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## Choose Wisely

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Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

# Choose Wisely

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God wants us to have a “wise” heart. Knowledge and understanding are not enough. They must be applied correctly to our situation so God will be pleased with our choices. Only then will our life truly honor Him.

“We have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way...” - Colossians 1:9-10

Sometimes we make the wrong decision because of ignorance. We chose without the right knowledge or understanding of the matter at hand. But there are other times when we clearly understand what is right, but choose to do something different anyway.

➤ *Can you think of a situation where you clearly understood the truth but then deliberately chose to do something different?*

## **Do you ever wonder why God has given us the freedom to choose our own destiny?**

It is hard to imagine God, Supreme Authority of the universe, granting us the right to choose against His desires. And yet, He has chosen to give us this right of self-determination. By giving us this freedom, our decisions of obedience have value. But, choosing our way also has consequences.

## **Do you ever wonder why God permits us to choose things that are contrary to His will?**

Before God ever created Lucifer, He knew about the rebellion that would follow. He knew the pain and suffering that would result. He knew the supreme sacrifice He would need to make for His purposes to be fulfilled. And yet, He was willing to give Lucifer and mankind the right to choose. Somehow the end result would be worth the problems and enormous sacrifice.

## **Do you ever wonder what your life would be like today if you had made better choices?**

## **Your decisions *determine* your future.**

### **Every day we choose**

- what we will think
- what we will say
- what we will do

What we think shapes what we say and what we say influences what we do.

“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.” – Galatians 6:7-8

The decisions we make today become the building blocks of our future.

➤ *Are you choosing to think with a renewed mind or with the world's deceptive philosophies?*

➤ *Are you choosing to speak words that build or words that destroy?*

➤ *Are you choosing to do acts of righteousness or deeds of darkness?*

God has given us the freedom to choose but He has not given us freedom from the consequences. We need to choose wisely because we are choosing our future.

There are five principles for making wise choices that lead to God's best.

### **1. Choose wisely by using God's truth in reasoning.**

#### **Good decisions are based on sound reasoning.**

However, meticulous reasoning with the wrong input still results in wrong conclusions...

- Conclusions which we assume to be factual.
- Conclusions which will direct our actions.

A computer can make all the right calculations and still produce the wrong answer if the original input was faulty.

In Romans 12:2 we are told, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is--his good, pleasing, and perfect will.”

Thinking with a renewed mind is absolutely essential for wise decision making. When our decisions are based on God’s truth, the result will prove to be in harmony with God’s desires. That is why it is so important for us to learn how to focus on God’s perspective.

Perspective/Perception > Beliefs/Values > Decision-making > Quality of Life

Our perspective on life and perception of the world around us form our values and beliefs. Our decision-making is usually influenced by our belief system. Small decisions we make in our daily living shape our life and determine the quality of life.

**> *Are your decisions based on God’s perspective of reality or on what the world promotes as truth?***

We choose wisely when our decisions are based on what God says in His Word-not what the world claims is reality.

## **2. Choose wisely *by listening to the Holy Spirit.***

**The Holy Spirit directs us through our human spirit.**

**The Hierarchy of our being.**

The body is like a chariot.	Our body is to be a servant to the soul
The soul is like the horses.	Our soul is to be a servant to the spirit.
The spirit is like the charioteer.	Our spirit is to be a servant to God.

**Within our soul, our will is the decision-making center.**

That is where we choose. But what we decide is determined by what we permit to be the dominant influence in our decision-making process.

The Holy Spirit communicates with us through our spirit. But we can only hear His inner voice when we quiet our minds and emotions. However, this is not natural to us. First, we must find an environment that is free from noisy distractions. Then we must eliminate mental distractions and preoccupation. We will not discern the Spirit’s leading if our mind is racing. And finally, we must quiet our emotions and yield our will to God. As we wait before the Lord in this quiet state, our will may

sense direction through the intuition of our spirit or through the insights of our renewed mind. Fulfilling these preparatory steps does not guarantee the Spirit will speak to us at that time. It merely puts us in a receptive state should He choose to. Apart from this discipline, we will continue to follow the voices of human reasoning and/or fickle emotions. And invariably, we will choose based on our fleshly desires.

In 1 John 2:6 we are told, Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did.

“Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to Him as instruments of righteousness.” – Romans 6:13

***➤ Are you being sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s direction or making decisions based on what your mind, feelings or senses are promoting?***

### **3. Choose wisely *by bringing your will into harmony with God.***

In the beginning, there was only one will in the universe—it was the will of God. Peace, joy, and harmony were everywhere.

#### **God wants us to choose His will and purposes. Self-will always leads to destruction.**

You said in your heart, “I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.” But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit.  
– Isaiah 14:13-15

#### **We will never be greater than what God has planned for us. We can only be less.**

It is not possible to achieve a higher position or role in life than that which God has determined for you before creation. Self-promotion and self-exaltation will never lead us to God’s best.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

“You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman.

“For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be

like God, knowing good and evil.”

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. – Genesis 3:1-6

***Disobedience and independence from God do not bring fulfillment— it brings judgment.***

#### **4. Choose wisely *by* making decisions *with* your new identity.**

**Our decisions are consistent with our self-image.**

How you see yourself determines the choices you make.

But when you were spiritually born again God radically changed you.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” – 2 Corinthians 5:17

At the time of your spiritual birth, you were transformed into a totally new person with a new nature. On the outside, you still look the same but on the inside, God gave you a new identity in Christ. It’s like being adopted. You may not feel any different after the adoption papers have been signed, but in reality, you have become part of a new family, with new legal rights and a different destiny. That is what happened to you spiritually. As a result, you must learn who you are now in Christ so you may make choices consistent with this spiritual transformation. It is foolish to live in the past by continuing to make decisions based on your old identity. What would a child of God choose? What would a righteous saint choose? What would a member of the body of Christ choose? What would an ambassador for God choose?

“You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.” – Ephesians 4:20-24

“Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature...You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived...Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being

renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.” – Colossians 3:5-10

“...clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.” – Romans 13:14

In order to live out your new nature, you must consciously disown those characteristics which are inconsistent with who you are now in Christ and by faith, embrace the traits of your new identity. Don't subconsciously continue to make decisions with a self-image that is rooted in the old nature.

***Choose wisely by acknowledging your new nature and make decisions that are consistent with your new identity in Christ.***

## **5. Choose wisely *by committing yourself to God's priorities.***

**God has given you new priorities that are consistent with your new nature.**

God has given us spiritual priorities for decision making that point us in the right direction for life. These four priorities are like a spiritual compass that will lead us to eternal significance and fulfillment.

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God...” – Colossians 3:1-4

We've all heard the saying, “He's so heavenly minded, he's no earthly good. But in reality, we are usually so earthly minded, we are no heavenly good.”

**Four spiritual priorities point out the direction that leads to God's best.**

◆ Commit yourself to pursuing intimacy with God.

“Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.” – Matthew 22:37-38

◆ Commit yourself to becoming Christlike in your character.

“For from the very beginning God decided that those who come to Him... should become like His Son.” – Romans 8:29 (TLB)

◆ Commit yourself to building up one another in Christ.

“Why is it that He gives us these special abilities to do certain things best? It is that God’s people will be equipped to do better work for Him building up the Church, the body of Christ, to a position of strength and maturity.” - Ephesians 4:12 (TLB)

✦ Commit yourself to being God’s ambassador to those who don’t know Him.

“We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God.” - 2 Corinthians 5:20

➤ ***How do your life goals reflect these spiritual priorities?***

God has given us the freedom to choose but He has not given us freedom from the consequences.