



10 simple steps in making Wise Decisions (I'm encouraged because of my Choices)

Pastor Daren L. Barron | March 5, 2023

Be very clear about who your real guide is; whoever has control of your heart has control over you.

- Is it going to be Holy Spirit or spirit of the world?

Proverbs 3:1-7 New International Version

1 **My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart,** 2 for they will prolong your life many years and bring you peace and prosperity. 3 Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. 4 Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man. 5 **Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;** 6 in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. 7 **Do not be wise in your own eyes;** fear the Lord and shun evil.

Proverbs 4:23 New Living Translation

Guard your heart above all else for it determines the course of your life.

When you know who your real guide is, Pray for guidance

Proverbs 28:26 Amplified Bible

He who trusts confidently in his own heart is a [dull, thickheaded] fool, But he who walks in [skillful and godly] wisdom will be rescued.

James 1:5 Amplified Bible

If any of you lacks wisdom [to guide them through a decision or circumstance], they are to ask of [our benevolent] God, who gives to everyone generously and without rebuke or blame, and it will be given to them.

- Don't just depend upon your opinion or intuition. None of us are 100 percent right all the time. Often intuition leads us to the wrong decision. As James 1:5 tells us, we need to ask God for wisdom to make the right decisions.

Ask for advice

Proverbs 24:6 Amplified Bible

For by wise guidance you can wage your war, And in an abundance of [wise] counselors there is victory and safety.

- Talk to someone who has taken a similar risk. It's good to learn from experience, but it's even better to learn from the experience of others. You don't need to make all the mistakes on your own. You simply don't have time. Review a concept called best practices.
- In this step, learn to ask good questions. Be prepared to write down those questions when you think about them, so you can ask them when the opportunity comes. One of the greatest blessings of a mentor is to discover a sincere mentee.

Get the facts; know the Truth!

Proverbs 4:7 Amplified Bible

"The beginning of wisdom is: Get [skillful and godly] wisdom [it is preeminent]! And with all your acquiring, get understanding [actively seek spiritual discernment, mature comprehension, and logical interpretation].

- Get all the information you can to help you make the right choice. Read a book, take a class, watch a seminar, or talk to an expert. Knowledge matters more than enthusiasm. Uneducated enthusiasm typically produces a non-delivered expectation.
- Study the difference between facts and truth.

John 14:6 New International Version

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Setting goals helps you avoid unwanted distractions

- Set your goals - You can't chase two rabbits at the same time. You must choose which goal to pursue! You don't have time to do everything. Pick what you want to focus on and do it.

James 1:5-8 New Living Translation

5 If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.
 6 But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. **Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind.**
 7 Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.
 8 Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.

- Never take risks just to prove yourself. Make sure you have a clear-cut purpose for every risk. Be like the trapeze artist: Don't let go of what you're holding onto until you know what you want to reach for. You don't need to have the goal within reach, but you need to know what that goal is.

Count the Cost

Proverbs 20:25 Living Bible

It is foolish and rash to make a promise to the Lord before counting the cost.

Proverbs 20:25 Contemporary English Version

Don't fall into the trap of making promises to God before you think!

- Take a calculated risk. Every risk has a cost. You should know what that cost is ahead of time. Asking these three questions will help you come to grips with what it is.
- Is it necessary? Can you reach your goal any other way?
- What will it cost? Your risk will cost you something in money, time, reputation, and so on. Identify what that cost is.
- Is it worth it? Will the potential profit outweigh that cost?...benefit - cost ratio

Plan for Problems

John 16:33 Amplified Bible

I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace and confidence. **In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration;** but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. **[I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.]**

- You will encounter problems. Something will go wrong. Planning for those problems means you will meet them head on. Looking ahead for potential problems isn't being negative, it's being proactive.
- **Pay appropriate attention to your problems...problems need Faith (strategy) not worry to solve them.**

James 1:2-5 New Living Translation

2 Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. 3 **For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.** 4 **So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.** 5 If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.

Understand how your emotions (fear, happy, sad, angry, excitement) work

- Use your emotions don't let your emotions use you!

2 Corinthians 5:7 Amplified Bible

for we walk by faith, not by sight [living our lives in a manner consistent with our confident belief in God's promises]—

- The experience of emotions can be great or they can be terrible. Emotions can inspire the best song, painting or poem; elevate athletes; inspire creativity for inventions or simply to do your best work. However, emotions can do the opposite as well: crush dreams, destroy relationships, and steal your

joy. When making decisions, it is imperative that you use your emotions (as fuel) and not allow your emotions to use you.

- Face your fears (Proverbs 14:26). Most of us—particularly leaders—don't want to admit we're afraid. We believe it makes us weak. But fear means you're alive. It's a warning light. Only fools are never afraid.
- Only God can help you face your fears. You must do what you fear. You can't cope with fear any other way. Courage is not the absence of fear; it is moving ahead despite your fear.

Be Still

Psalm 46:10 Amplified Bible

"Be still and know (recognize, understand) that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations! I will be exalted in the earth."

Psalm 4:4 New King James Version

Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. Selah

- This is an evening prayer, given by David in a distressing situation. Night often magnifies our problems, but it also provides time to reflect. When people are causing us trouble, this verse counsels to be angry and sin not. Instead, while lying awake, we should look deep within our own heart. What are our temptations and struggles? Where do we need to trust and surrender more? The call to be still is a call to be silent and examine our own heart before God.

Exodus 14:14 New International Version

The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."

- After the Israelites left Egypt, they became trapped between the Red Sea and the approaching Egyptian army. In their fear, they cried out against Moses, complaining, "It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!" Moses told them not to be afraid because the Lord would fight for them; they needed only to be still. The Hebrew word for "be still" doesn't mean inaction—it means to be quiet. They were to stop complaining but get moving as the entire nation walked through the Red Sea.

Go For It!!!!

- Go for it (Proverbs 16:3). At some point, you need to stop talking and develop strategy and start acting.
- I know many people who have big dreams for how God will use them, but they never take that last step of faith. Don't be like that. Take a step toward what God has called you to do.
- God never meant for you to live a life of safety. Your only ultimate security is in Jesus. To be fully alive is to take wise risks to achieve your goals.
- Are you ready to go after your goals in 2023?

I can't go back! I'm encouraged because of my Choices

Exodus 14:29-31 New Living Translation

29 But the **people of Israel had walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground**, as the water stood up like a wall on both sides. 30 That is how the Lord rescued Israel from the hand of the Egyptians that day. And the Israelites saw the bodies of the Egyptians washed up on the seashore. 31 When the people of Israel saw the mighty power that the Lord had unleashed against the Egyptians, they were filled with awe before him. They put their faith in the Lord and in his servant Moses.