



The Family Room

By: Dr. Roy Don Whitehead

Does Choice or Chance Determine our Destiny?

I drive by the church every day on my way to work, so I could not miss the sign out front: "Choice not chance determines destiny." I am grateful to those folks for displaying that thought because it set me to thinking.

Does choice or chance determine our destiny? Do we have control over what happens to us or are we at the mercy of fate? Obviously, whoever posted that sign believes that we have control.

My friend Ann might argue with them. She has post-polio syndrome. That is a particularly nasty disease because it strikes those who were already struck by polio as a child.

Not only did she endure polio in the 1950s, but now she is barely able to walk with this latest attack of post-polio. She certainly did not choose to have either of these problems.

The family of the young man killed in the car wreck might also disagree with that sign on the church. He was not drinking nor did he go to sleep at the wheel. Instead a drunken driver hit him and killed him instantly.

Again it seems that chance determined his destiny. I can point to many instances where things happen in our world seemingly by chance. In these situations the individual has little choice: Being in the wrong place at the wrong time can bring tragedy. If he had just been a few seconds earlier or later, he would still be alive.

Does people deserve what happens to them? Perhaps the illness or accident is punishment for sin. Jesus disciples once asked him who had sinned that the man should be born blind, he or his parents? They believed that tragedy was the result

of sin. Jesus stood that belief on as far as when he said, "Neither." The man's blindness was not the result of sin.

There does seem to me to be an element of chance in the world. Being human and being alive means the odds are stacked against you. Cancer can happen for no known reason. Tornados strike at random, leveling one house and leaving the one next door. Car wrecks happen to some and not to others.

Does choice play any role at all in our lives? Let's go back to my friend Ann. While she had no choice about being struck with polio, she did have a choice as to how she responded to the illness. She could have grown bitter. Especially when post-polio syndrome hit, she could have given up on life and been angry at God and the world.

Instead, Ann chose to live her life as fully as she could rather than give in to the disease. She and I worked together planning and leading conferences. She enjoyed teaching and helping people. Her chosen career was one of service to others.

Choice did make a difference in Ann's life. While choice affected her, the ultimate quality of her life was determined by the choices she made. She chose to live, rather than to die in bitterness.

Life is too complicated for one simple answer to work at all situations. Someone may feel that chance has ruined his life. Another may think that she is burdened with more tragedy than she can endure. I would not presume to tell these folks what they "ought" to do in their situations.

I am convinced, however, that the sign on the church is right: "Choice not chance determines our destiny." What I make of my life is up to me. It is not simply a matter left to chance.

Agricultural News

By: Warden Alexander, FSA Director

"I Never Got That Kind of Money!"

Recently producers were mailed a Form 1099-MISC from the Commonwealth of Kentucky with an amount in item 3, Other Income. FSA has received numerous calls concerning these 1099s questioning the amount. Please note: **ES: DID NOT and these out and we do not have records to verify the amounts.** However, when we called the toll free number, the bank stated these payments were issued to producers in May 2000. Producers received payments allocated to the quota owner, growing farm and tenant. Therefore, if you were the owner, the operator of the farm and the person who produced the quota, then you would have received three checks and three Form 1099-MISC.

2001 Burley Tobacco Quota
The Secretary of Agriculture has announced the 2001 national marketing quota for burley tobacco (type 311) is 332 million pounds, of which Kentucky's quota is 164,073 pounds. The 2001 national quota for burley tobacco reflects a 34.4 percent increase from the 2000 crop. The 2001 notice of burley tobacco quota are scheduled to be mailed to producers from the local FSA office on Thursday, February 8th.

Burley Tobacco Leasing of Quotas
April 2nd is the first date produc-

ers shall execute a lease for the 2001 quotas.

Quota Referendum
The Secretary of Agriculture has announced national marketing quotas for the 2001 through 2003 crops of burley tobacco (type 311) and called for a referendum by mail ballot during the period February 12 through February 16, 2001, to determine whether marketing quotas will be in effect for this kind of tobacco. The 2001 Burley Tobacco Referendum ballots are scheduled to be mailed Friday, February 9th to producers who are listed as eligible to vote according to FSA records. Voting will take place February 12th-16th. During that time frame burley tobacco producers will vote for or against marketing quotas for the next three marketing years beginning October 1, 2001. The ballot shall be returned to the county office no later than close of business Friday, February 16th. If mailed the ballot should be postmarked no later than February 16th.

If you do not receive a ballot and feel you are eligible to vote contact the FSA office. **REMEMBER: February 16th is the DEADLINE TO VOTE IN THE REFERENDUM!**
Marketing Cards
Producers who have sold the current years crop of tobacco are en-

couraged to return their marketing card to the FSA as soon as possible. Marketing cards are then compared to sales recorded for accuracy. Failure to return marketing cards promptly could result in producers receiving incorrect information for the 2001 quota, scheduled to be released February 8th.

Applications taken for new burley tobacco farm quotas
Farm Service Agency's across the burley tobacco belt are once again taking applications for new burley tobacco farm quotas.

Before a new farm quota is recommended it must be determined that each applicant meets all eligibility requirements as set forth in the guidelines for burley tobacco. Eligibility requirements include: Applicant has NO burley tobacco quota, has land suitable for tobacco production, has two of the past five years marketing history of burley tobacco and 50% of ALL household income is received from farming.

Producers wishing to make an application new burley tobacco farm quota should contact the FSA office in the county where the farm is located no later than February 15th.

Bank of Mt. Vernon Customers
Customers of Century Trust Bank, formerly Bank of Mt. Vernon, who receive or expect to receive payments from the Farm Service Agency are urged to complete a new Standard Form 1199A, Direct Deposit Sign Up Form, at their earliest convenience. Routing numbers for the bank have changed and some account numbers have also been changed. When routing numbers and/or account numbers change without our records being updated it means producer's payments are not correctly deposited. So if you want to continue receiving your payments make a point to stop by today and complete this form to avoid delays!

Loans for socially disadvantaged persons

Efforts exists to remind farmers that funds are reserved each year to make loans to socially disadvantaged applicants to buy and operate family-size farms. A socially disadvantaged farmer is one of a group subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For that purpose of this program, socially disadvantaged groups have been defined as women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asians and Pacific Islanders.

There are two types of loans available. These include:
• Operating loans may be used for various short and intermediate type credit needs, such as the purchase of livestock and equipment and annual operating expenses.

• Farm ownership loans may be used for the purpose and/or improvement of farmland and buildings. Individuals, partnerships, joint operations and cooperatives primarily and directly engaged in farming on family-size operations may apply. A family-size operation is considered to be one that a family can operate and manage itself.

Repayment terms for direct operating loans depend on the collateral securing the loan and usually run from one to seven years. Repayment terms on direct ownership loans are at least 10 years. Guarantied loans (through a third party, i.e. bank) are set by the lender.

Interest rates for direct loans are set periodically according to the Government's cost of borrowing. Interest rates for guaranteed loans are set by the lender.

Applications for all FSA direct loan programs are made through the local FSA County office. Guarantied loan applications are made with the lender. For information on participating lenders, contact the local FSA County office.

New small loan process to speed loan assistance

FSA has announced the required paperwork has been reduced for farmers to receive farm operating loans from USDA. Producers who need to borrow \$50,000 or less and who have a record of borrowing and repaying FSA on annual operating loans will benefit from the new procedure.

Producers must meet FSA loan eligibility requirements, be current on all debt payments, have no FSA debt outstanding in the past five years and submit:

• FSA 410-1, Request for Direct Loan Assistance.

A check or money order for credit report.

A cash flow projection for the next operating cycle and Environmental information about the land to be farmed.

Additional financial and/or organizational information if an entity applicant.

For more information contact the local FSA County Office. FSA programs are open to all regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political belief, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.

e-mail us at

mvsignal@sun-spot.com

Cost Share Program

The Rockcastle County Conservation District will be accepting requests for cost share funding under the Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Program beginning February 1, 2001 and extending through February 28, 2001. The Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Program was created to assist agricultural operators protect the soil and water resources in Kentucky. The program was created in 1994 and received its first appropriation of \$650,000 from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. Over the past six years the program has now grown to an annual appropriation of \$11,150,000 coming from general fund appropriations from the General Assembly, dollars transferred from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and now from Phase I tobacco settlement agreement funds.

With the passage of the biennial budget by the 2000 General Assembly and HB-611, an appropriation of \$18,000,000 over the biennium was a direct funding to the cost share program by the General Assembly. These additional funds will supplement existing cost share program, which provides landowners with technical and financial assistance to address environmental concerns associated with agriculture production.

Sign-ups for the 2001 program year will include some additional changes to the existing programs. A

new practice will be added, KWPS-Closure of Agriculture Waste Impoundments, and additional components to existing practices will be added which include gravel lanes, trails and waterways (KWPS). Changes will be made to the number of paddocks required at a minimum in rotational grazing systems (KSW3) and likewise changing the cost share rate for this practice from 65 percent to 75 percent. Funding for practices will be approved by the Soil and Water Conservation Commission at the Kentucky Division of Conservation located in Frankfort as funds are available. Cost share rates are a maximum of 75 percent of the actual cost not to exceed \$7,500 for agronomic practices and \$20,000 for animal waste concerns.

For more information stop by the local conservation district office located at USDA Service Center on Hwy. 150. Office hours are Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Telephone number (606) 256-2325 ext. 3.

Posted

No trespassing on land belonging to James Mason, located on the south side of Maple Grove Road. All violators will be prosecuted.

Area Technology Center Open House

Rockcastle County Area Technology Center will host the Rockcastle County Board meeting for the month of February. The meeting will be held Tuesday, February 13th at the Area Technology Center (vocational school) beginning at 7:00 p.m.

The Area Technology Center will host an **Open House from 3:00 - 5:30 p.m.** for parents to discuss students issues with faculty and staff. If you have a student presently enrolled at the vocational school, or a student that will enroll in the fall, we extend to you a welcome to attend the Open House and the Board Meeting.

ATTENTION Tobacco Growers

There will be an important meeting, Monday, February 12th at 2 p.m. at the **Burley Tobacco Warehouse**, 907 West Walnut Street in Danville, concerning contracting for this year's upcoming tobacco crop.

All Growers are urged to attend.

The Burley Tobacco Warehouse will be contracting and receiving tobacco for Southwestern Tobacco Co. (a subsidiary of Universal Leaf Tobacco Co., Inc., the World's largest independent tobacco dealer), at our warehouse in Danville, Ky.

Anyone interested in learning more about/or contracting their 2001 tobacco crop, please attend.

Contracts will be made available for signing at this meeting.

For more information, please call

The Burley Tobacco Warehouse
859-236-2616

ARE YOU SICK AND TIRED?

Sick of having family and friends destroyed by drugs, alcohol, abuse, disease and other devastation?

Tired of feeling like there is nothing that can be done?

There is something that we can do. Again I tell you, if two of you on earth agree about whatever (anything and everything) they may ask, it will come to pass and be done for them by my Father in heaven. For wherever two or three are gathered (drawn) together as my followers in my name, there I AM in the midst of them." *Matthew 18:19-20 AMP*

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin; and will heal their land." *2 Chronicles 7:14 KJV*

IT'S TIME

Please join us for the following community prayer services

February 17 @ 7 p.m. - Our Lady of Mt. Vernon Catholic Church

February 24 @ 7 p.m. - Lighthouse Assembly of God

March 17 @ 7 p.m. - Mt. Vernon Pentecostal Church

March 24 @ 7 p.m. - To Be Announced