

# Making Wise Decisions

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**Instructions:** The format of these mini-studies is similar to that of the Bible On-Line Study Course. Look up and read in your Bible the scripture references given in answer to the questions. Comments following the questions further explain the scriptures just read. That's all there is to it! (These studies are based on the King James Version of the Bible, unless otherwise stated.)

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Will you go to college or continue your education in some other way? What career will you choose? Whom will you marry and where will you live?

These and other decisions we face can affect us for the rest of our lives.

If we make wise decisions, our lives will be happier, and we'll have peace of mind. But making the right decisions is not a matter of luck or chance. It is a matter of knowing and applying the keys to successful decision making. Few realize that the Bible contains the all-important guidelines we need to make truly wise decisions!

Before we begin this study and learn these keys to wise decision making, get a Bible, pen or pencil and some paper. Writing out the verses that answer the questions will help you remember the priceless principles you'll be learning.

1. Who was the wisest of all men? 1 Kings 4:30-34. How did Solomon obtain his wisdom? 1 Kings 4:29. (Read also 1 Kings 3:5-13.) Did he write the book of Proverbs? Proverbs 1:1.
2. What key principle did Solomon give for making wise decisions? Proverbs 3:5-6. Will God grant His wisdom, knowledge and understanding to those who seek it? Proverbs 2:1-6.

The primary way that God directs us, provided we are striving to please Him, is through the Instruction Book He has given humanity – the Holy Bible. God inspired the Bible to be written for our benefit (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

3. Is God's Word like a spotlight that shows us the way to go? Psalm 119:105. What comparison is drawn between the vital knowledge, guidance and wisdom contained in God's Word and a treasure chest full of precious things? Proverbs 8:10-11. (See also Proverbs 3:13-18.)

God's Word is far more valuable than all the gold, silver and precious gems in the world! In it are principles that can help us make wise decisions in all areas of life.

A gold mine of wisdom and understanding is to be found especially in the book of Proverbs.

It contains priceless wisdom that can guide both young and old alike in making decisions that lead to lifelong success and happiness, including good health, a challenging career, a beautiful marriage, happy children and lasting friendships.

4. Did God also have the lives of Old and New Testament personalities recorded so we could profit from their experiences? Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:6-10, 11.

By reading about the lives of the great men and women of the Bible – men like Abraham, Moses, David, Christ and women like Ruth, Hannah and Sarah – we can learn valuable lessons and principles that will help us in making decisions and in other areas of our lives!

5. How did King David refer to the Word of God that was available to him? Psalm 119:72, 162. Did he obtain wisdom and understanding from following God’s instruction? Psalm 119:97-100, 104.

David knew from practical experience that God’s Word contains a priceless storehouse of wisdom, knowledge and understanding! He diligently studied the portion of God’s written Word available to him in his day.

David thought about God’s law and how to use it in making wise decisions. Therefore, he was exceedingly blessed, becoming wiser than his enemies and understanding more than his teachers.

Now, let’s examine some additional keys for wise decision making, contained in the book of Proverbs.

6. Is it important to avoid making rash or hasty decisions? Notice the principles in Proverbs 21:5; 4:26 and 14:15.

An important rule to follow in good decision making is to avoid being hasty. A hasty decision can end up creating unnecessary difficulty because you have not really understood the facts before making a decision. Take time to carefully analyze the situation and get the facts. Think through the end result of various alternatives you might have.

Also, don’t allow others to pressure or rush you into a decision you may regret. They may not always have your best interests in mind.

7. Before making important decisions, is it wise to seek advice and counsel from others with knowledge and experience? Proverbs 11:14; 12:15; 15:22; 19:20.

There is an old saying that “two heads are better than one.” Advice and assistance from others – *especially* from your parents, teachers and experts in a particular field – are often of great help in solving a problem or making a wise decision. A good adviser can often steer us in the right direction by giving us ideas we would not think of ourselves.

Sometimes what we think would be a good decision may not necessarily be the best.

That is why advice from our parents, teachers and elders is so important. Often they have gone through similar experiences and are more than willing to give us the guidance we need to make the right decisions. They want to help us avoid making mistakes that could prove costly and cause much heartache.

8. Is it also to our benefit to get to know and associate with those who are wise?

Proverbs 13:20; 27:17.

Seek friends who are known for their wisdom and good judgment. Such friends sharpen our wits and can help us to make wise decisions

Reading autobiographies of successful men and women can also help us in making wise decisions. We can glean from their experiences important traits and ways of doing things that we can apply in our lives.

Men and women known for their wisdom and common sense, whose biographies are profitable reading, including Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Andrew Carnegie, Thomas Edison, Winston Churchill, Dwight Eisenhower, Ronald Reagan, Queen Elizabeth, Golda Meir and Abigail Adams, just to name a few.

Should a person carefully “count the cost” to be sure he or she is able to follow through with a decision? Luke 14:28-30.

In making decisions such as whether to buy a new or used car and what make, deciding on a career or whether to live on your own, *count the cost!* Decide whether your plans might be premature, financially inadvisable or beyond your ability to achieve. Sometimes it is best to hold off on a decision and wait till the circumstances are more favorable.

9. Has God promised to give us the wisdom we need to make wise decisions if we ask Him?

James 1:5-6.

God, who is the supreme source of wisdom, will guide us as we apply the keys to decision making that He reveals in His Word. He will steer us in the right direction. But we must *ask* Him for that help!

Even though we may do our best to follow the keys discussed in this study, we still will sometimes make a bad decision because of unknown factors or circumstances beyond our control.

When this happens, don't get discouraged. Chalk it up to experience and learn whatever lessons you can from the entire situation.

To briefly summarize what we've learned, remember to avoid making *hasty* decision. Be sure to get the facts. Seek counsel and advice from qualified experts. Study God's Word and ask Him for guidance and wisdom.

By following the all-important keys outlined in this study, you'll begin to experience the happy, productive and successful life God wants each of us to have!