

## 週一嗎哪 午間查經分享祈禱會

MONDAY MANNA

August 29, 2022

### GENETICS, CIRCUMSTANCES, AND CHOICES

By Robert J. Tamasy

There is so much discussion these days about who we are, and why we do what we do. Some factors we cannot control, determined even before we are born. For example, if you grow up to be a tall person – perhaps over six feet tall – you will never be able to compete as a jockey in horse racing. On the other hand, if your parents are short and members of your extended family were not tall either, it would make little sense to aspire to become a center on a professional basketball team.

Circumstances can affect our lives, such as family influences; level of affluence (or the lack of it); health, and the availability of good schools definitely contribute to our personal development. Even the seemingly random effects of “being at the right place at the right time” – or being at the wrong place at the wrong time. But are we destined to be limited by our circumstances?

Leadership consultant and author Tim Kight suggests that we are not. He offers this simple but straight-forward perspective: “You are shaped by your genetics. You are influenced by your circumstances. You are defined by your choices.”

There is great danger in focusing on things like our genetics or circumstances that have occurred in our past. These cannot be changed and will always remain beyond our control. However, we can control our choices – how we respond to these circumstances. We see evidence of this in many ways: People who grew up in disadvantaged homes, one becoming addicted to drugs or involved in criminal behavior, while the other determined to do whatever is necessary to excel, becoming a physician, businessperson, or schoolteacher.

Even if we cannot change our genetics, or undo adverse circumstances from our past, we still can greatly affect our own lives by the choices and decisions we make. The Bible has much to say about this:

**To what will you commit your life?** We can direct our lives to the pursuit of many things, many “gods” that we can serve and receive the bulk of our time and energy. What we decide to pursue makes an incredible difference in what our lives will look like. “...choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.... But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15).

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由香港工商基督徒協會 (CBMC Hong Kong Ltd) 逢週一發放

地址: 香港上環禧利街 2 號東寧大廈 20 樓 2004 室 Tel: (852) 2805-1923

Email: [enquiry@cbmc.org.hk](mailto:enquiry@cbmc.org.hk)

Web: [www.cbmc.org.hk](http://www.cbmc.org.hk)

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**How will you define success?** There are many ways for measuring personal success: Money, material possessions, career advancement, status, and influence in one's community. Some have greater, more enduring value than others. Which we choose will guide the course of our lives. *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, whether moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.... No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Mammon"* (Matthew 6:19-21,24).

**What will you value most?** We have many options when it comes to choosing priorities, goals, and objectives. Those choices will largely determine the sum total of our lives. *"Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her"* (Proverbs 8:10).

© 2022. Robert J. Tamasy has written *Marketplace Ambassadors: CBMC's Continuing Legacy of Evangelism and Discipleship; Business at Its Best: Timeless Wisdom from Proverbs for Today's Workplace; Pursuing Life With a Shepherd's Heart*, coauthored with Ken Johnson; and *The Heart of Mentoring*, coauthored with David A. Stoddard.

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### Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. What are the inherent, genetic factors that have had an influence on your life?
2. Which circumstances in your life, past and present, have contributed to where you are in life today, whether in a positive or a negative way? Explain the impact they have had on you?
3. Do you agree with the assertion that we are defined by our choices, and not the genetic factors we are born with or the circumstances that have transpired in our lives? Why or why not?
4. What are your answers to the questions asked in this *Monday Manna*:
  - \* To what will you commit your life?
  - \* How will you define success?
  - \* What will you value most?

#### NOTE:

*If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages: Proverbs 3:5-6, 14:8, 17:24, 27:20, 28:14; Matthew 6:25-34; Luke 16:10-1*

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