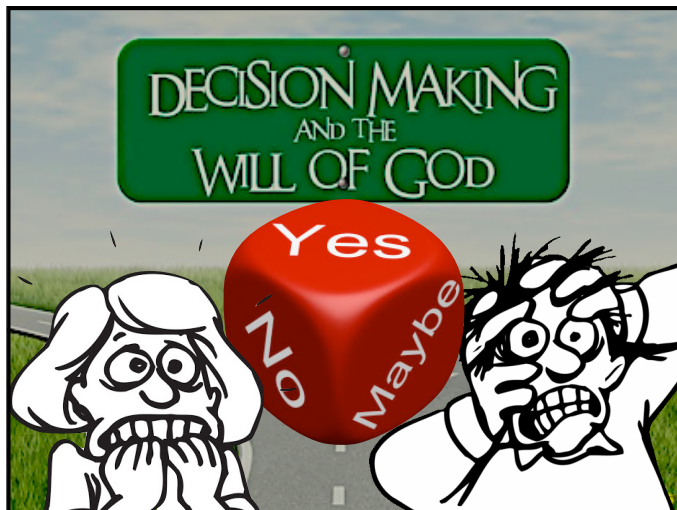




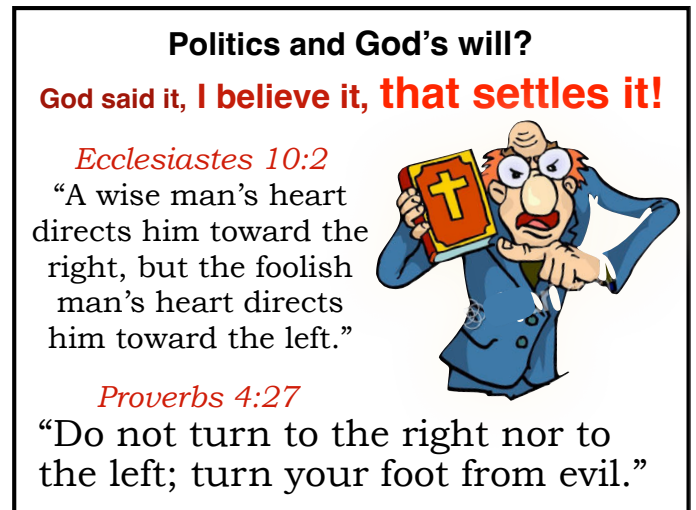
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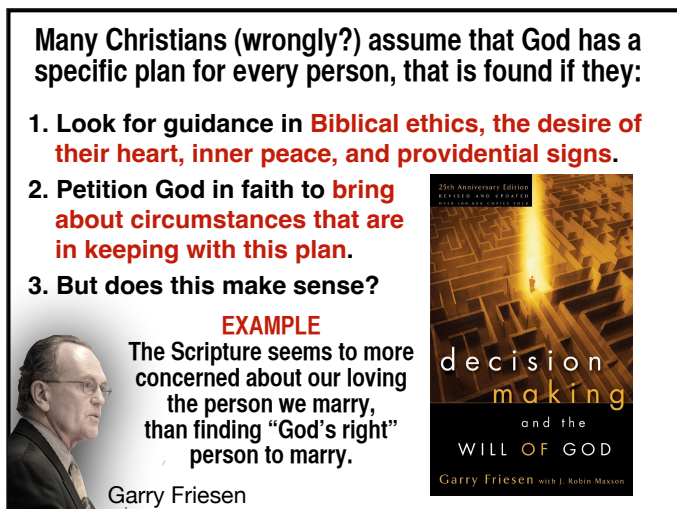
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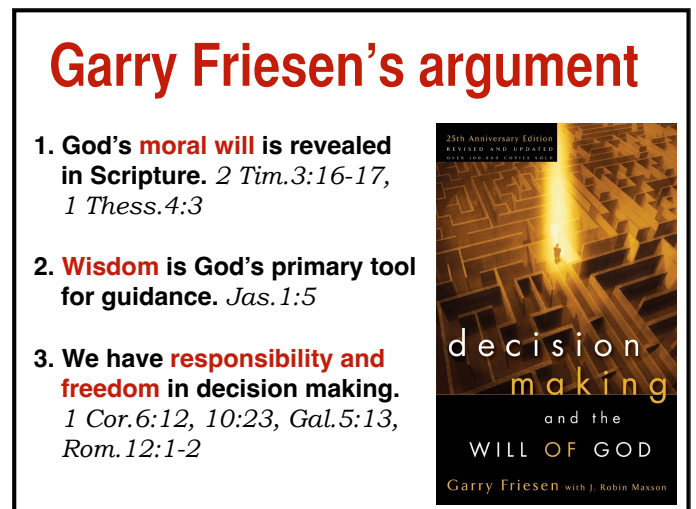
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4



5



6

Decision making calls for **Wisdom**. (not a special “sign from God”)

James 1

“5 But if any of you lacks **wisdom**, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But **he must ask in faith** without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that person ought not to **expect** that he will receive anything from the Lord, 8 *being* a double-minded man, **unstable** in all his ways.”

7

Hebrews 8

“10 For this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: **I will put My laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts**. And I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 11 And **they will not teach, each one his fellow citizen**, and each one his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they will all know Me, from the least to the greatest of them. . . . 13 When He said, “**A new covenant**,” He has made the first obsolete. But whatever **is becoming obsolete** and growing old is about to disappear.”



The New Covenant
with the inner gift of
Christ's Spirit **replaces**



the Old Covenant
with its emphasis
on outward signs.

8

John 16

“13 But **when he, the Spirit of truth**, comes he will **guide you into all the truth**; . . . 14 He will glorify me, for he will take of mine and will disclose it to you.”

2 Corinthians 3:6

“who also made us adequate as servants of a **new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit**,”

1 John 2:27

“And *as for* you, the anointing which you received from Him remains in you, and **you have no need for anyone to teach you**; but as His anointing teaches you about all things,”

9

Old Covenant

God's Spirit is
WITH us!



We seek a
word or sign
from without.

New Covenant

God's Spirit is
IN us!



We seek wisdom
from within our
renewed mind and
a Godly community.

10

This is illustrated in decisions made
before Pentecost.

Acts 1

(discerning a replacement for Judas) “24 And **they prayed**, and said, “Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show which one of these two Thou hast chosen . . . 26 And **they drew lots** for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.”

after Pentecost.

Acts 15

(concerning the inclusion of Gentiles) “22 it **seemed good** to the apostles and the elders, . . . 28 For it **seemed good** to the holy Spirit and to us . . . 34 But it **seemed good** to Silas . . .”

11

Wisdom is a dynamic responsibility,
not a search for proof texts, signs or feelings.

Acts 15

“7 And after there had been **much debate**, . . . 28 For **it seemed good** to the Holy Spirit and to us. . . . 15 And with this the words of the Prophets agree, **just as it is written**, (Amos 9:12)”

1 Corinthians 6:5

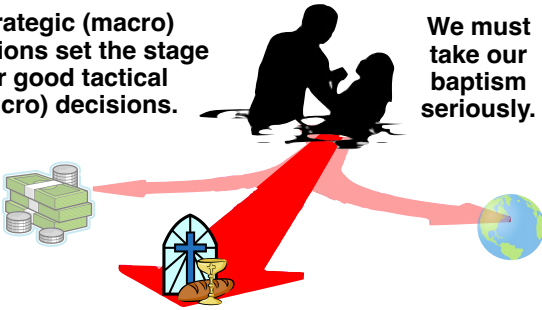
“... Is it so, that there is not among you **one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren**, but brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers?”

12

WISE decisions are easier when we face in the right **DIRECTION**, with the right **GOALS** and the right **VALUES**.

Strategic (macro) decisions set the stage for good tactical (micro) decisions.

We must take our baptism seriously.



13

Making **WISE** decisions is more like following a compass than a road map.



This is centered on knowing the goal and the direction for finding it.

14

Making **WISE** decisions involves knowing our responsibilities and their limits.



We need to spend less time critiquing how others play their instrument and spend more time following the conductor and mastering our instrument.



We are not an organ, where we are the only one needed.

15

Examples of Freedom in decision making

1. **Marriage** — *1 Cor. 7:39* “A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is **free to be married to whom she wishes**, only in the Lord.”
2. **Giving** — *2 Cor. 8:13* “For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction, but **by way of equality**”
3. **Sabbath** — *Rom. 14:5* “One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be **fully convinced in his own mind**.”

16

Making **WISE** decisions involves being sensitive to opportunities and timing.

Ephesians 5:15-16

“Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as **wise**, making the most of your **time**, because the days are evil.”

Colossians 4:5

“Conduct yourselves with **wisdom** toward outsiders, making the most of the **opportunity**.”

1 Corinthians 16:3-4

“And when I arrive, **whomever you may approve**, I shall send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem; and **if it is fitting for me** to go also, they will go with me.”

17

Acts 6:2-4

“And the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, ‘It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. **But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom**, whom we may put in charge of this task. But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.’”

Philippians 2:25-26

“But **I thought it necessary** to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need; because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.”

1 Thessalonians 3:1-2

“Therefore when we could endure it no longer, **we thought it best** to be left behind at Athens alone; and we sent Timothy, our brother and God’s fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith.”

18

Five keys to WISE DECISIONS

1. Enlightened **POSITIVITY** - Not hopelessness but confidence and joy as we face decisions.

James 1

"2 Consider it all **joy**, my brothers and sisters, when you encounter various **trials**, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance."

View decisions as opportunities to develop and / or display wisdom.



"In the end, dear friend, it is always between us and God, not between us and them (or it)"

Mother Teresa

19

Five keys to WISE DECISIONS

2. Believing **PRAYER** - Not for what WE want, but for wisdom in knowing what GOD wants.
3. Kingdom **PRIORITIES** - Not circumstances, so much as Godly responses to circumstances.
4. Scriptural **PRINCIPLES** - Not proof texts, but established values in CONTEXT.

Proverbs 26

4 "Answer not a fool according to his folly lest you be like unto him."



5 "Answer a fool according to his folly lest he be wise in his own conceit."

20

Five keys to WISE DECISIONS

5. Godly **PEOPLE** - who's example / advice is added to our own experience.

"The key to success is making wise decisions.
The key to wise decisions is learning from foolish decisions, which starts with making decisions."



21

Spiritual Formation & Wise Decisions

Looking inside

Know ourself -

What are our strengths & needs?

Accept ourself -

What do we fear and why?

Looking beyond

Forget ourself -

What is best for the Kingdom?

Give ourself -

Insight & attitude are fruitful only when put into action!



22

Our life going forward is not shaped by our circumstances so much as how we respond to them.

Making bad decisions does not make one a fool, but failing to learn from bad decisions does.

It is understandable that a child is afraid of the dark, but it is sad when an adult is afraid of the light.

"He who has an ear to hear, let him hear."

23

Hard Questions



24