

## The Good vs The Best – Zanga Schutte, January 21, 2024

**The Fall of Man - Genesis 3:6 NIV** When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

**And here we are today . . .** Life in the Garden of Eden was like living in heaven. Everything was perfect. They became convinced their way was better than God's and acted on that belief

**The Good can be the enemy of the Best.** Choices we make each and every day can be good, but is it the best choice?? Are we leaning on our own understanding or are we seeking God to direct our path. You see, there are times in our lives that we just settle for the good when God has the Best waiting for us

### **Abram and Lot Separate - Genesis 13:1, 5-7a, 8-10 NIV**

<sup>1</sup> So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, with his wife and everything he had, and Lot went with him.

**(They settled in a place between Bethel and Ai)**

<sup>5</sup> Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. <sup>6</sup> But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together. And quarreling arose between Abram's herders and Lot's . . .

<sup>8</sup> So Abram said to Lot, "Let's not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herders and mine, for we are close relatives. <sup>9</sup> Is not the whole land before you? Let's part company. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right; if you go to the right, I'll go to the left."

<sup>10</sup> Lot looked around and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar was well watered, like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.)

**(In this passage, it would seem that the wisest thing in the world for Abram to do would be to choose. It was his right, and the people around him would consider him to be a fool for not choosing.)**

**Many of us do not continue to grow spiritually because we prefer to choose on the basis of our rights, instead of relying on God to make the choice for us. We have to learn to walk according to the standard which has its eyes focused on God.)**

**Hebrews 12:2 NIV** fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**Notes:** The Christian life involves focus and training. It requires us to give up whatever hinders or endangers our relationships with God and to run with stamina and commitment in the power of the Holy Spirit. We will stumble if we look away from him to worry about ourselves or look at the opposition, trials, or suffering facing us. We should be running solely for Christ, not our own glory or success, and we must always keep him in sight.

**The Rich Young Man - Matthew 19:16-22 NIV** <sup>16</sup> Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"

<sup>17</sup> "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments."

<sup>18</sup> "Which ones?" he inquired. Jesus replied, "'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, <sup>19</sup> honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'" <sup>20</sup> "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?"

<sup>21</sup> Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." <sup>22</sup> When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth. ...

**-Again, the Good can be the enemy of the Best...**

**Notes:** This man thought he was perhaps just one or two good deeds away from punching his ticket to heaven and enjoying eternal life on his terms. What he really needed, however, was a whole new starting point for his life. Instead of adding another commandment to keep or good deed to perform, the young man needed to submit humbly to the authority of Jesus. Resist any leader or teaching that stresses doing more and more for your faith. Tasks need to be done, but Jesus wants more than anything else to have a personal relationship with us.

**The Parable of The Lost Son - Luke 15:11-24 NIV** <sup>11</sup> Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup> The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup> "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. <sup>14</sup> After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup> So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup> He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup> "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! <sup>18</sup> I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' <sup>20</sup> So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup> "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' <sup>22</sup> "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup> Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. <sup>24</sup> For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

**Notes:** Sometimes we want to be free to live as we pleased. Do it my way. But God wants to save us a lot of pain and heartache and help us live the Best Life Today...

**John 10:10b NIV** I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

**In Closing:** God doesn't just want what's Good for us, He wants what's Best for us...

So... "The Good vs The Best?" You choose...

Amen and Amen