The great American poet, Robert Frost, penned the famous poem, “The Road Not Taken.” In the poem, he stands at a fork in the road and ponders which road to take. He finally decides to take the one “less traveled by.” Then he quizzically muses over the choice that he has made and predicts that in the end it will make “all the difference.” The poem illustrates how everyone has to make his own choices and that those decisions will affect the outcome of his life. Though the immediate application is to all choices of life in general, I cannot help but see the application to our religious service.

The Master Teacher spoke the truth of the Forked Road of life in His sermon on the mount (Matt. 7:13-14). He preached about the individual’s obligation to make the choice to travel the proper road. I see some similarities between His message and the message taught by Frost in “The Road Not Taken.” No doubt Frost received some of his insight from the words of Christ.

The obligation to choose belongs to the individual. Frost was alone as he stood at the two roads. He knew that he alone had the power to choose his path. Nobody could make it for him. Likewise, Jesus implores us each to choose our way. Contrary to the fancies of men, God has given each of us the opportunity to choose our way of life. “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil” (Deut. 30:15). “Choose you this day whom ye will serve” (Josh. 24:15). Although we can be influenced by our friends and families (Gal. 6:2), ultimately, what we choose will affect each of us individually (Gal. 6:5). So here we are, alone at a fork in the road and we each have to make a choice. “Which way should I go?”

The two possible paths are unique. Jesus clearly saw two ways or paths just as Robert Frost saw in the “yellow wood.” When speaking of the two roads, Jesus went on to identify each of them, “For wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matt. 7:13,14). In contrasting the roads, Jesus gives three specific areas where they differ, 1) Their portals, 2) Their pressures, and 3) Their population.

**Their Portals**

A “portal” is a door or opening. Here Jesus calls it the gate. One road had a wide gate that guarded its entrance. Being wide, it would be easy to see. Plus, it would have the advantage of allowing several people through at one time. Accordingly, it does not take much effort to get on the road. The other path had a “strait gate.” This may suggest a small, inconspicuous door. It was not easy to find. Therefore, it took some investigation by someone who wanted to go in it. There is no chance of stumbling into the strait gate. Those who are not willing to diligently search and exert much effort will never enter the strait gate. Hence we can tell the two paths apart by looking at their portals. The doors that are easy to find and open are not the doors that lead to life.

**Their Pressures**

Here “pressure” refers to their ease of travel. The first road

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has a wide gate that opens to a “broad” road. The word means “wide and spacious.” Those that travel this road have little pressure. They can zig and zag without meeting any resistance. Robert Frost’s poem illustrates this road as the one that is not grown over with brush and weeds (in his mind). The path is well worn with travel. In comparison, the other way is full of pressure. The grass is thick and the leaves are undisturbed. Jesus used the word “narrow” which means that it is constricted. Constriction brings friction and resistance. Those who choose to enter the strait gate will be met by many trials and tribulations. Though this way is not burdensome (1 Jno. 5:3), it does take effort and perseverance to stay on the path (Heb. 12:1-4; Phil. 3:13-14). Hence the easiest way is not the way that leads to eternal life!

### Their Populations

Finally, Jesus compares the roads according to how many people are traveling them. The wide gate leads to the broad way that is well populated. On this road there will always be company because most people do not want to expend the effort to travel the narrow road. The majority of souls on this earth do not want to take the time to find the small door that leads to salvation. Therefore, they devise their own ways. They build their own doors and leave the Great Door unopened (Jno. 10:9). Among those few who seek and find the strait gate, many of them turn back and leave the pressured way. Through indifference and a lack of diligence they leave the overgrown path and find an “easier” way. That leaves a very precious few that walk the narrow path. Just as Jesus said, “and few there be that find it.”

Another lesson found in the lines of Frost’s poem is that we cannot travel two roads at once. Men today need to learn that they cannot travel both ways. Jesus said that we cannot serve two masters (Matt. 6:24). Neither can we walk two roads at once; for we will either follow the one and leave the other, or leave the one and follow the other. Hence, we must choose one or the other lest we make God sick (Rev. 3:16).

Finally, we see the tremendous importance of making this choice. Robert Frost could see that the two roads led to different ends. Likewise the forked path before us will lead to two different ends. If we take the easy road today and walk it until death we will travel to hell. However, if today we choose the narrow path and “walk in the light as He is in the light,” then our reward will be everlasting life!

> I shall be telling this with a sigh
> Somewhere ages and ages hence:
> Two roads diverged in a wood,
> And I—

> I took the one less traveled by,
> And that has made all the difference.
Did you know that the family name of the Herodians (i.e. Herod), the Idumeans, who would eventually be in a position of power and prominence among the Jews, and intimately involved with the life and death of Jesus Christ, actually signifies heroic? A study of the Bible, and the life of Jesus Christ, reveals an ironic, if not fitting end to the usefulness of the Jews, God’s “chosen people”, as well as the Herods, the “heroic” people. Their “state” in the end, was far worse than their beginning. Neither the Herods nor the Jews could muster activity towards Jesus that could be labeled heroic (cf. Jn. 1:11; Lk. 23:7-12). I wonder if the Herods ever thought, or bragged about the meaning of their name, or if it troubled them that their conduct was not heroic at all. I wonder if they wondered, “Where did it go?”

Christians have a name that signifies a follower of Christ, which is by far, the most heroic of names (Phil. 2:9; Eph. 3:15; Acts 11:26), but unfortunately the passing of time and the pull of the world can cause us to engage in activity that is not in keeping with the high name that we claim. It is easy to follow the path of least resistance (Mt. 7:13-14), and when we do, our state in the end, is far worse than our beginning (2 Pet. 2:20-22).

Do you wear the name Christian? It signifies following Christ. Are you? If not, where did you go, and better yet, why would you not return to the heroic and useful conduct to which you were called?

*Toby Soechting will be our guest speaker this Wednesday night in the adult Bible class.
Updates

Among the Ill: Paul Ross had detached retina surgery Friday. Colton Stewart had his tonsils and adenoids removed Friday. Ozell Schmidt began dialysis late last week and hopes to be released today. Daisy Beggs had surgery for her fractured hip last Wednesday night. Upon release from the hospital, she will go to a nursing facility for rehab. Continue to Remember: Carrie Gibson, Leeanne Bayes, and Rob Owens.


Sympathy
Bill McHenry’s aunt, Sue Laengrich, passed away unexpectedly Saturday evening, May 29. Services were held last Wednesday. Sue lived in Midland, TX with her husband of 47 years.

Ann McPhaill, long-time member at North Beaton and great grandmother of Michelle Chennault, passed away Wednesday morning. The funeral was held yesterday at Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home.

The Junior High Devo is tonight immediately following worship service in the outreach center. Girls bring snacks, boys bring drinks.

The First Summer Youth Series will be this Tuesday night at the Handley congregation in Fort Worth. We will leave the building at 5:00 p.m.

VBS Meeting this Wednesday night immediately following services in the family room. Anyone interested in helping with this year’s VBS, please plan to stay and meet with Russell.

The Men’s Breakfast is this Friday at 7:00 a.m. in the outreach center. All men are invited.

Camp Ida begins next Sunday. The youth group will be leaving at 6:00 that morning to make their way to the camp and will be back Friday by 6:00 p.m.

Records for May 30, 2010

Bible Class................................................................. 220
AM Worship.................................................................. 319
PM Worship ................................................................. n/c
Wednesday Night..................................................... 180
Contribution.............................................................. $11,821.10

Birthdays This Week
June 6—Sidney Moore, Morgan Weaver
June 7—Corey Newton
June 10—Tressa Barham
June 11—Greg Dickey
June 12—Billie Murphy, Mary Butler, Daniel Sumrall

Privileged to Serve

Welcome George Schmidt
Song Leader AM Micah Fry
Song Leader PM Micah Fry
Opening Prayer Don Ivy
Communion Leader Russell Bankes
Communion Servers Chad Briggs
Lynn Berry
Don Corley
David Garcia
Kenny Martin
Gene Steinkraus
Kye White

Closing Prayer Jim Haden
Elder for June Don Bowen—903.874.3556
Nursery Attendants Wanda Horner & Christie Beamon