

Sometime ago, I came across this statement that I found to not only be true in our world, but also reflect what the Word of God teaches: “It’s our decisions and not our conditions that determine our future; and it’s our choices that show who we are, far more than our talents.”

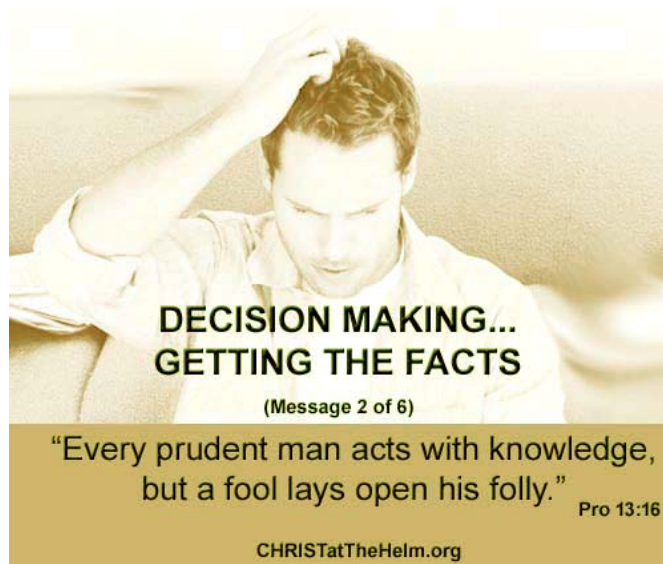
In other words, each and every choice we make in life has an effect on our future. It can either bless us, or translate into trials and challenges. That’s why, whenever making decisions, we must always bring God in the equation, ensuring the path we choose will honor Him.

Paul in Rom 8:6-7 said, “For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.” Obviously, we must place God at the very center of our decision process, and not make decisions foolishly based on feelings.

In Mat 6:33 Jesus said, “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.” This is meant to ask for God’s guidance in everything we do in life, especially in making important decisions.

Will we seek and trust God to lead us in the proper direction in making life’s decisions, or let our feelings and emotions control us?

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The business world teaches and demands that we get facts in the process of making decisions, so as to profit the enterprise. Yet, more often than not, we see people making decisions in their lives without getting all the facts. When we don't take time to get facts, we essentially react with emotions and end up making knee jerk decisions resulting in trials.

Jesus in Luke 14:28 illustrated this principle; "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has *enough* to finish *it*." In other words, how can we make decisions, especially important ones that carry a greater responsibility, unless we know all the facts, and are prepared to carry out our decision based on truth?

Proverbs 21:5 illustrates this important process: "The plans of the diligent *lead* surely to plenty, but *those of everyone who is hasty*, surely to poverty." These principles apply in every day life as well as our relationship to God. In essence, decisions made without getting the facts in all aspects of life equates to distrust God's ability and power to lead us, therefore denying His lordship over our life. Shouldn't we, as believers, rely on God's principles in His Word to lead us into our decision making?

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We've all heard the term "One Man Show," and most probably have encountered such people. They don't take advice from anyone, and go through life standing alone in their beliefs, attitudes and decisions.

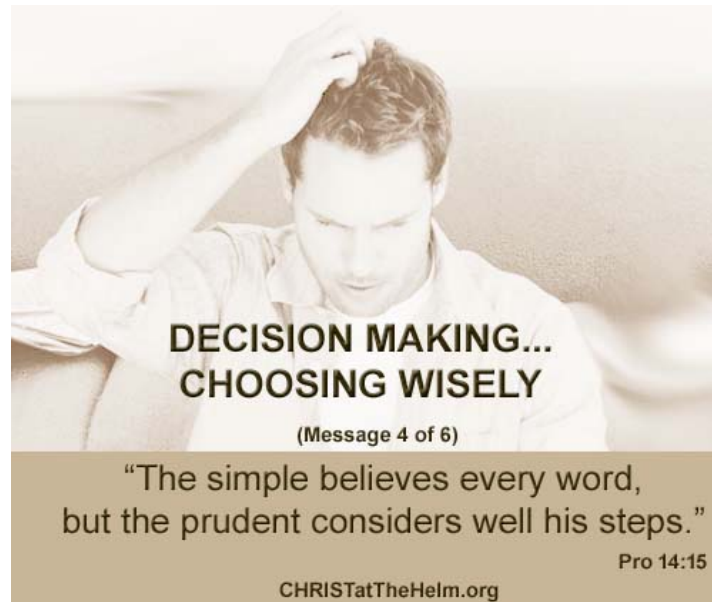
Prov 11:14 describes what we can expect when we rely on ourselves exclusively rather than seek counsel: "Where *there is* no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors *there is* safety." Prov 12:15 adds, "The way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel *is* wise."

In essence, it comes down to not only getting facts to help us make life's decisions, but as well seek counsel from knowledgeable and spiritually focused believers. This then allows us to make choices that will both be wise and honor God in the process.

Who are those who can be a reliable source of counsel? First and above all, God's Word is our guide to discern whether it will honor God or not. Then experienced and true dedicated believers are a good source to help us navigate the process.

When all is said and done, if we claim to live for God in Christ, this is what must prevail, as stated in Prov 19:21; "Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails." Who prevails in our life?

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## DECISION MAKING... CHOOSING WISELY

(Message 4 of 6)

“The simple believes every word,  
but the prudent considers well his steps.”

Pro 14:15

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Aren't we all at times drawn to take the easy way out in life? In other words, whatever is easiest to get whatever we are seeking, has a way to draw us so as to fulfill our desires. The danger is also be compounded if we fellowship with people whose thoughts and life's attitudes are with the world.

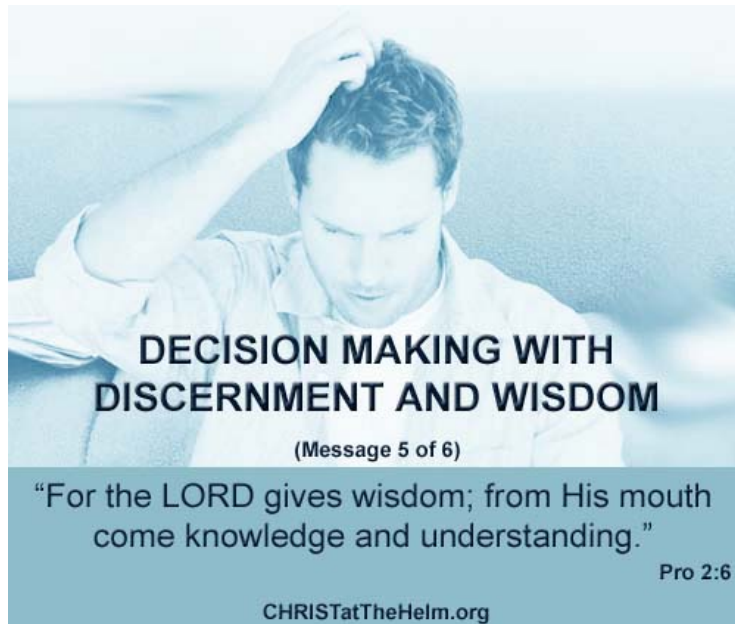
Prov 13:20 says, “He who walks with wise *men* will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.” Additionally, the apostle Paul put it this way in 2Cor 6:14: “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?”

The reality is that we will always be influenced in life, especially when making decisions, by the people we keep company with. Why? Because those people have a tendency to influence us into espousing their beliefs and behavior. There's a saying that goes like this: “Tell me who you hang around with and I'll tell you who you are.”

That's why we are enjoined by the Word of God to seek instruction so we aren't fooled. Pro 10:17 says, “He who keeps instruction *is in* the way of life, but he who refuses correction goes astray.”

Whom do we keep company with and trust for making important decisions?

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There are three things I ask the Lord for each day; discernment, so I can know right from wrong; knowledge and understanding of His Word, so I can know how to live the path of righteousness; and wisdom, so I discipline myself to apply God’s principles to my life.

While it is tempting at times to go with the flow, and follow the world because it is the easy way out, it however comes with a price. The reason making decisions in life requires wisdom, and as James 1:5 says, “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.” In truth, if we seek God’s wisdom and discernment, He is faithful to guide and inspire us to walk the right path for our life.

How can we define God’s wisdom? Again, James 3:17 says, “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”

What is the core source of wisdom for Christians? Joshua 1:8 puts it as clear as crystal: “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it.”

How often do we draw from it?

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Have we ever made decisions that we lived to regret? Do we at times impatiently fail to trust the Lord whenever facing challenges, need to make important decisions, or even when facing serious trials? What does it mean to trust God?

Prov 3:5-6 describes how to: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” As believers, we confess Christ as Savior and Lord and proclaim we trust God for our eternal salvation. Then, how can we say we trust God for eternity, yet fail to trust Him entirely for this limited life?

Paul in Col 2:6-7 said: “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.” Then, Psalm 37:23-24 adds: “The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the LORD upholds *him with* His hand.”

In other words, we must trust God in everything and follow His Word, as God is always present to guide, help and support us.” Why? “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” (2 Cor 5:7) Do we?

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