

Bible Reading: Genesis 27: 18 – 27

Key verse: Genesis 27: 22, “Your voice sounds like Jacob’s voice, but your arms feel like Esau’s arms”

Message: **GOD’S GUIDANCE OR HUMAN SENSES?**

God’s guidance is the unseen or unfelt controlling mechanism that often leads to right choices or decisions while human senses which involve hearing, seeing, tasting, feelings, and smelling are, most of the time, lead to wrong choices and decisions. Our modern world provides us with many choices to make. However, the question is “What normally determines our choices?” Is it God’s guidance or is it human senses?

There are three characters involve in this Genesis narrative. First, the old man Isaac who had lost his sight, relied very much on his sense of hearing, feelings, and smelling for making choices or decisions. His decision to give the blessing to Jacob was driven by human senses. “Your voice sounds like Jacob’s voice, but your arms feel like Esau’s arms... and you smell like Esau’s smell” (Genesis 27: 22 & 26 – 27).

Second was Jacob. He was a cleaver cunning great pretender. When his brother Esau asked for his soup, he said that he would not give him the soup unless his brother gives him his “birthright”. Eventually, Jacob was successful. He bought Esau’s birthright with soap. It was also Jacob who misled his father to give him the blessing which supposed to be given to his brother Esau. He pretended to be like his brother by wearing the goat’s skin to resemble his brother’s hairy body and wearing Esau’s clothing to give his father the smell of his brother’s smell. Through his act of false – pretense, his father gave him the blessing and Jacob ran away with it.

Third was Esau whose life was ruled by the stomach. He did not care about his birthright. All he wanted was to fill his stomach with Jacob’s soup. He listened more to the feeling of his stomach than to his blessing. It was not until Jacob ran away with the blessing which supposed to be given to him that he realized the importance of the blessing so he regretted and cried over spilt – milk.

Choices or decisions that are determined by five human senses are bound to fail or unsuccessful. Isaac failed miserably to give his blessing to Esau because he was guided by his sense of hearing, smelling and feelings. Jacob used the wrong means to get the right end because he listened and followed the cunning instructions and manipulations of his mother. Esau was missed out of his blessing because he was misled by the tune of his empty stomach.

However, choices and decisions that are determined by God's guidance are bound to be successful, achievable, and make ends meet. As the Scripture says, "You may make your plan but God has the last word. You may think everything you do is right but God judges your motives. Ask the Lord to bless your plans, and you will be successful in carrying them out" (Proverbs 16: 1 – 3).

Our life - experience has it that crisis after crises, problems after problems, are becoming a common place in the families, church communities, and in every sectors of our society.

This can be ascribed to our choice of leaderships driven by favoritism and wantokism. The breakdown of our social structure can be ascribed to our choice of friends driven by hidden agenda, kinship ties, and professionalism. The boredom of church services and activities can be ascribed to our choice driven by nice feelings and the sights of miracles and wonders. Empty church can be ascribed to empty stomach. Rebellious attitudes and behaviors can be ascribed to our choice of unmet high expectations and illusive imaginations. And the list goes on...

The reason is very obvious that God's guidance and wisdom has been excluded from our daily choices and decision – makings. Proverb says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and never rely on the things you know". In other words, we must rely on God's guidance that is not seen rather than on the things we see. Jesus said to Thomas, "Happy are those who believe without seeing"

Many people today are sick and tired of living meaningless, unproductive, and unsatisfactory life. The only alternative is to come back and seek God's guidance or directions through Jesus Christ in their daily choices or decisions in life. Life is worth the living in Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ, life is productive and blessed. Peace, joy, and happiness of our Lord Jesus Christ give life abundantly in all its fullness. As Jesus invited us "Come to me all of you who are tired of carrying heavy loads and I will give you rest" (Matt 11: 27). One of the prisoner of Hitler's Nazi camp once said, "When I look up, I am distressed. When I look around, I am oppressed. When I look down, I am depressed. But when I look to Jesus, I am at rest!"

Brothers and sisters in the Lord, our message is loud and clear. When our choices and decisions are determined or guided by five human senses, the end result will be crises after crises, problems after problems, burdens after burdens. On the contrary, when our choices and decisions are determined or guided by God's guidance and wisdom through our Lord Jesus Christ, there will be blessing after blessing, success after

success, where peace, joy, and happiness are experienced abundantly in our daily livings. Amen!