, count to one hundred." THOMAS JEFFERSON

• Time Bombs



"Repressed (unresolved) anger hurts and keeps on hurting. If you always deal with it simply by holding it firmly in check or sweeping it under the rug, without any form of release or healing, it can produce rigidity and coldness in personality."

DR. DAVID AUGSBURGER

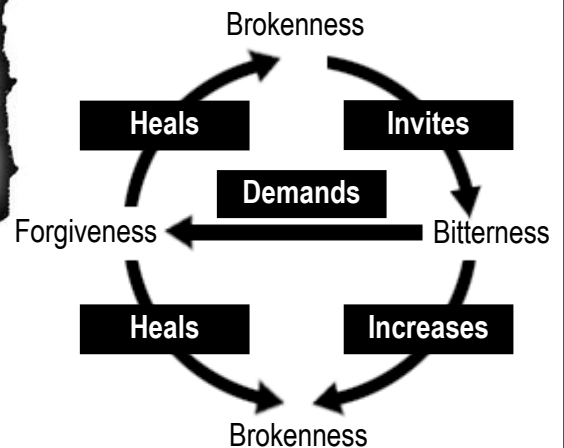
• Truckers

• Titanics

• Thermometers

Wrong response to the hurts and hardships of life will not bring right outcomes.

III. CONCENTRATE ON FORGIVENESS IN ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE



I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You! JOB 42:5

"What a wonderful life I've had! If only I realized it sooner."

COLETTE

LEMON LAWS FOR YOUR LIFE:

- Admit the bitter taste you have experienced
- Stop feeding your bitterness
- Wash your mind with God's Word
- Develop a reconciling spirit
- Allow time for recovery
- Trust in God's control in all circumstances

But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day to save many people alive. GENESIS 50:20

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Today, I Choose Discipline!

Part 1

By Dr. David H. McKinley

"The easiest thing to do everyday is to follow the path of least resistance."

"No pain, no gain" is a familiar maxim today. But a more realistic maxim is, "No pain, no pain."

"Character is, by its very nature, the product of probationary discipline."
—AUSTIN PHELPS

Definitions of *discipline*:

- "to train or develop by instruction and exercise especially in self-control"

- "an orderly or prescribed conduct or pattern of behavior"

- "training that corrects, molds or perfects the mental faculties or moral character."
—WEBSTER'S NEW COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY

"To live a disciplined life, and to accept the result of that discipline as the will of God—that is the mark of a man."
—TOM LANDRY

By faith, Moses, when grown, refused the privileges of the Egyptian royal house. He chose a hard life with God's people rather than an opportunistic soft life of sin with the oppressors. He valued suffering in the Messiah's camp far greater than Egyptian wealth because he was looking ahead, anticipating the payoff.

HEBREWS 11:24-26 (The Message)

PMS: Physical, Mental, Spiritual

PHYSICAL:

DIET & EXERCISE

"I went on a fourteen-day diet, but all I lost was 2 weeks!"

"Losing weight is a triumph of mind over platter."

"I am on 3 diets. I can't get enough to eat on just one!" —MARK LOWERY

• **Smaller Portions, Not Bigger Restrictions**

"Minutes at the table don't put on weight—it's the seconds."

• **Shift, Don't Starve**

Learn to eat before you eat a meal. Too often we don't balance need and hunger.

Eat earlier, not later: breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince, dinner like a pauper.

• **Simplify Your Sweets**

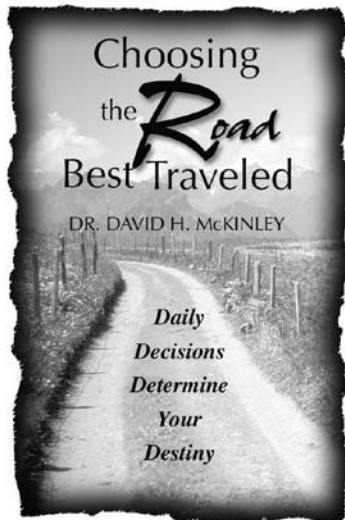
Eat a piece of chocolate, but don't do the triple version of your treat.

• **Split, Don't Stuff**

Sometimes a taste is better than nothing at all.

• **Splurge, But Don't Make It Your Standard**

You can splurge occasionally, but make it the exception rather than the rule.



Today, I Choose Discipline!

Part 2

By Dr. David H. McKinley

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HEBREWS 11:24-26 (The Message)

PMS: Physical, Mental, Spiritual

PERSONAL GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT:

"The mind of man is like a clock that is always running down, and requires to be as constantly wound up." WILLIAM HAZLITT

As a man thinks in his heart so is he. PROVERBS 23:7

"The mind is like a stomach, it's not how much you put into it that counts, but how much it digests." A.J. NOCK

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. PHILIPPIANS 4:8

• Reading

Read a least one page per day.

• Retooling

Do some new things, meet new people, change the routine of your life.

• Reflecting

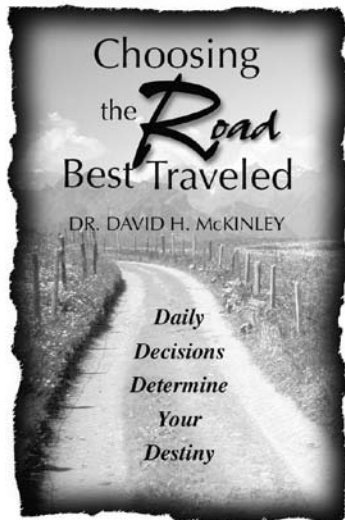
Take time to think about life, your schedule, your priorities.

• Resting

Take time to rest. Your mind needs change. Sometimes problem solving is a lot clearer once your mind has an opportunity to rest.

• Releasing

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE & DEVOTION



"Man is born to have connection with God."

—CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

"I have more trouble with D.L. Moody than any other man I ever met." —DWIGHT L. MOODY

R-P-M-S G-O!

Read the Bible Daily

Regular and repetitious study of the Bible

Pray

Adoration-Confession-Thanksgiving-Supplication

Memorize Scripture

"Nothing is easy to the unwilling." —GIOVANNI, Poet

Rejoice always. 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16

Serve

Invest time in others. Extend yourself.

Give

Giving breaks the stronghold of greed.

It is more blessed to give than to receive. ACTS 20:35

Obedience

Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

JAMES 1:21-25

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Today, I Choose to Seize My Opportunities!

By Dr. David H. McKinley

"Success in life doesn't depend on the dreams we dream, but on the choices we make." —GEORGE SWEETING

By an act of faith, Abraham said yes to God's call to travel to an unknown place that would become his home. When he left he had no idea where he was going. By an act of faith he lived in the country promised him, lived as a stranger camping in tents. Isaac and Jacob did the same, living under the same promise. Abraham did it by keeping his eye on an unseen city with real, eternal foundations—the City designed and built by God.

HEBREWS 11:8-10 (The Message)

Seize the Moment by Saying "Yes" to Changes in Your Daily Pattern

"Whenever there is danger, there lurks opportunity; whenever there is opportunity, there lurks danger. The two are inseparable, they go together." —EARL NIGHTINGALE

Seize the Moment by Doing Your Best Until You Are Able to Do Something Else

"Opportunities are seldom labeled."

"Small opportunities are often the beginning of big enterprises."
—EMOSTHENES

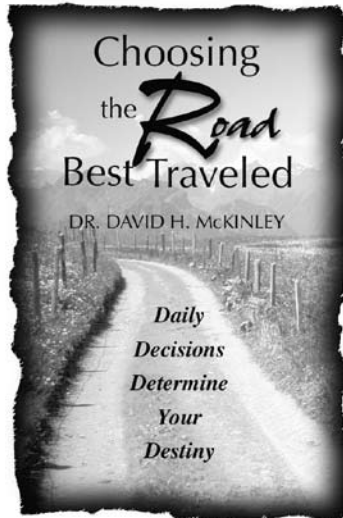
"Opportunities multiply as they are seized; they die when neglected."

Seize the Moment by Seeing Beyond Your Current Circumstances

By faith, barren Sarah was able to become pregnant, old woman as she was at the time, because she believed the One who made a promise would do what he said. That's how it happened that from one man's dead and shriveled loins there are now people numbering into the millions. HEBREWS 11:11-12 (The Message)

To each is given a bag of tools,
A shapeless mass, and a book of rules,
And each must make, ere life is flown,
A stumbling block or a stepping stone.

"The reason so many people never get anywhere in life is because, when opportunity knocks, they are out in the backyard looking for four leaf clovers." WALTER P. CHRYSLER



OPPORTUNITIES MISSED:

- Show kindness
- Speak words of encouragement
- Say "I love you" in a meaningful way to your mate, children, family or friends
- Improve your knowledge and skills
- Meet new people and make new friends
- Finish something you have started
- Allow others to help you
- Share your faith

"A pessimist is one who makes difficulties of his opportunities; an optimist is one who makes opportunities of his difficulties."

—REGINALD B. MANSELL

Seize the Moment by Believing God to Take You Outside of Your Own Limitations

Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah will have a son. GENESIS 18:14

Each one of these people of faith died not yet having in hand what was promised, but still believing. How did they do it? They saw it way off in the distance, waved their greeting, and accepted the fact that they were transients in this world.

HEBREWS 11:13 (The Message)