

Biblical Decision Making¹

Put the Word in Your Heart

Storing up the word in your heart

Colossians 3:16 “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

“I believe that the most important thing that Christians who want to make God-honoring decisions can do is to immerse themselves in the written Word of God, and consequently to learn to think God’s thoughts after him.” – Kenneth Berding

S.O.A.P.

Submit – Say to God, “I’m totally willing to do whatever you want from me in this situation.”

Obey – God’s law forbids a number of activities and behaviors. These are out of the question.

Apply Wisdom - Wisdom is skill in godly living, the application of God’s truth to a situation.

Pick Your Preference – If there are multiple options open at the end of this, do the one that seems best to you!

Christian freedom

“Furthermore, I do not believe that some sort of special message from God is required for every decision we make.” – Kenneth Berding

Seek God’s Guidance and the Leading of the Spirit

Extra-scriptural guidance

Are there times when God leads or speaks in ways that are consistent with his Word, and yet gives information not revealed exactly in Scripture?

¹ This sermon is indebted to two articles, one from Kenneth Berding *A Biblical Spectrum of Guidance from God* and the other from Will Anderson *Be Slow to Pull the ‘God Card.’*

Bible examples

LEADERSHIP → “Then my God put it into my heart to assemble the nobles and the officials and the people to be enrolled by genealogy.” Nehemiah 7:5

GROUP LEADERSHIP → “Everyone whose spirit God had stirred to go up and rebuild the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem.” Ezra 1:5

INDIVIDUAL’S NEXT STEP → “And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained (bound) by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, ²³except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me.” Acts 20:22-23

GROUP DECISION → “For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements...” Acts 15:28

REDIRECTION → “Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.” Philippians 4:15

GUIDANCE → “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.” James 1:5

REASSURANCE → “The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God.” Rom. 8:16

The importance of fasting and prayer

Surround Yourself with Christian Community

An abundance of counselors

Proverbs 11:14 “Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.”

Test everything

1 Thess 5:19-22 “Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise prophecies, ²¹but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²²Abstain from every form of evil.”

1 Corinthians 11:7, 10 “To each is given a manifestation of the Spirit for the common good... to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits.”

Questions for Study and Reflection

1. Are there any big decisions you are facing? What are they, and what does God’s Word say about them?
2. Have you ever experienced God’s leading with a decision before? How was it confirmed by Christian friends?
3. What are the potential abuses of “God told me” and “God said to” type language? What safeguards do we have?
4. Have you ever fasted before? What was this experience like for you, and why?