

Monday **God's Plan for Making Decisions**

You can't escape making decisions. Some are simple; some require a little more thought. Thankfully, God gave us examples of people in the Bible who had to make difficult decisions. Their examples help us to make our decisions well.

1. Read Matthew 27:3-5 – What did Judas Iscariot do after he realized the consequences of betraying Jesus?
2. Read Acts 1:15-22 – Judas was one of Jesus' Disciples. After Judas died, there was one less Disciple. According to verse 22, what did Peter say needed to happen?
3. Was the decision whether they should have another Disciple, or was the decision who the new Disciple should be?
4. Was ordaining another person to be a Disciple a big decision or a little one?
5. How did Peter know that this was the decision that needed to be made?
6. This first step in making an important decision is identifying the decision that needs to be made. What big decision are you facing now or might be facing soon?
7. Accurately defining the question will help greatly in making an informed decision. Peter saw the need for another helper. He knew what the need was. That guided him into knowing what decision needed to be made. How can you be sure you know exactly what needs to be decided?
8. What could happen if you make a big decision without really understanding the decision you are making?

Don't skip over this step lightly. It's important! It will guide the rest of your decision-making process.

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After you have clearly identified the decision that needs to be made, you are ready to examine the possibilities. You may have only two options, or you may have many. This is the time to examine each one.

1. Read Acts 1:15-23 – According to verse 15, how many people were assembled together?
2. Judas' death left a vacancy that needed to be filled. Obviously, a person who is to be a Disciple needs to be saved. According to verse 15, how many people were assembled together?
3. 120 is a lot of possibilities! The chances of making the best decision in this situation are not very good. The consequences of ordaining an unqualified Disciple at this point could be catastrophic. The church was in its infant stage. A mistake at this point could have far-reaching consequences. Step three in making a major decision is to analyze the consequences of all options. What could have happened if they made a bad choice?
4. According to verse 21-22, what qualifications did Peter put on the choice?
5. It would be crucial to find someone who has proven himself to be faithful and agreeable. For example, what could happen if you choose to attend a college that is not agreeable to what you have been taught from the Bible?
6. Read Acts 6:3 – What would the consequences have been for choosing deacons who were not qualified to serve?

Every decision you make has consequences. Be sure to take the time to figure out what would and could happen for whatever decision you make. A little planning could save you a lot of grief.

Wednesday
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The next step in making important decisions is to spend time in prayer and fasting. Prayer is simply talking to God, telling Him what is on your heart and mind. Fasting is voluntarily going without food and has many purposes. One of them is to allow you extra time to spend in prayer. Let's look at an example of that in the New Testament.

1. Read Acts 13:1-3 – What important decision needed to be made here?
2. The Holy Spirit led the people of the church to send out Barnabas and Saul to be missionaries. To send someone out as an official representative of a church is no small decision! According to verse 3, what action did the church take before they decided that it was right to send them out?
3. All throughout the Bible, fasting is associated with prayer, especially in times when there is a big decision to make. Read Ezra 8:21 – What does this verse teach about fasting?
4. Why do you think fasting is so important?
5. What big decision are you facing now or might be facing soon?
6. What big decision is our church facing?
7. How could prayer and fasting together make a difference in making the right decisions?
8. The church ended up sending out Barnabas and Saul. Do you think they made the right decision?

Both prayer and fasting are activities for believers that require much discipline. As you practice them regularly, they will come more easily.

Thursday
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The next step in making good decisions is to ask God for wisdom.

1. Read James 1:5-7 – Verse 5 starts with the phrase “If any of you lack wisdom...” If you need to make a big decision, do you think the rest of this verse applies to you?
2. If you do lack wisdom, what does James instruct you to do?
3. James says that God gives wisdom to everyone liberally. What does that mean?
4. What does it mean that God does not upbraid us for asking?
5. What promise comes to those who ask for wisdom?
6. According to verse 6, how must you ask?
7. To what does James compare a person who wavers in his faith?
8. According to verse 7, will God give wisdom to people who waver in their faith?
9. Will God necessarily answer and give wisdom immediately?
10. What big decision are you facing now or might be facing soon?
11. Have you asked God for wisdom to make the right choice?
12. Read Ecclesiastes 2:26 – To whom does God give wisdom?

God is wisdom. He knows everything from beginning to end. He knows the best way for you to take. He wants to help you. He is ready and able to help you with your decisions. All you need to do is ask in faith that He will give you the wisdom you need.

Friday
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God has spelled out his plan for making decisions in His Word, the Bible. We will look at the next two steps today. After you ask God for wisdom, look for Bible principles to help you.

1. Read II Peter 1:3-4 – What has God given us that pertains to life and Godliness?
2. According to verse 3, by what does He give us those things?
3. According to verse 3, through what do we receive these things?
4. By what do we gain knowledge about Jesus Christ?
5. According to verse 4, by the things that Christ has given us that pertain to life and Godliness and by His exceeding great and precious promises, we are partakers of what?
6. If God has given us everything that pertains to life, and it is in His Word, can you find something to help you with the decision you have to make?
7. What big decision are you facing now or might be facing soon?
8. Who else in the Bible faced a similar situation?
9. The next step is to commit your situation to God. Read Proverbs 16:3 – What is the benefit of committing your way to God?
10. What does it mean to commit your way to God?

The people whose lives are recorded in the Bible are no different than we are. They faced the same things we face today. Learn from their example, whether good or bad. Commit the way of your life to God, and He will establish your thoughts, making it possible for you to make the very best decision.

Saturday
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The next step in making important decisions is to get advice from several Godly people who know you well.

1. Read Proverbs 11:14 and 24:6 – Why is it important to get advice from many people?
2. Read I Kings 12:6-9 – Why is it important to get counsel from Godly people?
3. Different people see different situations differently. They may see things that you don't or might never consider. What could be the danger of not getting advice before you make a major decision?
4. Somewhere along the way, you will probably be considering marriage. Why would it be smart for you to get other Godly people's advice before you get married?
5. Somewhere along the way, you will probably be considering dating someone. Why would it be smart for you to get other Godly people's advice before you get emotionally attached?
6. Read Proverbs 12:5 and 12:15 – What do these verses teach about getting advice from Godly people?
7. What big decision are you facing now or might be facing soon?
8. From whom can you get good, Godly advice?

God places people in our lives for a purpose. Don't waste an invaluable resource by not asking them for their advice. Consider it well before you make your final decision!

Sunday

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There are two final principles that God gives for making good decisions. The next is to make the decision in faith, trusting God's leading in your life.

1. Read Psalm 37:23-25 – What does God do to the steps of a good man?
2. If you are living right and have done all you can do to make a responsible decision, is there really any worry that you will make the wrong decision?
3. Why or why not?
4. The final step in making a decision is to trust that God will see you through your decision and provide for you every step of the way. Read I Thessalonians 5:24 – How does this verse describe God?
5. If God calls you or leads you to make a particular decision, what will He also do?
6. The word for “do” in verse 24 gives the idea that God will act rightly or carry out that which He led you to do. That means all you really need to do is be obedient, and He will take care of the rest of the details.
7. What big decision are you facing now or might be facing soon?
8. If you have done all the previous steps, in what direction is God leading you?

Trust God that He knows what He is doing and that He will take care of you. We walk by faith not by sight. Step out in faith that God will guide you in your decision. Do all you can do and trust God to open and close the appropriate doors as He leads you.