



SIEBENQUELL

Choose Life!



In recent weeks, the urgent call to choose has dominated the media landscape and many personal conversations in all areas. And now, after Germany's general election, we are continuing with assessments, research into causes and speculation. Yes, we had a choice, just as people everywhere in democratic countries always have the choice of who they want to be governed by. And: Yes, we have to live with the consequences of our choice.

But isn't that true every day? We make decisions, we say YES to one option and NO to many others. We often don't even realise it, but it's in the nature of our freedom. But where do we orientate ourselves? Where do we find help and a guideline for our choice?

The Jewish tradition, on which we Christians stand, gives us very clear words on this. At the end of their 40-year wilderness journey, with the promised land finally in sight, the Israelites gathered before Moses to hear his great farewell speech and these words:

»I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore, choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.«
(Dt 30, 19-20)

You can and should choose life, again and again, supported by your God, who is your life, embedded in his love, who promises you living space if you choose life.

Choose! Don't let whims and circumstances, the opinions of others or convenience determine you!

Choose life! Don't settle for lazy compromises that end up costing life. If you do not choose life, you will not enter the space of your life, your »Promised Land«.

It is serious, the words are insistent. They take us seriously, our life, our dignity as human beings, our freedom and our responsibility. In this seriousness and clarity, we are called upon, in view of the gift of our life, to choose this life again and again, for ourselves personally, for the people entrusted to us, for creation. We can choose between blessing and curse. What serves life is the standard. Anything else leads to death.

We today have long lived in a 'multi-option society' (Peter Gross 1994) and see a flood of possibilities in all areas. We have to painstakingly learn to delve into our depths with the questions: What do I really want? What do I really need? What truly gives me life? In other times - and in many regions today - hardship and constraints were so great that personal freedom had no chance. Now let us hear from a voice with a rich experience of life:

»The foundation of freedom is the power to choose. In the final months of the war, I had very few options, and no way to escape.« Thus writes Dr. Edith Eva Eger in her book »The Gift«. As a young Hungarian Jew, she and her family were deported to Auschwitz in 1944 and, after a horrific death march, she was liberated, half-dead, with a broken back, covered in wounds and almost starving to death in an Austrian concentration camp in May 1945. She had survived! » I couldn't alter the systematic dehumanization or slaughter of the over six million innocents who died in the camps. All I could do was decide how to respond to terror and hopelessness. Somehow, I found it within myself to choose hope.« Over decades, it becomes her great challenge to move out of the prison of the victim role and to choose life more and more clearly and lovingly. »The whole reason to step out of victimhood is so we can step into the rest of our lives.«

We have a choice. So let us choose life!

Rosemarie Monnerjahn

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