

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

Biblical Principles for Making Godly Decisions

Decision, Decisions, Decisions

- Life is the sum of the choices we make
- We are a product of our last decision
- It behooves us to exercise wisdom in making decisions
- How do most people, including some Christians make decisions?
- They make decisions:
 - Based on what feels right to them
 - On the emotions of the moment
 - Without all the facts
 - Quickly
 - Yielding to pressure
 - Without prayer
 - Without consulting the Bible
 - Without counting the costs
 - Without considering the results of past experiences and decisions
 - Without considering how their decision impacts their walk with God
 - Without considering how their decision may impact others, especially unbelievers
 - Without considering whether their decision will glorify God
- Why do believers sometimes make important decisions without biblical guidance?
 - We think we already know ***Proverbs 14:12 (KJV)*** ***“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man,...”***
 - Pride ***Proverbs 16:18 (KJV)*** ***18 Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.***
 - Impatience ***Proverbs 21:5 (KJV)*** ***5 The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness; but of every one that is hasty only to want.***
 - We let our emotions get the best of us
 - Refusal to listen to the wisdom around you ***Proverbs 11:14 (KJV)*** ***14 Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.***
 - Ignore warning signs
 - The truth is in front of us, but ignore it or overlook it
- Many of our decisions are based on our pride, our emotions, our flesh, our comfort, fear, money, and our impatience
- We look at the surface but don't go any deeper
 - Attractive choices can lead to unattractive results
 - Right choices are not always easy to make
 - The choices we make can have long term effects

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Prayer

James 1:5 (KJV) ***If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.***

- If we lack wisdom, we can ask God and God has wisdom in abundance
- Wisdom is not just knowledge; it is the ability to make wise decisions in difficult situations

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- We don't have to wander around in the dark, hoping to stumble upon the answers we need
- The wisdom that we need has three distinct characteristics:
 1. It is *practical*
 - The wisdom from God relates to life even during the most trying times.
 2. It is *divine*
 - God's wisdom goes beyond common sense.
 3. It is *Christlike*
 - Asking for wisdom is ultimately asking to be like Christ

Get All the Facts

Proverbs 18:13 (NLT2) 13 Spouting off before listening to the facts is both shameful and foolish.

- Information is critical to decision-making
- Making rash judgments before hearing all the facts can be costly
- It is your responsibility to ask questions and gather information that affects your decision
- Gathering information may take some time but it's worth the effort

Seek the Wisdom of the Word

Psalms 119:105 (KJV) 105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

- The Word of God makes our steps *clear*
- Without God's Word, our steps are unsure, uncertain, and even perilous
- If we live by the Word of God we won't walk in spiritual darkness, we won't stumble over spiritual obstacles, we won't fall into traps set for us by the devil, and we will be able to recognize efforts by the world to pull us away from the biblical principles written in the Word of God
- The Word of God will clearly show us *which path* to take
- We will see the path God wants our lives to travel and we'll also see and avoid the obstacles, ungodly detours, and those "slight angles" off the main path that over time lead us away from God
- When we make the Word of God our guide and follow its instructions, we will always be on the right road

Be Patient

Proverbs 14:8 (NLT2) 8 The prudent understand where they are going, but fools deceive themselves.

- We must learn how to wait on God's timing
- It is possible to do the right thing at the wrong time
- Take your time in making decisions
- Don't yield to time pressure
- Be deliberate in your decision-making
- Take time to understand what you're getting into
- Don't rush to make announcements, but wait for God's *green light*

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Consult Wise Counsel

Proverbs 15:22 (KJV) 22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.

- Without wise counsel our plans often fail
- God has placed godly people in our lives to help us
- We need godly people in our lives to help in our decision-making
- They are stable, and sober and they won't let the emotion of the issue interfere with a sound decision
- They are spiritual people that can hear God's voice
- We need people in our lives that we can talk to
- And when we talk to them, it is to *share* with them; not *sell* them on our idea, dream, etc.
- They are not afraid to tell you the truth
- Godly counsel helps us avoid mistakes

Listen to the Voice of the Spirit

1 Kings 19:11-12 (NLT2) 11 "Go out and stand before me on the mountain," the LORD told him. And as Elijah stood there, the LORD passed by, and a mighty windstorm hit the mountain. It was such a terrible blast that the rocks were torn loose, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. 12 And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper.

- For Elijah to be guided by God; God had to show him how He speaks in whispers
- The Holy Spirit doesn't scream and shout directions, but it's a still small voice
- Are you listening for the whispers of God?
- We must be sensitive for the guidance of God
- The Holy Spirit is a guide

Acts 16:6-10 (KJV) Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, [7] After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. [8] And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. [9] And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. [10] And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

- In this text you can see:
 - The leading of the Holy Spirit (The Holy Spirit restrained Paul from going and preaching in Asia and Bithynia)
 - The directions of the Holy Spirit (The Holy Spirit shows Paul in a vision a man in Macedonia saying help us)
 - The obedience to the Holy Spirit (Paul obeys the Holy Spirit and it opens the door for the gospel to be preached in all of Europe)

Learn from Past Experiences

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Proverbs 17:10 (NLT2) 10 A single rebuke does more for a person of understanding than a hundred lashes on the back of a fool.

- We learn valuable lessons from our experiences
- Past experiences teach us we must live with the consequences of decisions
- Sometimes the *pain* of past experiences is enough for us not to make the same mistakes
- Considering our past experiences will reveal what worked and didn't work
- We *purchase* wisdom through our past experiences

Will this Decision Maintain or Jeopardize My Witness?

Proverbs 22:1 (NLT2) 1 Choose a good reputation over great riches; being held in high esteem is better than silver or gold.

- The decisions we make are often lived in public
- The unbeliever is looking at our decisions, our motives, our integrity, our godliness in our decision making
- We must make certain our decisions don't cause Christians to question our Christianity
 - Our questionable decisions may cause unbelievers to "devalue" Christianity
- God does not want the decisions of Christians to be a stumbling block for unbelievers

Trust God with Your Decision

Proverbs 3:5-6 (KJV) 5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

- When you've made your decision through prayer, sound wisdom, consulting godly counsel, etc. trust God for the outcome
- Put your decision into action **Joshua 1:5-6 (KJV) 5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. 6 Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.**
- You're expecting doors to open for you
- Your decision will honor God!