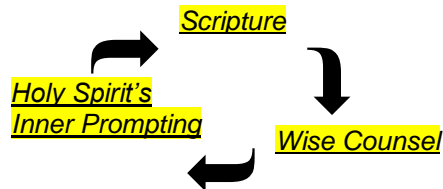


GOD'S WILL: WHAT'S YOUR DECISION TREE?

God's ~~Decision Tree~~ Decision Cycle



How To Make Some Really Bad Decisions

- ❶ Trust your **feelings** above all else. (The “**Inner Peace**” Trap)
1 Corinthians 4:4/ Proverbs 12:15 & 14:12/ Romans 1:28-32
- ❷ Put out a **fleece**. (The “**Strange Circumstances**” Trap)
Judges 6:36-40 & 8:22-27/ Acts 16:4-12 & 1 Corinthians 16:5-9
- ❸ Don't bother God with **obvious decisions**. (The “**No Brainer**” Trap)
Joshua 9:1-27/ John 8:44/ 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12
- ❹ Confuse **faith** with **optimism**. (The “**Head In The Sand**” Trap)
Hebrews 11:6
- ❺ Ask God **what** – forget to ask **when**. (The “**Timing**” Trap)
Acts 7:20-36
- ❻ Ignore your **spouse**. (The “**Sleep On The Couch**” Trap)
1 Peter 3:7/ 1 Samuel 25:1-42

What's Your Decision Tree?

Food for Thought for the week of December 18, 2005
(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

1. This weekend we explored God's Decision Cycle and discovered that good decisions flow out of continually checking three major components – *Scripture, wise counsel, and the inner promptings of the Holy Spirit*. Below are some verses that shed additional light on each of these components. Read each one and then jot down your insights.

Scripture:

Psalms 119:9-11; 59-61; 97-105
Proverbs 2

Psalms 119:9-11

9 How can a young person stay on the path of purity?

By living according to your word.

10 I seek you with all my heart;
do not let me stray from your commands.

11 I have hidden your word in my heart
that I might not sin against you. [NIV]

Wise Counsel:

Proverbs 15:22
2 Chronicles 10:1-11

Proverbs 15:22

22 Plans fail for lack of counsel,
but with many advisers they succeed.

2 Chronicles 10:1-11

Now the Philistines fought against Israel; the Israelites fled before them, and many fell dead on Mount Gilboa. 2 The Philistines were in hot pursuit of Saul and his sons, and they killed his sons Jonathan, Abinadab and Malki-Shua. 3 The fighting grew fierce around Saul, and when the archers overtook him, they wounded him.

4 Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and run me through, or these uncircumcised fellows will come and abuse me."

But his armor-bearer was terrified and would not do it; so Saul took his own sword and fell on it. 5 When the armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died. 6 So Saul and his three sons died, and all his house died together.

7 When all the Israelites in the valley saw that the army had fled and that Saul and his sons had died, they abandoned their towns and fled. And the Philistines came and occupied them.

8 The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. 9 They stripped him and took his head and his armor, and sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines to proclaim the news among their idols and their people. 10 They put his armor in the temple of their gods and hung up his head in the temple of Dagon.

11 When all the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul,

The Inner Promptings of the Holy Spirit:

Acts 16:6-10

Acts 20:22-23

John 16:12-14

Acts 16:6-10

6 Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. 7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. 8 So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. 9 During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Acts 20:22-23

22 "And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. 23 I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me.

John 16:12-14

12 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.

2. Pastor Larry also listed six traps that lead to really bad decisions. Are there any of these that you've fallen prey to in the past?

If so, what were the consequences?

Based on the insights from this week's message and Scriptures, how would you handle the situation differently in the future?

Which trap would you be most susceptible to fall into?

3. Solomon was the wisest man of his day, yet even he made some really bad decisions. A summary of Solomon's bad decisions can be found in 1 Kings 11:1-13. Read this passage and then answer the following questions:

1 Kings 11:1-13

King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. 2 They were from nations about which the Lord had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love. 3 He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray. 4 As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been. 5 He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molek the detestable god of the

Ammonites. 6 So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the Lord; he did not follow the Lord completely, as David his father had done.

7 On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. 8 He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.

9 The Lord became angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice. 10 Although he had forbidden Solomon to follow other gods, Solomon did not keep the Lord's command. 11 So the Lord said to Solomon, "Since this is your attitude and you have not kept my covenant and my decrees, which I commanded you, I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates. 12 Nevertheless, for the sake of David your father, I will not do it during your lifetime. I will tear it out of the hand of your son. 13 Yet I will not tear the whole kingdom from him, but will give him one tribe for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen."

What were the bad decisions that Solomon made?

What were the consequences of those decisions?

Which of the components of the Decision Cycle did Solomon ignore?