

In moral theology – it is called “the fundamental option.” The theory is at some point in each of our lives, at the very core of our being:

Each person makes a choice that affects every other choice they make. It is a choice that determines the course of our lives. The choice which determines what we are willing to live for and what we are willing to lay down our lives for. . . This is how G.K. Chesterton and Dr. Martin Luther King describe the choice – our fundamental option:

“The issue is clear. It is between light and darkness – and everyone must choose their side:

*to walk in the light of creative altruism or in the darkness of destructive selfishness.”*

So the choice, the fundamental option, is between darkness and light. Between a life centered and turned in on self – or a life centered and turned outward on others. A choice between living through him and with him and in him – him being Christ, or course --- or living through, with, and in the ways of the world. . .

What choice is each of us going to make at the core of our being – a choice which will guide and direct every other choice we make – a choice which will determine who or what we live for and what we are willing to lay down our lives for?

Now the trouble is. . . most of us will say one thing – especially in the safety of the group – in here – but then do something else when we are on our own – out there. . . After all, I think by our very presence here, it shows we have chosen to live life through, with, and in Christ.

And we are not alone in this often saying one thing, but doing another thing – because it is the story line, the plot – of all of the Old Testament:

The people of Israel and Judah say they want to follow the Lord – they want to be the people of God – they want to be faithful to the covenant ---- but then they add infidelity to infidelity – proclaiming all kinds of abominations – rather than being faithful to God.

And, not surprisingly – God is never happy with that choice – but certainly respects it.

Rather than force anyone to believe in him – and follow his ways --- God sends his messengers, the Prophets, to persuade people to return to him with all their hearts and souls – and sometimes they listen *for a while*, and sometimes they don't.

God never gives up on anyone – not because he is mean, fault-finding, or finger pointing: but because God wants everyone to know of the JOY of receiving all the good things he has in store for us – and that JOY begins in knowing that GOD LOVES US.

That's the consistent message we hear in the readings today: “Early and often did the Lord, the God of their ancestors of faith – send messengers to them – for HE HAS COMPASSION FOR HIS PEOPLE.”

“God is rich in mercy – because of the great love he has for us. For by grace we have been saved through faith – and this is a GIFT from God.”

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only son so that everyone who believes in him might not perish – but might have eternal life.”

God loves us so much – he would never force his love on us – he wants us to freely choose it – the light has come into the world, but some people prefer darkness to light. . . And some people mock the messengers of God, despising their warnings, and scoff at his prophets.

What's our choice going to be? What is our fundamental option going to be?

To walk in the light of creative altruism – or to walk in the darkness of destructive selfishness. . .

The choice is, of course – totally ours. And if and when we choose to walk in the light of Christ. . . let's not just do it --- but do it ENTHUSIASTICALLY -- because we are on FIRE with values of the Kingdom of God. . .