

Viewpoints

We have a choice

In this quiet moment, before cheers of triumph send their vibrations into our world, before utter disappointment settles its cloud on those who would welcome it, I want to draw our collective attention to how blessed we are to be living in a time of choice.

My friend Mona Everson was just writing about choice the other day. We were corresponding on the topic of gratitude. Mona told me she believes we can train ourselves to live in gratitude. To experience gratitude. Because, she said, we can make that conscious choice.

On this day, in the wake of the midterm elections, there is no doubt in my mind that there are people – likely a whole bunch of them – who will be angry and disappointed because whatever side they chose to stand on didn't win.

And while I won't rob them of the chance to be angry – I don't have that power – I ascribe to the school of Mona Everson.

Choose something better.

If your candidate didn't win, if something for which you were

passionate failed to pass, if you chose a side and that side failed to achieve whatever mythical goal an overzealous anything whipped up into a stormy froth, take a moment to shut out the cacophony and choose gratitude.

Here's another approach to gratitude.

Do you know the name Dorothy Sayers? She was the author of some fun and amusing British who-done-its. But when her homeland found itself in the crosshairs of World War II, she dusted off another dimension of herself that held deep beliefs in the resiliency of humanity. Even before the Nazis fixed their aim on London, she saw what could be and put it into these words:

"War is an ugly disaster; it is not a final catastrophe. Whatever men may have said in their haste and terror, let us get that fact firmly into our heads. There are no final catastrophes. Like every other historical event, war is not an end, but a beginning." (Begin Here, A Statement of Faith, Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1941.)



Jane Curtis

"This book does not pretend to offer any formula for constructing an Earthly Paradise; no such formula is possible. It suggests only that there is at present something incomplete about the average human being's conception of himself and society, and that the first step towards constructing the kind of world he wants is to decide the kind of person he is, and ought to be."

Those words were meant for her homeland. But when it was obvious that the United States would enter WWII, she reissued the book from which those words were taken. Her goal was a noble one: Bring people together in hope.

And so, at Christmas 1940, she addressed the people of the United States of America:

"This book does not pretend to offer any formula for constructing an Earthly Paradise; no such formula is possible. It suggests only that there is at present something incomplete about the average human being's conception of himself and society, and that the first step towards constructing the kind of world he wants is to decide the kind of person he is, and ought to be."

No. We are not at war, unless you would consider that anger kindles a war within ourselves.

Even then.

Especially then.

We have a choice.

Jane Curtis is interim editor of the Daily Freeman-Journal.

Share Your Views

Send your letters:
"To the Editor,"
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Letters should be 350 words or less and must be the original work of the author.

We reserve the right to edit for length, taste and possible libel, as well as personal attacks and inflammatory

statements about businesses, groups or individuals. Letters must be signed and include a full address, plus a phone number for verification purposes.

One submission per month per writer.



The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."



How to Reach Federal Officials

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How to Reach Your City Council members

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City Council meetings are held the first and third Mondays of the month at 6 p.m. at the Council Chambers in City Hall.

For more information, contact the City Manager's office, 832-9151