

Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study - March 24, 2022

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Title: "When You Need to Make a Decision" - Part I

Subtitle: "The Deciding Factor"

Scripture Reference: Jeremiah 29:11, 13

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."

I. Introduction

A. Former President Ronald Reagan says that he learned the need for decision making early in life. An aunt had taken him to a cobbler to have a pair of shoes made for him. The shoemaker asked young Reagan "Do you want a square toe or a round toe?"

B. Young Reagan hemmed and hawed. So, the cobbler said, "Come back in a day or two and let me know what you want."

C. A few days later, the shoemaker saw Reagan on the street and asked what he had decided about the shoes. "I still haven't made up my mind," Reagan answered. "Very well," said the cobbler.

D. When Reagan received the shoes, he was shocked to see that one shoe had a square toe and the other a round toe.

E. "Looking at those shoes every day taught me a lesson," Reagan said years later. "If you don't make your own decisions, somebody else will make them for you!"

F. God wants to help us make the right decisions. To find His will, we must obey what He tells us to do.

G. Where there is a will, there is also a won't. We usually want to obey the parts of God's will that we like. For the parts we don't

like, we pray, "Thy will be changed" rather than "Thy will be done."

Point: In order to make the right choices, we must believe that God has the very best planned for us.

H. God's will is not revealed as a blueprint that we see all at once, but as a scroll that is unrolled a little at a time.

I. God does this so that we will learn to trust Him day by day. Jesus told His disciples "**I have yet many things to say unto you but ye cannot bear them now.**" (John 16:12)

J. Because God loves us so much, he doesn't disclose any more than we can handle. He reveals His will one step at a time through the decisions we make every day.

K. Because God speaks in various ways (but don't forget that today, He speaks primarily to us through His Son (in the Word of God) [Heb. 1:2]). However, it would be wise for us to examine the other different ways He has spoken to His people because, He will probably choose similar ways to speak to us.

L. Several guidelines need to be considered when making a decision. Different ones will apply to various situations you encounter, so you must choose those that best fit your circumstances.

II. Guideline #1 - Consult God's Word (Always)

"Forever O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path, Thy word is truth." (Psalm 119:89, 105; John 17:17).

A. When we come to a crossroad in our lives, we must decide which road to take.

B. In the movie The Wizard of Oz, Dorothy followed the yellow brick road easily until she came to a crossroads. Then she didn't know which way to go because the road split in several directions.

C. A scarecrow in the cornfield next to the road offered her

advice. The only problem was - he didn't have a brain!

D. What do we do when there is no more yellow brick road to follow? Anytime we come to a crossroads, we need something to point us in the right direction.

E. The Bible, The Word of God is the first place we must go to find the direction we need. It is the clearest revelation we have of God's will; therefore, it is the most important.

F. God's Word speaks to us concerning salvation, morality, marriage, divorce, attitudes, and numerous other topics. It also gives examples of how others made decisions and what happened as a result.

Point: The decisions we make should never contradict God's Word!

Comment: All of the following guidelines are based upon Holy Scripture, God's Word.

III. Guideline #2 - Pray for God's Wisdom

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask God, that giveth to all men liberally (i.e., generously), and upbraideth not (i.e., without reproach); and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering (not doubting). For he that wavereth (doubts) is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." (James 1:5-7).

A. If we need wisdom, we should ask God. He always knows what to do when we don't. If we don't understand that principle, we will panic and try to figure out what to do on our own. But when we ask God for wisdom, He gives it generously.

B. Why, then, does it seem like God sometimes doesn't answer? It is because some people will doubt that He will answer.

C. The problem is not on the giving end; it is on the receiving end: "((God)) that giveth to all men liberally (generously) ... For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord."

Comment: The problem is not in the shipping department. It's in the receiving department.

D. Your local radio station is sending out radio signals right now! You don't hear anything because you need a radio to pick up the signals. The station gives out the signals, while the radio receives them.

E. Two things are involved in receiving God's wisdom signals:

1. **First**, we must have a radio. The Holy Spirit who indwells all believers acts as the radio receiver within us.

a. He is the One who knows the thoughts of God.

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save (except) the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God:" (1 Corinthians 2:11-12).

2. **Second**, we must listen by turning to the right station. We must "tune in" to what God is saying.

a. We can't keep turning the dial every two seconds because we don't hear anything.

b. When we pray for wisdom and thoughts enter our minds, we shouldn't quickly dismiss them as being our own. (Spiritual discernment is necessary.)

Comment: God will speak His wisdom as thoughts and ideas in our minds. But remember the words of our Lord - "**My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.**" (John 10:27).

IV. **Guideline #3 - Gain Insight Through Wise Counselors**

"For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of

counselors there is safety." (Proverbs 24:6)

A. Sometimes we should seek advice from other people. We don't need to ask advice on every decision, but we do on major decisions.

B. Waging war falls into the category of major decision - making. It would not be wise to choose our friends to be our advisor simply because we like them.

C. Our counselors need to be qualified before they should be allowed to advise us. Here are some suggestions on how you can select qualified people as your advisors.

1. **Choose godly Counselors** - "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly (i.e., the wicked), ... (Psalm 1:1a)

Comments:

- 1) It is extremely important that our advisors love God and have a personal relationship with Him.
- 2) This will be evident by good fruit in their lives. Godly counselors are stable examples of godly living. They put into practice what they preach and teach and have a track record of making good decisions.

2. **Choose wise and knowledgeable Counselors.**

"For by wise counsel thou shalt make (wage our own) war."
(Prov. 24:6a).

Comments:

- 1) An advisor should not be the nearest warm body that has an opinion.
- 2) We must choose someone with knowledge concerning the problem we are dealing with. It will help if that person is experienced and

has already traveled down the road we are about to walk.

3. Choose Caring Counselors

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." (Prov. 27:6)

Comments:

- 1) The wounds of a friend are those truthful statements that may hurt, but we need to hear them.
- 2) The kisses of an enemy are insincere and deceitful statements that point us down the road of destruction.
- 3) Some people don't want to see you succeed. Others like to hand out advice but aren't concerned about the consequences if we follow their counsel.

Point: We must choose people to advise us who truly care about what happens to us down the road.

V. Guideline #4 - God Will Speak to Your Heart

A. When we ask Jesus to save us, he enters in and dwells in our hearts (Eph. 3:17). He can now direct us from inside (because we are recipients of the Holy Spirit) and lead us into His will in two ways:

1. First, He will put desires in your heart. **"Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."** (Psalm 37:4).

- (a) The Lord will put the desires in our hearts so that we want what He wants. This doesn't mean that everything we want is His will.
- (b) It means that when we are submitted to doing His

will, He will prompt our heart in the direction we should go.

2. The Lord will put peace in your hearts. "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, ... (Col. 3:15).

B. If we have no peace in our hearts, God may be saying that what we are asking for is not in His will, or we may simply need to have some of our questions answered. Once we have received the answers, peace should come.

C. If we still have no peace after receiving the answers, our decision is probably not His will, or the timing is wrong.

Point: It is not wise to make decisions if we are experiencing turmoil inside our hearts.

D. This lack of peace may be the Holy Spirit warning us that what we are desiring isn't right for us.

Point: The peace of God in our hearts will point us to the things that are in His will.

VI. Guideline #5 - Gather All The Facts About The Decision

"For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, whether he have sufficient to finish it?" (Luke 14:28)

A. It sounds pretty obvious that we should gather all of the facts before we make a decision, but you would be surprised how many people don't do this.

B. Some people think it is a lack of faith to see if they can afford an item before they purchase it. But Jesus is the One who told us to count the cost. Here is what He said to do:

1. Sit down

- a. He didn't say, "First, rush to do it while you are still on

- an emotional high. He told us to first sit down because people can get excited about building something.
- b. Adrenaline and emotions can eliminate common sense (which is not too common nowadays).
 - c. Many people become very excited about buying a new car without thinking about the payments, taxes, and insurance.
 - d. Soon after the purchase, the emotions settle-down, but the constant reminder of those payments every month puts the owner in financial bondage.

Point: Sitting down settles our emotions so that we can think clearly!

2. **Calculate the cost.**

- a. Get out a calculator, a pencil, and a piece of paper, because you need to do some figuring.
- b. Questions you should also be asking and honestly answering:
 - (1) Do we have enough resources to finish the job?
 - (2) If not, then we shouldn't start. Either it shouldn't be done, or it should be done at a later time.

Comment: Decisions should not be based upon the amount of our excitement but on the wisdom of God and the amount of the resources that we have. ((I know that God will provide but let us not be foolish!))

3. "Counting the Cost" means:

- Do all your homework before the decision is made.
- Collect all the information you can about the decision.
- Explore all possible avenues and options.
- Look at the situation from every angle.
- Consider all possible outcomes of the decision.
- Leave no stone unturned. Check out everything.

- C. If we do all of these things, we will be able to evaluate the long-term big picture rather than how the situation looks at the

present moment.

If the Lord allows, we will continue this lesson in Part II of our next study session together. Thank you for your participation.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, **think on these things.**" (Phil. 4:8)

Jude 3

Pastor Austin