

Decisions That Mark A Life  
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*The unexamined life is not worth living.*

About 399 B.C., the classical Greek philosopher Socrates was tried for impiety and corrupting youth. He was sentenced to death, and given the option, chose death rather than exile. It was at this point that he supposedly said, “The unexamined life is not worth living.”

When someone senses death is approaching, it may be expected for them to examine their life – to look back at all they’ve experienced, remember those they’ve loved, and recall joys and regrets. But the real challenge in life is – before we are at death’s door, to examine our lives, consider our priorities, our dreams, the way we invest our time and talents, and to live life *intentionally*.

While none of us can control the events which we may face, there is *much* we can control, and in large part, these come down to *decisions* we make. We can decide what kind of food to eat, and whether or not to work out; these decisions affect our physical health. We can decide what books to read, or how diligently to study; these decisions affect our mental health. Countless decisions like this go together to affect our lives.

But the *most significant* decisions we make in life – decisions which truly affect everything else we do, and how we respond to those things which happen to us that we cannot control – these are *spiritual* decisions. Sometimes we think that spiritual decisions only affect life after death; it is true these decisions determine where and how we will spend eternity. But *on the way to eternity*, spiritual decisions mark our lives.

Whether you are a young person with all your life before you, or somewhere down the track in life, uncertain how much longer you have before you step over the threshold of time to eternity, spiritual decisions can make a big difference. This month at NBBC, we’re going to explore four life-changing decisions, and I hope many of us will one day look back, and realize that the trajectory of our lives was changed as a result.

In a poignant scene from the movie version of Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings*, the diminutive hobbit Frodo reflects on the suffering he has endured as the ring-bearer: “I wish the Ring had never come to me. I wish none of this had happened.” Gandalf, the wise old wizard, replies: “So do all who live to see such times, but that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us.”

What will you do with your life? Jim Elliot considered his future, and the value of investing his life for Jesus Christ, and made a decision: “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.” He lost his life as a missionary in Ecuador, but many Auca Indians believed in Jesus, and received eternal life. Heaven resounds with the impact of his life. I pray that will be true for all of us!

