

It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time!? (Slide 1)

Spiritual Discernment

Reading: Luke 10:38-42 & Luke 12:13-21

Have you ever made a decision *that seemed like a good idea at the time* and it turned out not to be?

Have you ever been at the grocery store and decided to move from one checkout to the next because the line was smaller, perhaps even with one person waiting in line, only to wait, for whatever reason, a longer period of time to checkout as the folks who were actually behind you in the other line filed right through?

Some decisions we make often have minor consequences, more of a nuisance than anything, while others can have major consequences in our life.

You order something in a restaurant because it looked so appealing on the menu cover only to get it and it doesn't look the same nor does it taste like you anticipated it would.

Compare that to marrying a person who turns out to be someone completely different after you say your, "*I do's!*"

Everyone has made decisions that seemed like a good one at the time. No one chooses the right thing all the time.

Eve made the wrong decision, what seemed like a good idea at the time based on what she physically saw and desired, and it had devastating consequences.

Making good decisions requires having all the facts, as much information as possible and perhaps most importantly, a trusted source. Let's remember that Satan can enter the church and has in some instances, just as he did in the garden:

Jude speaking of those who had crept into the church unaware, did so with words and actions that "*seemed like a good thing at the time,*" speaking

words that sounded true, until it was too late and many, undoubtedly, began to follow their way.

Would anyone really have let them in if they were upfront at the beginning as to what their intentions were?

Jude 11-13 (Slide 2)

11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

12 These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. (Slide 3) They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; 13 raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

Cain, Balaam, and Korah sought for themselves their own glory! Jude mentions all these worthless attributes that these characters have and they are nothing more than hypocrites and apostates. Which means that every attribute isn't reality, no truth only pretense.

Jude states they are like ***spots in your love feasts***, which means they are like hidden rocks below the water's surface in which ships strike and break apart.

He beckons to us, even to this day to be sure of whom we trust and of whom we follow!

We all at one time make poor decisions, but the fact remains that we cannot undo them. In life, there are no "U-turns" or "do overs."

So the question is, *will we continue to be a victim to our circumstances or a victor over them? After all, you cannot unscramble eggs! (Attributed to the Late Wayne Polk)*

Poor decisions, if we overcome them, often gives us another notch on our belt of wisdom. Yet, it's important to sow life's seeds with forethought and care. We reap what we sow.

Galatians 6:7-8 (Slide 4)

7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

There is an old country song entitled “*Mama Tried*” where a mother tried to raise her son to make good choices but watched as he failed over and over again, *praying that the crop he had sown would fail.*

We want to avoid that cycle of failed decisions because poor choices have lasting consequences.

When we are young we grow naturally from a physical standpoint but it is also extremely important to develop wisdom along the way.

The Proverb writer encourages a method for parents to use to aid in the development of wisdom:

Proverbs 22:15 (Slide 5)

Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child;

The rod of correction will drive it far from him.

Yes, I believe in this method when done correctly for training a child. However, I also believe the Bible is the rod God uses to drive out foolishness from His people.

As we mature we replace folly with wisdom:

1 Corinthians 13:11 (Slide 6)

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

I know people my age that haven't reached this point in their life and the severity of the consequences have piled on top of each other.

It is the duty of the truth seeker to develop maturity. Without growth we cannot please God nor come to know His will as we should.

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 (Slide 7)

1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; (Slide 8) 3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?

Spiritual growth will shield us from the cycle of poor decision making:

Ephesians 4:14 (Slide 9)

that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

Yet, spiritual growth takes discipline. Sometimes God allows us to be afflicted to train us in spiritual discipline.

Hebrews 12:5b-6 (Slide 10)

"My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD,

Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;

For whom the LORD loves He chastens,

And scourges every son whom He receives."

Many accept the discipline and grow from it, yet some reject it and are left to make decisions without proper spiritual training.

Before a person who desires to be a policeman is allowed to be on their own, they are paired with a training officer who trains and corrects so that on their own they will make life saving decisions. That is; saving their own life and many times the lives of those they serve. It is just that serious for one's physical life and so it is with one's spiritual life.

Hebrews 12:8 (Slide 11)

But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

No one necessarily likes to be corrected/ disciplined but those who are spiritual embrace it. In fact, they realize discipline is given for their best interest:

Hebrews 12:11 (Slide 12)

Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Accepting the training and learning from the discipline makes us the very best of spiritual decision makers:

Hebrews 5:14 (Slide 13)

But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

It's hard sometimes to keep spiritual matters at the forefront of our lives when we are dealing with earthly circumstances and decisions. Sometimes the *here and now* has our full attention.

In our reading we see that while Mary hung on every spiritual word that Jesus spoke, Martha was distracted with her domestic role of preparation for the entertainment of her guests. She didn't hear a word of Jesus' teaching.

There is nothing wrong with storing your crop in a new barn if that is what is needed. However, The farmer made preparation for this life only, neglecting all spiritual matters.

Though I think it's important to fulfill our responsibilities, they must never take the *front seat* to spiritual matters.

Not everyone we encounter will support spiritual decision making. In fact, some will consider us foolish to make decisions based on spiritual guidance.

1 Corinthians 2:13-16 (Slide 14)

13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; (Slide 15) nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. 16 For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

Because this is the prevailing attitude of the world, even some very nice people in the world, making spiritual decisions will always have opposition.

Yet, the Christian must not be their own worst enemy by allowing others to influence us from an earthly perspective.

For certain, we are going to make mistakes in decision making. What then shall we do?

"When you find yourself in a hole, stop digging!!"

The wise man admits their mistakes and does their very best to make things right:

2 Corinthians 4:1-2 (Slide 16)

1 Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. 2 But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

The wise man seeks to have a clear conscience in man's eyes and before God.

But not all will see our efforts for what they are. Some are so blinded by their earthly bias that spiritual matters have no validity with them.

2 Corinthians 4:3-6 (Slide 17)

3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should

shine on them. (Slide 18) 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. 6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Whether accepted or not, let your light shine before men to the *Glory of God Almighty!*

When we make a decision that at the time seemed *oh* so right but in reality was wrong, move forward and accept the consequence of that decision. Right the wrong the best way you know how. Not all wrong decisions are sins, maybe poor judgement, but if they are sin:

1 John 1:9 (Slide 19)

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Get out of that hole we have dug with our own hands and move forward- don't look back! Remember the devastating consequences for Lot's Wife!!

Philippians 3:12-14 (Slide 20)

12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; (Slide 21) but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Some decisions seem so right at the time: *"How can it be so wrong when it seems so right?"*

As long as we make decisions from the lens of the world, many of those will never be exposed as wrong. We will never be ready for solid food. It takes spiritual discernment to see error!

The ultimate goal is to be spiritually minded in all matters. Admittedly, this is not something done overnight. I have personally been working on it for 50 years or so and still fall short. But may I encourage you to take baby steps.

Be conscious of spiritual discernment in decision making and you will see a clearer path than ever before.

Invitation

The most important decision a person can make is to become a child of God. Today, if you haven't put on Christ through Baptism, why wait? Tomorrow isn't guaranteed.

If you are in Christ but need the prayers of your Brethren for whatever reason, please let us know. We will pray for you and help you make the best decisions possible through the Holy Word of God.

Please let us know how we may assist you today.....

Reading

Luke 10:38-42

38 Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. 40 But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

41 And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. 42 But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

Luke 12:13-21

13 Then one from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

14 But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" 15 And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

16 Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' 18 So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." ' 20 But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'

21 "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

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