



2025 | Week 8

It's Your Choice

Blog Contributors:

Rey & Annie Abarca

There are great differences in choices when moving from being single to being married. Whether you are deliberately intentional about considering your spouse in those choices or not, there is an evident impact on both of you.

This week, we will take a look at how making choices is far different when married. We will also use this time to reflect on how we are doing in the area of making choices with our spouses. May this week's reflection encourage many of us married individuals to improve the way we make choices—united with our spouses.

DAY 1

When we think of our childhood, our choices are very simple. Our limited view of life made us feel that we were facing complicated decisions at that time. It's the start of our behavior being developed, which contributes to how we perceive things. As we begin to embrace the beauty and adventure of life, experiencing a taste of freedom from our parents, we start to see the real complications of adulthood. Furthermore, our perception of life keeps evolving. We may either gain confidence in making choices or become cautious, avoiding areas where we feel uncomfortable making decisions. Now that we are married, the process of making choices has taken a different turn.

Once, we thought that the life stage of being married and having a partner would make decision-making easier. Little did we know that we would face different perceptions and that making choices would become complicated once again. Even with the most sincere considerations, we cannot deny the reality that the choices we make—whether consulted with our spouse or not—will undoubtedly impact our partner. This may have positive effects to some extent, but there is also the undeniable reality of complications and negative impacts on the relationship.

In our book, ["Couple's Journey: Restore, Relearn, Rejoice,"](#) we share how many choices we made that painfully affected our marriage—and, even more so, our little family. Looking back on those days, we are grateful to God for His intervention. It wasn't an easy shift in our journey; it truly required a thorough process of understanding ourselves, our behaviors, and the old perceptions that did not recognize the authority of God. Even today, we are still learning, and the only difference is that our awareness has improved our responses. It's God's grace that we have a better understanding of ourselves, our behavior, and the areas we need to improve, particularly as God continues to work in our hearts and minds.

In the past, we were consumed by how our previous independent lives influenced our decisions, which kept us far from being a united couple. Now we understand that we need a Savior. Furthermore, we require constant reminders to consistently embrace that salvation. Our lives and marriage are committed to anchoring ourselves in Jesus Christ.

Our relationship with Christ provides the strong foundation that helps and guides us in improving the way we make choices—as a united couple.

How about you and your spouse? What has the process of making choices been like in your marriage? Does Jesus Christ play an important role in that process?

Keep Journeying with Christ!

Your Fellow Couple,

Rey & Annie

DAY 2

As we mentioned in yesterday's post, it wasn't easy for us to make choices that reflect our unity as a couple. This reality didn't resonate with us immediately, as some of those choices didn't reveal their consequences until some time (or even years) later, and the pain is undeniable.

We had a good period of working as a united couple, moving in the same direction while we were still in the Navy. While one of us focused on advancing in this career, the other concentrated on raising our children. Our goals were clear, and our journey was quite secure. However, when we left the service, the overwhelming transition led to many temptations that pulled at us. It felt like we had been released, but we were starting from the bottom again. The hype and chase for a good life led us to make various choices without realizing that we were no longer united. We were trying to accommodate as much as we could, knowing we were starting over. It is only now that we realize our choices were coated with anxiousness and fear in this life. As expected, more complications followed. Then one day, we both made a drastic decision: to restart again, but this time with Jesus Christ.

It was the best decision we made—anchoring our life and marriage to Jesus Christ. Again, it wasn't an easy transition because such a restored connection with God clears out our wrong beliefs and perspectives. If you've been following our blog posts for quite a while, you know that we are still learning on this journey with Christ. Those lessons include choices—choices that test our faith and trust in God.

Initially, our intentionality in this choice doesn't really define a true personal relationship with God. So, when we faced moments of choice, we solely based our responses on wisdom. Wisdom that we accumulated over time, even during the years we weren't connected with God yet. It was a process of discovering that this was

not God's intent for us. Trust and faith are not solely based on wisdom; they are understanding that our life is a constant reminder that we need a Savior, and we need to exercise the salvation that we accepted through Jesus Christ. Eventually, we began to make choices with the intent of seeking God's will and purpose. There are still temptations to take shortcuts, but moments like these now serve as constant reminders that we must intentionally anchor our hearts and minds to God. It's only by God's grace that we learn, experience, and move forward, repeating the process until we get it.

It's very tempting to make choices based on wisdom alone or even with the effort of seasoned understanding that we have gained from the various pieces of information available today. But the bottom line is this: if a choice contributes to the foundation of our marriage, reflects our submission to God's authority, and defines the salvation gifted to us by Jesus Christ, it is a true choice that brings life.

Through the many pains brought by the “not-so-easy transition” moments, with Christ, endurance comes with a purpose, new strength, and genuine redemption (Isaiah 40:31).

'By wisdom a house is built, And by understanding it is established; ' Proverbs 24:3

Keep Journeying with Christ!

Your Fellow Couple,

Rey & Annie

DAY 3 | For Husbands

Even after Annie and I committed ourselves to be intentional in our faith journey—in our lives and our marriage—we still find ourselves making different choices that test our unity.

In the first chapter of our book, “Couple's Journey: Restore, Relearn, Rejoice,” we detail the genuine realization we encountered that reveals the wrong choices we made in this life. We share how we reached

the point of making radical changes. The weaknesses we mentioned still show traces in our lives today as we move forward in the sanctification process that God is working in us. There are moments when I witness my wife, Annie, displaying stubbornness and pressing forward on choices that are quite far from my preferences. On the other hand, I also observe how she perseveres in seeking God's guidance to address her weaknesses. It's a significant difference to see my wife recognize her weaknesses and faithfully rely on God's power for deliverance.

On a practical note, I'd be a hypocrite if I did not admit that when we face indifferent choices, they often lead to heated discussions. Tension is a continuous temptation, particularly when we're faced with difficult circumstances, and it's only through God's grace that we can respond appropriately—or, better yet, have the courage to approach our differences with understanding.

One particular verse that has strongly struck me and continuously guides me when we encounter indifference is from 1 Peter 3:7.

'You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered. ' 1 Peter 3:7

When Annie and I deal with indifference, we view it as an opportunity to grow in understanding. Such moments could be God's appointed incidents for us to gain profound insights and improve our perspective—a perspective that leans toward His. It's not natural for a married couple to always make similar choices, much less to be united in making choices that follow God's will and purpose. We all know that obedience to God often requires us to die to our old selves and take steps toward the transformation He is working in us.

Regular conversation plays a very important role in our journey of continuously improving our responses. We're grateful for God's words, the examples of Jesus Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit that enables us to have conversations that recognize our weaknesses and express our desires to obey God. In the end, it's not about who makes the better choice between the two of us, but

rather about working together toward God's choice for us.

Keep journeying with Christ Jesus.

Your Fellow Husband,

Rey

DAY 4 | For Wives

As my husband, Rey, mentioned in yesterday's blog post, even after we committed to intentionally journeying through this life with Christ, we still face indifference in choices or approaches to certain things. It wasn't an easy transition for us to quickly unite under the banner of God. It's not about justification, but we've learned how our past life away from God has shaped our behaviors and attitudes. These have become Satan's means to tempt us, keeping us in such conditions and preventing the transformation that God is working in us. Not taking a route of understanding on this matter will leave us with blind spots that affect our growing journey with Jesus Christ. There are times when we need to understand our behaviors and how they impact our decision-making, as well as reflect on our experiences and analyze the perspectives we allow to linger in our minds. After doing so, we'll have a more profound realization of why we need a Savior—why we need to look at the pattern of Jesus Christ in terms of making choices. Why do we need to keep journeying with Christ?

Rey and I grew up very independent. Although we lived a former life that wasn't intentionally focused on knowing God, looking back on those years, God allowed us to experience certain opportunities to exercise the gifts He gave us. We had different platforms that enabled us to apply our knowledge and skills in leadership roles. Bringing this into the heart of our household was indeed chaotic until we learned God's blueprint for our roles in this marriage.

I appreciate how Rey takes the time to hear my input and understand my perspective. Although he has a strong military background, his leadership style has allowed me to actively participate in the crucial choices we make together. I must admit that there have been instances

when I felt my input wasn't given enough attention and understanding. Such emotions have become Satan's playground to create further division between us. It is the great help of the Holy Spirit that has made me more aware of this and helps me remain in union with my husband on certain choices he pursues. There have also been a few incidents where we moved forward on certain choices, but I didn't reach a level of understanding that gave me confidence in our actions. In times like this, I find myself praying loudly and seeking God's guidance. He's the one who appointed my role as a wife and designed my submission toward my husband. In these instances, God is gracious and faithful; our obedience to the authority God entrusted to our husbands brings blessings—such as experiencing His presence.

It takes a lot of practice to develop the habit of making united choices between husband and wife. Moreover, it requires a great deal of humility to submit to a choice that reflects the husband's authority. With that being said, we need significant help to overcome those challenges that hinder our responses to choices that test our obedience to God's design, will, and purpose. Even more, we need Christ in our marriage and the continuous guidance of the Holy Spirit.

"[Jesus said] But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. " John 14:26

Keep journeying with Christ!

Your Fellow Wife,

Annie

DAY 5

For the past four days, we've been reflecting on making choices and how to achieve unity in decision-making within marriage.

We've acknowledged that it's not easy to make immediate decisions with your spouse, as it is natural for

individuals to lean towards choices that are more aligned with their personal perspectives. Furthermore, it's challenging to make unified choices that align with God's will and purpose. Even though we have great speakers, teachers, and theologians today, we often find ourselves making radical choices that reflect our submission to God. There is something that drives us toward obedience.

We may fall into making life choices that do not align with God's authority when our foundation fails to recognize the true essence of faith—what it truly means to follow Jesus Christ. It's a common misconception that once we hear the "Good News" and accept Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior, we have fully grasped the definition of faith. While this is an important initial step, God doesn't intend for us to receive the good news without experiencing transformation. The initial acceptance of the gospel marks the beginning of the sanctification process, which transforms us into the new creation that God intended. It initiates a journey of making choices that define true life. Only by His grace and the guidance of the Holy Spirit can we be fully equipped for this transformative process. In this way, a couple united in their journey with Jesus Christ will begin to make choices that embody God's genuine unity in marriage.

Here are a few practical insights we've learned from other couples on growing in making united choices that follow God's will:

1. Consistency in our individual quiet time with God through His Word.
2. Having regular conversations about how we encounter God during our individual quiet time.
3. Praying together every day.
4. Keeping on track with an accountability circle of those who are journeying with us.

Today's culture can make it challenging to make choices that reflect and define our genuine love for our spouse, let alone for God. Yet, God has been extraordinarily faithful to us since the beginning, as He has already prepared what we need, even going so far as to send His own Son, Jesus Christ, to give us hope and to be a new creation that makes choices for true life.

'I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.'
Deuteronomy 30:19-20

Your Fellow Couple,

Rey & Annie



Let's embark on a comprehensive learning experience with this week's topic by following the **D.R.A.S.H. - 5 Steps of Learning Method!**

Step 1 | Discover the Truth

- From the shared Biblical truths, Biblical perspectives, and testimonies, what struck you most about making choices as a united couple?

Step 2 | Reflect and Meditate on the Truth

- How does this week's topic relate to your current season in marriage?

Step 3 | Apply the Truth

- After this week's discussion about making choices, are there any changes you plan to make with the insights you gained from this week's topic?

Step 4 | Share

- Using a storytelling concept, compose a short story about how you will share the truths you discovered in this week's topic with your spouse or other married individuals journeying with you. You may want to consider a 1-minute or 5-minute storytelling technique.
- You can use the following guiding questions in your composition:
 1. What truths did you discover and reflect on in this week's topic?
 2. How are these truths and reflections related to yourself and your current marital status?
 3. What actions do you plan to take in the coming days that relate to this week's learning?

Step 5 | Help in Navigating the Truth

- Besides your spouse, identify another person (or member/s of your small group) who will journey alongside you as you take intentional actions based on this week's learning. Consider what additional help you may need, such as further discussion or a regular prayer partner.

We pray that you encounter God through this week's topic. May His grace turn your learning experience into a transformative journey, leading to testimonies of breakthroughs that further strengthen your walk with Christ Jesus!

Let us know how this guide has helped you!

May this study tool be effective and helpful for every fellow seeker and believer who is intentionally journeying with Jesus Christ. We would be grateful to hear how this tool has significantly impacted your journey and your relationships with your spouse and others. Please share your feedback or experiences through this [link](#) (or scan QR Code)



Couples' Journey with Christ Jesus

www.couplesjourney.org

THIS STUDY GUIDE IS MEANT TO BE SHARED.

To download visit couplesjourney.org

"Scripture quotations are taken from the

(NASB®) New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. All rights reserved. lockman.org"