

# The Choices We Face

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A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to travel with my husband to New Jersey. Some dear friends picked us up from the airport, and we had an enjoyable dinner together, followed by dessert at their home.

When it was time to leave, instead of taking us back to the hotel, they kindly offered to let us use their car. Not knowing our way around New Jersey, we were a little hesitant. We are used to driving in California, where the directional landmarks are easy to spot. This is not so in New Jersey! It seems that the trees hide any directional signage. Our friends assured us they had a GPS, and even though there was one built in the car, they gave us a portable Garmin GPS System to use as well. We were equipped with two navigational systems. How could we possibly get lost?

Appreciative of the kindness extended to us, we waved goodbye and headed to our hotel. When we reached the first intersection, a woman's voice told us to turn left. At the same time, another woman's voice told us to turn right! My husband and I looked at each other as if to say, "Did I hear that right?" My poor husband—he now had three women telling him how to drive!

We were faced with a decision in the car that night. We had a choice to make: either turn left or turn right. We parked for just a moment to refer to a good old-fashioned paper map, when a car approached us from behind. It happened to be the daughter of the couple who had loaned us their car. She gave us clear directions, and we were at our hotel before long.

As I reflect on the fun memory, I am reminded that we are faced with choices every day. Decisions must be made on an hourly basis. And there is a great possibility for error, simply because we are human! In addition, many of the choices we face don't have an exact Bible chapter and verse for us to follow. Because of this, we must claim the promise of the provision of God's wisdom. James 1:5 says "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God...."

When it comes to decision-making, we can make our choices based on biblical principles—claiming God's promise to provide godly wisdom along the way. Here are five simple questions to ask yourself when faced with difficult decisions:

## **Does it violate clear teachings of the Bible?**

There are some difficult passages in the Bible that require time in deep study to comprehend. However,

most of the Bible is not this way. The most basic test of any decision is an honest look at what the Bible says. God wrote the Bible to communicate His person, His plan, and His principles for our lives. The timeless wisdom of the Bible is still as relevant for the decisions we make today as it was thousands of years ago when it was first written.

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105).

### **Does it violate my body as the temple of the Holy Spirit?**

We are living in borrowed property. If you borrow a friend’s car, you drive very carefully because that car does not belong to you. Someone else bought the vehicle, insured it, repaired it, and you get full benefit of it while it is loaned to you. Our bodies were created and then purchased by God. We are just stewards of them on this earth. Stop and ask yourself, “Is this really how I should treat God’s possession?”

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” (1 Corinthians 6:19).

### **Does it cause another Christian to stumble?**

Some people live with the attitude “I can do anything I want if it doesn’t hurt someone else,” but the reality is that everything we do in some way influences someone else. Some things we do may not be sinful, but they can be a cause for another Christian to sin. Paul wrote that the strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. It is the responsibility of the spiritually mature to live in a way that builds up those weaker in the faith.

“Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way” (Romans 14:13).

### **Does it go against the expressed will of my spiritual authority?**

From Moses to the apostles, God has expressed His will through human authorities. No authority is perfect, but God still has asked us to submit ourselves one to another.

“Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation” (Hebrews 13:7).

### **Does it glorify God?**

We are usually very conscious of our reputations and appearances, but do we ask ourselves if our actions lift up the name of Jesus Christ? As we become more aware of the presence of God in our lives, our choices become much clearer. “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Some decisions are big, and others are small, but they are all important. In order to get to our destinations, we must make sure the decisions we make keep us on the right road. May you follow the One who longs to give you direction in these upcoming months!