

WISDOM

Wisdom, according to Webster, means to be wise and understanding.

It's impossible to cover the subject of wisdom in limited space, but I want to share a taste of it with you.

II Peter 3:15 says "...and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you." It looks like Paul's letters contained wisdom given by God.

When making decisions, there are situations in life where morality may not be in question but we do need wisdom. Wisdom is not a teaching, it is a gift through Jesus. When God calls everyone to pursue wisdom, it's a call to know where that wisdom can be found. It is wisdom from God.

How are you wise in making decisions? When you have multiple options in front of you, how do you determine which is the best choice? How do you not make a bad choice? Do you know how to make a choice that always honors God.

We live in an unprecedented time where we have more options than ever before. When you look at situations in our lives, there are multiple choices. Even at the store, every product has multiple variations. It's hard at times to make the right choice,

In some ways, it's a blessing. But some psychologists have found that the more options we have, the less happy we are in making a decision. We are less happy in making the decision when there are too many choices.

I'm going to share a four-step process to help us make wise decisions. I didn't just make these up. They're from the Book of Proverbs. I want us to seek wisdom practically and follow Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

This process is meant to help us trust in the Lord and His Word, not in ourselves.

Here I think is the four-step process to making a wise decision:

1. Believe God's Word.

We believe God's Word, don't we? We start the four step process with His Word because all wisdom starts with God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction." Proverbs 1:7 (ESV)

Wisdom starts with who God is and what has He said in His word--what has He said about Himself; about you; about the circumstance and our relationships. Also He has expectations of us. You start with the Bible because, if it speaks to something, it is the truest data you could have.

First, you have to ask if what we're considering is sin? Does God's Word forbid you to do the thing you're thinking about doing? If God says it's sin, our response is to trust Him. We are to say, "God, you alone know where life is and you're leading me towards life through your Word. I'm going to trust you."

Over all of our decisions is a God who is working all things for our good. He is a God who is moving all things according to His plan and purpose. He is with us in both our wise and unwise decisions. For those who trust Christ, God promises He will not leave us nor forsake us.

Now, the truth of God's sovereignty does not justify unwise decisions. You can't think God is going to take care of you so you can do whatever you want. But we are still responsible for our decisions.

If you don't believe God's word, you'll have a very difficult time getting the wisdom you need.

2. Listen To Godly Counsel

One of the greatest gifts God has given His people is....His people. So often we neglect or ignore the collective wisdom God has given in this room. "Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety" Proverbs 11:14 (ESV)

Seek council in the hoary heads.

3. Take Action and Do What You Want

Now, I know this sounds incredibly unspiritual. If you haven't done the first two steps, it is unspiritual. But if you go to God's Word and His people then the

question becomes what do you want to do? Do you want to take that job? Do you want to move? Do you want to marry that person? Do you want to invest there?

You may have times in your life where God makes it abundantly clear which direction you need to go, and if you don't, you're not following Jesus. Becoming an elder was this circumstance for me. If I didn't, I knew I wouldn't be following Jesus.

You have the freedom in Christ to do what you want. Once you've brought your decision under the authority of His word and people, do what you want to do.

4. Ask For more Faith

You've made your decision, and you're going in a particular direction. Now you need faith to trust God, because you have no idea what's going to happen. You can be the wisest person on the planet, but you still don't know what the future brings. You can look at trajectories and trends, but no matter how confident someone may be, you don't know what God is going to bring. "The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." Proverbs 16:1 (ESV)

Our decisions don't ultimately dictate what comes into our lives. God does. What you and I need is faith to trust Him, His decisions, and what He decides is necessary and appropriate to bring in to our life. He is directing our life. You can seek wisdom, and God still may lead you where you don't want to go. When you don't understand what is happening, and you can't see God's hand, that is when you need faith to trust Him.

Always call for God and His Wisdom.