



Making the Right Decisions
Compiled by Dr. Harold Bollinger

Table of contents

Forward		3
Chapter 1	Teach us to be responsible	4
Chapter 2	Decisions have lasting consequences	9
Chapter 3	How Prayer helps in making decisions	14
Chapter 4	Maintain an eternal perspective	17
Chapter 5	Criteria for making important decisions	20
Chapter 6	Biblical principles should direct our decisions	23
Chapter 7	Hasty decisions may be poor decisions	27
Chapter 8	Past decisions influence our present decisions	29

Forward

In Making Decisions We Should Seek Counsel from God it is a wonderful moment when we discover a specific Scripture that helps us in the decision-making process. Memorization is simplified because we are living and breathing the word while sensing his presence with us

Sometimes when we are pressed to make tough decisions, there is a temptation to be quick and presumptuous instead of waiting for God to direct us. Being still before God means that we will have periods of time when it seems like nothing is happening.

Yet in the spirit the Lord is moving on our behalf. This is a time of quiet reflection and meditation with thankfulness because of the Lord's goodness Psalms 37:7

Everyone can have an opinion on what is best decision for you. However it's important to screen out the voices and hear from those who walk closely with God. Pray and ask the Lord to reveal his anointed wisdom to you, his servant. You will recognize the spirit of God within others because their advice leans heavily on the truth of God's word without fear.

We are to have faith and trust in God. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways submit to him, and he will direct your path. Proverbs 3:5-6

Submit yourself to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
James 4:7.

May each of your decisions brings glory to God the Father

Chapter 1

Decision making



Teach us to be responsible.

Joshua 24:14-15

Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods that your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord.

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

The people had to decide whether they would obey the Lord, who had proven his trustworthiness, or obey the local gods, which were only man-made idols. It's easy to slip into a quiet rebellion—going about life in your own way. But the time comes when you have to choose who or what will control you. The choice is yours. Will it be God, your own limited personality, or another imperfect substitute? Once you have chosen to be controlled by God's Spirit, reaffirm your choice every day.

In taking a definite stand for the Lord, Joshua again displayed his spiritual leadership. Regardless of what others decided, Joshua had made a commitment to God, and he was willing to set the example of living by that

decision. The way we live shows others the strength of our commitment to serving God.

Genesis 2:15-17

The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and care for it. But the Lord God gave him this warning: "You may freely eat any fruit in the garden except fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat of its fruit, you will surely die."

God gave Adam responsibility for the garden and told him not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Rather than physically preventing him from eating, God gave Adam a choice, and thus the possibility of choosing wrongly.

God still gives us choices, and we, too, often choose wrongly. These wrong choices may cause us pain, but they can help us learn and grow and make better choices in the future.

Living with the consequences of our choices teaches us to think and choose more carefully.

Why would God place a tree in the garden and then forbid Adam to eat from it?

God wanted Adam to obey, but God gave Adam the freedom to choose. Without choice, Adam would have been like a prisoner, and his obedience would have been hollow.

The two trees provided an exercise in choice, with rewards for choosing to obey and sad consequences for choosing to disobey.

When you are faced with the choice, always choose to obey God.

Lot's character is revealed by his choices

Genesis 13:10-11

Lot took a long look at the fertile plains of the Jordan Valley in the direction of Zoar.

The whole area was well watered everywhere, like the garden of the Lord or the beautiful land of Egypt. Lot chose that land for himself—the Jordan Valley to the east of them. He went there with his flocks and servants and parted company with his uncle Abram.

Lot's character is revealed by his choices. He took the best share of the land even though it meant living near Sodom, a city known for its sin. He was greedy, wanting the best for himself, without thinking about his uncle Abram's needs or what was fair.

Life is a series of choices. We too can choose the best while ignoring the needs and feelings of others. But this kind of choice, as Lot's life shows, leads to problems. When we stop making choices in God's direction, all that is left is to make choices in the wrong direction.

Deciding daily to follow God.

Deut. 30:19-20

"Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, that you and your descendants might live!

Choose to love the Lord your God and to obey him and commit yourself to him, for he is your life. Then you will live long in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

Moses challenged Israel to choose life, to obey God, and therefore continue to experience his blessings. God doesn't force his will on anyone. He lets us decide whether to follow him or reject him.

This decision, however, is a life-or-death matter. God wants us to realize this, for he would like us all to choose life. Daily, in each new situation, we must affirm and reinforce this commitment.

Don't delay making decisions when God gives you all the facts.

Judges 6:37-39

Prove it to me in this way. I will put some wool on the threshing floor tonight. If the fleece is wet with dew in the morning but the ground is dry, then I will know that you are going to help me rescue Israel as you promised."

And it happened just that way. When Gideon got up the next morning, he squeezed the fleece and wrung out a whole bowlful of water.

Then Gideon said to God, "Please don't be angry with me, but let me make one more request. This time let the fleece remain dry while the ground around it is wet with dew."

Was Gideon testing God, or was he simply asking God for more encouragement? In either case, though his motive was right (to obey God and defeat the enemy), his method was less than ideal.

Gideon seems to have known that his requests might displease God (Judges 6:39), and yet he demanded two miracles (Judges 6:37, 39) even after witnessing the miraculous fire from the rock (Judges 6:21).

It is true that to make good decisions, we need facts. Gideon had all the facts, but still he hesitated. He delayed obeying God because he wanted even more proof.

Demanding extra signs was an indication of unbelief. Fear often makes us wait for more confirmation when we should be taking action. Visible signs are unnecessary if they only confirm what we already know is true.

Today the greatest means of God's guidance is his Word, the Bible. Unlike Gideon, we have God's complete, revealed Word. If you want to have more of God's guidance, don't ask for signs; study the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

After seeing the miracle of the wet fleece, why did Gideon ask for another miracle? Perhaps he thought the results of the first test could have happened naturally. A thick fleece could retain moisture long after the sun had dried the surrounding ground.

“Putting out fleeces” is a poor decision-making method. Those who do this put limitations on God. They ask him to fit their expectations.

The results of such experiments are usually inconclusive and thus fail to make us any more confident about our choices. Don't let a “fleece” become a substitute for God's wisdom that comes through Bible study and prayer.

Chapter 2



Decisions have lasting consequences.

Judges 16:21

So the Philistines captured him and gouged out his eyes. They took him to Gaza, where he was bound with bronze chains and made to grind grain in the prison.

Samson, the mighty warrior, became a slave. Rather than kill him, the Philistines preferred to humiliate him by gouging out his eyes and making him grind grain. Samson now had plenty of time to wonder if Delilah's charms were worth spending the rest of his life in humiliation.

Although God did not completely abandon Samson (Judges 16:28-30), he allowed Samson's decision to stand, and the consequences of his decision followed naturally.

We may choose to be close to God or to go our own way, but there are consequences resulting from our choice. Samson didn't choose to be captured, but he chose to be with Delilah, and he could not escape the consequences of his decision.

Blinded and without strength, Samson was taken to Gaza where he would spend the rest of his short life.

Gaza was one of the five capital cities of the Philistines.

Known for its many wells, Gaza was a vital stop along a great caravan route that connected Egypt to the south with Aram to the north. The Philistines probably showed off their prize captive, Samson, to many dignitaries passing through.

Ironically, it was in Gaza that Samson had earlier demonstrated his great strength by uprooting the city gates (Judges 16:1-3). Now he was an example of weakness.

Weigh both positives and negatives decisions.

1 Samuel 8:19-20

But the people refused to listen to Samuel's warning. "Even so, we still want a king," they said. [20] "We want to be like the nations around us. Our king will govern us and lead us into battle."

Samuel carefully explained all the negative consequences of having a king, but the Israelites refused to listen.

When you have an important decision to make, weigh the positives and negatives carefully, considering everyone who might be affected by your choice.

When you want something badly enough, it is difficult to see the potential problems. But don't discount the negatives. Unless you have a plan to handle each one, they will cause you great difficulty later.

Israel was called to be a holy nation, separate from and unique among all others (Leviticus 20:26).

The Israelites' motive in asking for a king was to be like the nations around them. This was in total opposition to God's original plan.

It was not their desire for a king that was wrong, but their reasons for wanting a king.

Often we let others' values and actions dictate our attitudes and behavior.

Have you ever made a wrong choice because you wanted to be like everyone else? Be careful that the values of your friends or "heroes" don't pull you away from what God says is right. When God's people want to be like unbelievers, they are heading for spiritual disaster.

Don't let impatience affect your decisions.

1 Samuel 13:19-20

But Samuel said, "What is this you have done?"

Saul replied, "I saw my men scattering from me, and you didn't arrive when you said you would, and the Philistines are at Micmash ready for battle.

So I said, 'The Philistines are ready to march against us, and I haven't even asked for the Lord's help!' So I felt obliged to offer the burnt offering myself before you came."

Israel was in no position to conquer anyone. The army had no iron weapons, and there were no facilities for turning their tools into weapons. In fact, if an Israelite wanted to sharpen his tools, he had to pay a Philistine blacksmith to do it because the Philistines had a carefully guarded monopoly on iron and blacksmithing.

And they charged high prices for sharpening farm implements.

The Philistines' tight control over the technology, along with their surprise raids, demoralized the Israelites and kept them in subjection.

Against such superiority, the Israelites were at a serious disadvantage. How could they hope to rout their oppressors? Only with God's help.

God wanted to give Israel victory without swords, so they would realize their true source of strength.

Getting support for your decisions

1 Chron. 13:1

David consulted with all his officials, including the generals and captains of his army.

David took time to confer with all his officers. As king, he had ultimate authority and could have given orders on his own, but he chose to involve others in leadership.

Perhaps this is why there was unanimous support for his decisions (1 Chron. 13:1-5).

When we are in charge, it is tempting to make unilateral decisions, pushing through our own opinions. But effective leaders listen carefully to others' opinions, and they encourage others to participate in making decisions.

Of course, we should always consult God first. We can run into big problems if we don't talk to him.

The parallel account of moving the ark (2 Samuel 5; 2 Samuel 6) shows that David's building projects were completed *before* he brought the ark to Jerusalem.

The writer of Chronicles puts the moving of the ark first in order to highlight David's spiritual accomplishments and relationship to God.

Do not let money affect your decisions.

2 Chron. 25:9-10

Amaziah asked the man of God, "But what should I do about the silver I paid to hire the army of Israel?"

The man of God replied, "The Lord is able to give you much more than this!" [10] So Amaziah discharged the hired troops and sent them back to Ephraim. This made them angry with Judah, and they returned home in a great rage.

Amaziah made a financial agreement with Israelite soldiers, offering to pay them to fight for him (2 Chron. 25:6).

But before they could go to battle, Amaziah sent them home with their pay because of the prophet's warning.

Although it cost him plenty, he wisely realized that the money was not worth the ruin the alliance could cause.

How would you have reacted? Money must never stand in the way of making right decisions.

The Lord's favor is priceless, worth more than any amount of money.

Chapter 3

For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Jeremiah 29 verse 11

How prayer helps in making decisions.

Nahum 1:5

In his presence the mountains quake, and the hills melt away; the earth trembles, and its people are destroyed.

God's presence will cause even the earth to recognize his existence and power.

Acts 1:12-13

The apostles were at the Mount of Olives when this happened, so they walked the half-mile back to Jerusalem.

Then they went to the upstairs room of the house where they were staying.

After Christ was taken up into heaven, the disciples immediately returned to Jerusalem and had a prayer meeting. Jesus had said they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit in a few days, so they waited and prayed.

When you face a difficult task, an important decision, or a baffling dilemma, don't rush into the work and just hope it comes out the way it should.

Instead, your first step should be to pray for the Holy Spirit's power and guidance.

Principles for making sound decisions.

Proverbs 18:13-15

What a shame, what folly, to give advice before listening to the facts!
Intelligent people are always open to new ideas. In fact, they look for them.

Proverbs 18:17

Any story sounds true until someone sets the record straight.

In these concise statements, there are three basic principles for making sound decisions:

- (1) Get the facts before answering;
- (2) Be open to new ideas;
- (3) Make sure you hear both sides of the story before judging.

All three principles seek additional information. This is difficult work, but the only alternative is prejudice—judging before getting the facts.

Identify your motives when making decisions.

Proverbs 21:2

People may think they are doing what is right, but the Lord examines the heart.

People can find an excuse for doing almost anything, but God looks behind the excuses to the motives of the heart.

We often have to make choices in areas where the right action is difficult to discern.

We can help ourselves make such decisions by trying to identify our motives first and then asking, "Would God be pleased with my real reasons for doing this?"

God is not pleased when we do good deeds only to receive something in return.

Following Christ requires difficult decisions

Matthew 9:9

As Jesus was going down the road, he saw Matthew sitting at his tax-collection booth. "Come, be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him.

Matthew was a Jew who was appointed by the Romans to be the area's tax collector. He collected taxes from the citizens as well as from merchants passing through town.

Tax collectors were expected to take a commission on the taxes they collected, but most of them overcharged and kept the profits.

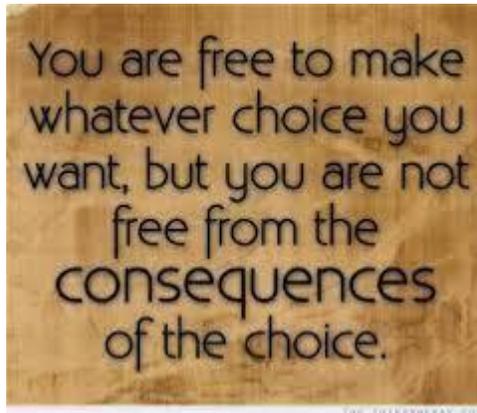
Thus, tax collectors were hated by the Jews because of their reputation for cheating and because of their support of Rome.

When Jesus called Matthew to be one of his disciples, Matthew got up and followed, leaving a lucrative career.

When God calls you to follow or obey him, do you do it with as much abandon as Matthew? Sometimes the decision to follow Christ requires difficult or painful choices.

Like Matthew, we must decide to leave behind those things that would keep us from following Christ.

Chapter 4



Maintain an eternal perspective when making decisions

Matthew 16:26

And how do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul in the process? Is anything worth more than your soul?

When we don't know Christ, we make choices as though this life were all we have. In reality, this life is just the introduction to eternity.

How we live this brief span, however, determines our eternal state. What we accumulate on earth has no value in purchasing eternal life.

Even the highest social or civic honors cannot earn us entrance into heaven. Evaluate all that happens from an eternal perspective, and you will find your values and decisions changing.

John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

Some people are repulsed by the idea of eternal life because their lives are miserable.

But eternal life is not an extension of a person's miserable, mortal life; eternal life is God's life embodied in Christ given to all believers now as a guarantee that they will live forever.

In eternal life there is no death, sickness, enemy, evil, or sin. When we don't know Christ, we make choices as though this life is all we have. In reality, this life is just the introduction to eternity. Receive this new life by faith and begin to evaluate all that happens from an eternal perspective.

To "believe" is more than intellectual agreement that Jesus is God.

It means to put our trust and confidence in him that he alone can save us. It is to put Christ in charge of our present plans and eternal destiny.

Believing is trusting his word as reliable, and relying on him for the power to change.

If you have never trusted Christ, let this promise of everlasting life be yours—and believe.

Taking responsibility for your decisions.

Pilate saw that he wasn't getting anywhere and that a riot was developing. So he sent for a bowl of water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying,

"I am innocent of the blood of this man. The responsibility is yours!"

Only God's forgiveness can make us not guilty.

How peer pressure affects decisions.

Luke 23:13-25

Then Pilate called together the leading priests and other religious leaders, along with the people, and he announced his verdict.

Indecision about Christ is deciding against him.

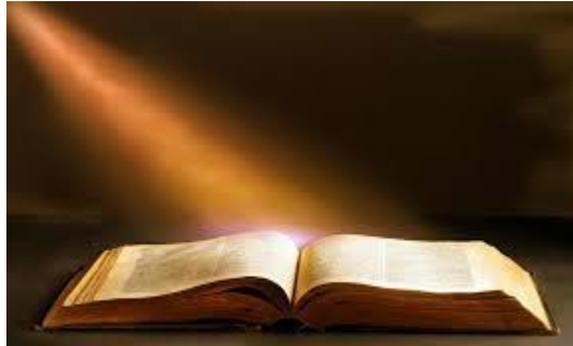
John 3:36

And all who believe in God's Son have eternal life. Those who don't obey the Son will never experience eternal life, but the wrath of God remains upon them."

Jesus says that those who believe in him *have* (not *will have*) everlasting life. To receive eternal life is to join in God's life, which by nature is eternal. Thus, eternal life begins at the moment of spiritual rebirth.

John, the author of this Gospel, has been demonstrating that Jesus is the true Son of God. Jesus sets before us the greatest choice in life. We are responsible to decide today whom we will obey (Joshua 24:15), and God wants us to choose him and life (Deut. 30:15-20). The wrath of God is God's final judgment and rejection of the sinner. To put off the choice is to choose not to follow Christ. Indecision is a fatal decision.

Chapter 5



Criteria for making important decisions.

Acts 1:21-25

"So now we must choose another man to take Judas's place. It must be someone who has been with us all the time that we were with the Lord Jesus from the time he was baptized by John until the day he was taken from us into heaven.

Whoever is chosen will join us as a witness of Jesus' resurrection."

So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. Then they all prayed for the right man to be chosen. "O Lord," they said, "you know every heart. Show us which of these men you have chosen as an apostle to replace Judas the traitor in this ministry, for he has deserted us and gone where he belongs."

There were many who consistently followed Jesus throughout his ministry on earth. The 12 disciples were his inner circle, but others shared the disciples' deep love for and commitment to Jesus.

The apostles had to choose a replacement for Judas Iscariot. They outlined specific criteria for making the choice. When the "finalists" had been chosen, the apostles prayed, asking God to guide the selection process. This gives us a good example of how to proceed when we are making important decisions. Set up criteria consistent with the Bible, examine the alternatives, and pray for wisdom and guidance to reach a wise decision.

Making wise decisions in difficult circumstances.

James 1:5

If you need wisdom—if you want to know what God wants you to do—ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking.

By *wisdom*, James is talking not only about knowledge, but about the ability to make wise decisions in difficult circumstances. Whenever we need wisdom, we can pray to God, and he will generously supply what we need. Christians don't have to grope around in the dark, hoping to stumble upon answers. We can ask for God's wisdom to guide our choices.

Wisdom means practical discernment. It begins with respect for God, leads to right living, and results in increased ability to tell right from wrong. God is willing to give us this wisdom, but we will be unable to receive it if our goals are self-centered instead of God-centered. To learn God's will, we need to read his Word and ask him to show us how to obey it. Then we must do what he tells us.

Getting rid of doubt in decision-making.

James 1:6-8

But when you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to answer, for a doubtful mind is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. People like that should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. They can't make up their minds. They waver back and forth in everything they do.

A mind that wavers is not completely convinced that God's way is best. It treats God's Word like any human advice, and it retains the option to disobey.

It vacillates between allegiance to subjective feelings, the world's ideas, and God's commands. If your faith is new, weak, or struggling, remember that you can trust God. Then be loyal to him.

To stabilize your wavering or doubtful mind, commit yourself wholeheartedly to God.

If you have ever seen the constant rolling of huge waves at sea, you know how restless they are—subject to the forces of wind, gravity, and tide.

Doubt leaves a person as unsettled as the restless waves. If you want to stop being tossed about, rely on God to show you what is best for you. Ask him for wisdom, and trust that he will give it to you. Then your decisions will be sure and solid.

Choose you this day who you will serve

Chapter 6



Biblical Principles should direct my decisions.

Proverbs 2:6

“For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth comes knowledge and understanding.”

Wisdom comes in two ways: it is a God-given gift and also the result of an energetic search. Wisdom’s starting point is God and his revealed Word, the source of “knowledge and understanding” (Proverbs 2:6).

In that sense, wisdom is his gift to us. But he gives it only to those who earnestly seek it.

But because God’s wisdom is hidden from the rebellious and foolish, it takes effort to find it and use it. The pathway to wisdom is strenuous.

When we are on the path, we discover that true wisdom is God’s and that he will guide us and reward our sincere and persistent search.

Proverbs 3:5-6

“Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”

Leaning has the sense of putting your whole weight on something, resting on and trusting in that person or thing.

When we have an important decision to make, we sometimes feel that we can't trust anyone—not even God.

God knows what is best for us. He is a better judge of what we want than even we are! We must trust him completely in every choice we make.

We should not omit careful thinking or belittle our God-given ability to reason; but we should not trust our own ideas to the exclusion of all others. We must not be wise in our own eyes. We should always be willing to listen to and be corrected by God's Word and wise counselors.

Bring your decisions to God in prayer; use the Bible as your guide; and then follow God's leading. He will make your paths straight by both guiding and protecting you.

To receive God's guidance, said Solomon, we must acknowledge God in all our ways. This means turning every area of life over to him.

About a thousand years later, Jesus emphasized this same truth (Matthew 6:33). Look at your values and priorities. What is important to you? In what areas have you not acknowledged him?

What is his advice? In many areas of your life you may already acknowledge God, but it is in the areas where you attempt to restrict or ignore his influence that will cause you grief. Make him a vital part of everything you do; then he will guide you because you will be working to accomplish his purposes.

Every decision should be for the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

God's love must so permeate our motives that all we do will be for his glory. Keep this as a guiding principle by asking, "Is this action glorifying God?" or "How can I honor God through this action?"

2 Corinthians 6:14

"Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?"

In a Roman triumphal procession, the Roman general would display his treasures and captives amidst a cloud of incense burned for the gods. To the victors, the aroma was sweet; to the captives in the parade, it was the smell of slavery and death.

When Christians preach the gospel, it is good news to some and repulsive news to others. Believers recognize the life-giving fragrance of to me

Proverbs 22:7

"The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower becomes the lender's slave."

Does this mean we should never borrow? No, but it warns us never to take on a loan without carefully examining our ability to repay it. A loan we can handle is enabling; a loan we can't handle is enslaving. The borrower must realize that until the loan is repaid, he or she is a servant to the individual or institution that made it.

Dwell on things that are honest and true

Philippians 4:8

"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things."

What we put into our minds determines what comes out in our words and actions. Paul tells us to program our minds with thoughts that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy.

Do you have problems with impure thoughts and daydreams?

Examine what you are putting into your mind through television, books, conversations, movies, and magazines. Replace harmful input with wholesome material. Above all, read God's Word and pray. Ask God to help you focus your mind on what is good and pure. It takes practice, but it can be done.

Chapter 7



Decisions made in haste may be poor decisions.

Proverbs 19:2

“Also it is not good for a person to be without knowledge, and he who makes haste with his feet errs.”

We often move hastily through life, rushing headlong into the unknown. Many people marry without knowing what to expect of their partner or of married life.

Others try illicit sex or drugs without considering the consequences. Some plunge into jobs without evaluating whether they are suitable to that line of work.

Don't rush into the unknown. Be sure you understand what you're getting into and where you want to go before you take the first step. And if it still seems unknown, be sure you are following God.

Faithful completion of mundane tasks is a great accomplishment.

Proverbs 21:5

“The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage, but everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty.”

Faithful completion of mundane tasks is a great accomplishment. Such work is patiently carried out according to a plan. Diligence does not come naturally to most people; it is a result of strong character. Don't look for quick and easy answers. Be a diligent servant of God.

Understanding the reason for my decision

Proverbs 16:2

“All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, but the Lord weighs the motives.”

“All a man's ways seem innocent to him.” People can rationalize anything if they have no standards for judging right and wrong. We can always prove that we are right.

Before putting any plan into action, ask yourself these three questions:

- (1) Is this plan in harmony with God's truth?
- (2) Will it work under real-life conditions?
- (3) Is my attitude pleasing to God?

Proverbs 20:9

“Who can say, ‘I have cleansed my heart, I am pure from my sin?’”

No one is without sin. As soon as we confess our sin and repent, sinful thoughts and actions begin to creep back into our lives. We all need ongoing cleansing, moment by moment.

Thank God he provides forgiveness by his mercy when we ask for it. Make confession and repentance a regular part of your talks with God. Rely on him moment by moment for the cleansing you need.

Chapter 8



Past Experiences inform your present decisions

Proverbs 17:10

“A rebuke goes deeper into one who has understanding than a hundred blows into a fool.”

Proverbs 11:14

“Where there is no guidance the people fall, but in an abundance of counselors there is victory.”

A good leader needs and uses wise advisers. One person’s perspective and understanding is severely limited; he or she may not have all the facts or may be blinded by bias, emotions, or wrong impressions. To be a wise leader at home, at church, or at work, seek the counsel of others and be open to their advice. Then, after considering all the facts, make your decision. (See the chart in Proverbs 29:2.)

Those who separate themselves seek their own desires

Proverbs 18:1

“He who separates himself seeks his own desire. He quarrels against all sound wisdom.”

Proverbs 27:6

“Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.”

Who would prefer a friend’s wounds to an enemy’s kisses?

Anyone who considers the source. A friend who has your best interests at heart may have to give you unpleasant advice at times, but you know it is for your own good.

An enemy, by contrast, may whisper sweet words and happily send you on your way to ruin. We tend to hear what we want to hear, even if an enemy is the only one who will say it. A friend’s advice, no matter how painful, is much better.

A righteous man should never give way to the wicked.

Proverbs 25:26

“Like a trampled spring and a polluted well is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked.”

To “give way to the wicked”, means setting aside your standards of right and wrong.

No one is helped by someone who compromises with the wicked.

Proverbs 10:9

“He who walks in integrity walks securely, but he who perverts his ways will be found out.”

“A righteous man who walks in his integrity have blessed children”

Proverbs 22:1

“A good name is to be more desired than great riches, favor is better than silver and gold.”

Proverbs 11:30

“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who is wise wins souls.”

A wise person is a model of a meaningful life. Like a tree attracts people to its shade, his or her sense of purpose attracts others who want to know how they too can find meaning. Gaining wisdom yourself, then, can be the first step in leading people to God. Leading people to God is important because it keeps us in touch with God while offering others eternal life.

HONESTY AND DISHONESTY

Proverbs tells us plainly that God despises all forms of dishonesty. Not only does God hate dishonesty, but we are told that it works against us—others no longer trust us, and we cannot even enjoy our dishonest gains. It is wiser to be honest because “a righteous man escapes trouble” (Proverbs 12:13).

Call unto me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things that you do not know.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: New Living Bible translation.

Additional comments and charts are taken from:

***Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print**