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## A Crossroads Of Faith Accept Or Reject, Stay Or Leave

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John 6:66-69; Colossians 2:16-23; 2 Timothy 4:7-8

### Billy Graham's Question "Will They Stay With It?"

- I. **Everyone comes to a crossroad of faith & belief**
  - A. Maybe at a crusade
  - B. Maybe in church
  - C. Maybe at a youth camp or retreat
  - D. A friend shared their faith
  - E. At a funeral/wedding
  - F. The birth of a child
  - G. A tragic experience
- II. **At that crossroad, we have a decision to make**
  - A. Do I choose God's grace found in Jesus or do I choose something else?
  - B. Today, many are choosing nothing
    - 1. The category of none
    - 2. This is often called practical atheism
    - 3. Living life as if there is no God
- III. **What happens when a person chooses to believe in nothing?**
  - A. They deny reason
    - 1. They suppress the truth - Romans 1:18-20
    - 2. They deny revelation - Luke 16:29
  - B. They deny reality
    - 1. Death comes - Romans 6:23
    - 2. Life continues
  - C. They deny responsibility for self & family - Joshua 24:15
  - D. They deny redemption
    - 1. John 14:6
    - 2. John 11:25-28
  - E. This is story of the none
- IV. **The result when you deny the truth, you believe anything**
  - A. The symptoms of none "theology"
    - 1. Overlook evil/sin
    - 2. Permit evil/sin
    - 3. Promote evil/sin
    - 4. Legalize evil/sin
    - 5. Celebrate evil/sin
    - 6. Magnify/venerate evil/sin
    - 7. Persecute those who stand against evil/sin
  - B. The sadness
    - 1. A slow rot of the conscious
    - 2. A slow rot of the community
    - 3. A slow rot of the culture
    - 4. A slow rot of the country
- V. **When you choose faith/following Jesus**
  - A. Receive the gift of eternal life
  - B. Receive the forgiveness of sin
  - C. Receive the adoption of God
  - D. Receive the Spirit of God
    - 1. Brings faith
    - 2. Brings hope
    - 3. Brings love
  - E. Receive the life that Jesus offers
    - 1. New heart
    - 2. New beginning
  - F. Receive understanding, insight, & answers to life's questions
  - G. Receive a purpose, a plan, & a promise that changes you
- VI. **The crossroads of the believer, which direction will you choose?**  
**Colossians 2:16**
  - A. Grace or legalism?
    - 1. Trying to add requirements to be right with God
  - B. Grace or asceticism?
    - 1. Trying to prove your faith by won't you don't do
  - C. Grace or mysticism?
    - 1. Feelings

2. Encounters - Colossians 2:18

D. Grace or fanaticism?

1. Where one topic becomes your only emphasis
2. Spiritual gifts
3. What you eat
4. The day of worship
5. How one is baptized

E. Cultism

1. Twist, pervert, deny, or dismantle Scripture
2. To make it fit your lifestyle, your position, your authority, or your control

F. Apathyism

1. Stop caring
2. Stop participating
3. Stop worshiping

G. Deconverting

1. Returning back to lifestyle
2. Returning back to the lack of faith
3. Returning back to the error God brought you out of

**VII. As a Christian, beware of the crossroads to stay or leave (The R's of deconversion)**

- A. Redefine faith (into what is is not)
- B. Refuse to look at evidence
- C. Repeat debunked phrases
- D. Rely on their own understanding
- E. Rebel against anything to do with God
- F. Rant about every weakness, imperfection, & shortcoming of every Christian they know
- G. This was Peter's dilemma
  1. Where shall we go?
  2. Only you have the words to eternal life

**VIII. When does this happen? What does this crossroad look like?**

A. It happens over time for some

1. Disappointment
2. Division
3. Derision
4. Disconnected

B. For some, it is an event

1. Painful
2. Suffering

C. A lack of growth in faith (a lack of discipleship)

**IX. How do we grow to prevent deconversion, falling away when our faith is tested? (Fighting the good fight)**

A. Practice Biblical teaching

B. Personal ministry (you get involved)

C. Private disciplines

1. Small groups
2. Bible study
3. Worship
4. Prayer

D. Pivotal relationships

1. Accountability
2. Consulting
3. Fellowship

E. Pivotal circumstance

1. Seeing how God works
2. Leaning on God in each experience

**X. The takeaway**

A. Everyone comes to a crossroad of faith

B. We will choose for that to strengthen or weaken our faith

C. What we choose sends us on a road of grace or brokenness

D. What we believe, who we choose, how we live out our faith determines how we face life, how we face God, & how we face eternity

**It's Your Choice**