

88.1 Choice Companions

Acts 4:23 (NKJV) – ²³ And being let go, they went to their own *companions* and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them.

We all have a group of people with whom we feel safe and at least somewhat comfortable. This group could be a family, a church's small group, or a like-minded political group. This group welcomes us when we feel alone and vulnerable. We choose to go to this gathering of friendly faces; no one coerces us.

In **Acts 4**, the Jews arrested and forced the apostles, Peter and John, into jail. The Jews persecuted the two men, but jail was not their choice. When the Jewish leaders released them, Peter and John chose to return to their company of like-minded friends who had determined to follow Jesus at all costs.

These two apostles' choices revealed the character of the men. They could have gone to a bar or a brothel to sulk and feel sorry for themselves; instead, they went to church. As the story unfolded, the group unified in a prayer meeting where they asked God for boldness to proclaim the gospel. Their prayer was far from what most American Christians would have requested; we most likely would have asked God for ease and protection.

I attend a non-denominational church, unlike the denominational congregation I served for fourteen years. I have areas of agreement and disagreement in both churches. However, I attend the church I do because this group and I are like-minded regarding the current national and church crises and the need to equip one another for the spiritual battle in which we are engaged.

Sometimes people are absent from church assemblies. This absence is a matter of choice or a matter of circumstance. One person may go to the hospital for an emergency on Sunday morning, not by choice but by necessity. By contrast, another may play golf or fish on the same Sunday morning, choosing a sport over the church service. The one who chooses the golf course or fishing hole over worshipping God with others reveals much about himself.

The actions and choices of our society reveal much about our national character. Do we use the unalienable rights and freedoms God has given us, or do we allow ourselves to be enslaved by an overreaching unconstitutional, unbiblical government? According to the Constitution and **Romans 13**, the purpose of government is to protect its good citizens, not control them.

Enslaved people do not have the luxury of thinking for themselves. They do the bidding of their sinister masters and do not have the freedom to do as they choose. America is in "slave mode." MOST Americans have given up their freedom to think for themselves and demand that government acts appropriately on their behalf. During the COVID "Scamdemic" the government barked, and the unthinking slaves bowed. A minority thought for themselves and acted in their own best interests. Freedom-loving people always resist enslaving political leaders despite their demonization.

I have thought often about **John Quincy Adams'** statement, "*Posterity--you will never know how much it has cost my generation to preserve your freedom. I hope you will make good use of it.*" Our ancestors paid an incredible price for the freedom we once enjoyed. They gave their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor to a cause more significant than any one person or colony.

We are becoming more aware that we have had only an appearance of freedom in recent years. The government has been in control of us rather than us of them. As a result, we have found it easy to take liberty for granted and trade it for pleasure or security. The Roman government held its citizens captive through food and entertainment, i.e., "*Bread and Circuses.*" The following quote has been attributed to

Benjamin Franklin, "*Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety.*" When we trade our liberty to our government for safety, we usher in an evil oligarchy that rules instead of serves.

Please think of how in recent days, we have carelessly viewed one of our most sacred rights, religious freedom. Years ago, thousands of like-minded people made a hard decision and left their European homes to go to America to practice their faith openly. They viewed the new world as unfamiliar, but they knew God and their traveling companions well.

The **Pilgrims, Puritans, Quakers, Baptists, Moravians, Methodists**, et al., chose to come to a country where they could serve God freely. Their choice revealed their character. Their faith in God and one another was so strong that they were willing to endure hardships to do the right thing rather than the easy or convenient.

Our ancestors knew that genuine freedom comes with the presence of the Lord and not without it. GOD is the source of liberty for those who choose Him. As a result, we have civil and religious authority. Please remember **2 Corinthians 3:17** (NKJV):

Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

It is not always easy to do the right thing, but it is always best. Our companions can help or hinder us in developing the courage to know and do what is right in the sight of the Lord. Evil companions corrupt our morals (**1 Corinthians 15:33**), and some friends will stick closer than a brother (**Proverbs 18:24**).

We may choose to serve the Lord as Joshua challenged his people in **Joshua 24:15**, which helps us choose solid companions with whom we serve (**Acts 4:23**). If you live in the Yukon, OK area and are having trouble connecting with like-minded people who love God and liberty and with whom you may serve, contact me. I may have some help for you. My contact information is in the notes, and my email address is GodNAmerica@gmail.com; my phone number is 405.361.3123; please leave a message. I will be happy to help if I can.

It is easier to stand for Christ when we stand together as like-minded people in His service.

Keep The Light of *Wisely Choosing Our Companions* Burning!

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