

*In search of...*

# Truth & Right

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## Decisions and Mistakes

We have all made lots of bad decisions in our lives. Whether it is a mistake in business or in the church, we have made plenty of mistakes and that also includes bad decision in both family and personal situations. Of course, none of us try to make bad decisions, but sometimes the way we make them can significantly increase or decrease the chances of mistakes. For myself, I have learned from every bad decision I have made. And, I have repeated a few of them again and again and will still learn something. But, as much as we can, we should want to make better decisions the first time. So, to help us, consider some ways you and I will make bad decisions. It begins with:

Making them too fast. As the old saying goes, "haste makes waste." Every day we make lots of decisions. Everyday there is a fork in the road and we have to decide

from which socks to put on, to what we will eat for lunch, to life altering decisions. And, oftentimes we have to make them quickly. But, bad choices are made too hastily on important issues when we make them based on our emotions or bad information or impulses just to satisfy another. And as a Christian, as a light in the world, people see you and rely on your influence upon them (Matt. 5:16) and your input. So, on important matters, it is wise to seek counsel and advice from God first (Matt. 6:33). And then, instead of getting information overload from several inexperienced individuals seek advice from others who are experienced and most importantly, godly realizing that the only basis for a really good decision is correct thinking knowing that wisdom comes from above (Jam. 3:17).

Making them too slow. I know that in the cartoon the tortoise

beat the hair. But realistically, decisions can be more like watching a pressure cooker: with Time all it does it builds steam and cooks everything in it. But, if you wait too long, it will explode. Of course, we are to count the cost of important matters (Lk. 14:28), but so often it is the case that people procrastinate and are just downright lazy or scared to death to make a decision. And worse, in matters of spirituality, some are double minded and unstable in all their ways (Jam. 1:8). And, James means here that when one is double minded they have two loyalties—two priorities and are pulled in two different directions and become confused because of their emotions or because of the relationship and so, they don't know what is best when dealing with something. But, waiting will seldom make the decision easier and often only complicates the process the longer we wait. But again, if we seek God's help, he will direct our paths (Prov. 3:5-6).

Making them to keep people happy. How many of you have done this? How many of you have made a decision for your family which is of least resistance for fear that a family member would not like it? Or, what about in the church? Of all things, there ought to be a 12-step program for those who are obsessed with seeking the approval of others. We are taught this in our early years, beginning with having the right clothes, driving the right car, and then as

we get older, making decisions that will make everyone love you. Well, everyone will not love you. That is a deceit (Matt. 5:11). Making decision to get approval from others is exhausting and turns us into someone we do not like very much. And, quite frankly, we can become so obsessed with what others will think that we forget about what God thinks. Christians, we are a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17), having been forgiven of sins (Acts 2:38), are God's masterpiece (Eph. 2:10) and greatly loved by Him (Rom. 1:7) and as we stop trying to please men, only then can we realize that we are to be pleasing God in all we do.

Making them when angry. I don't know about you, but I don't think clearly when my emotions get in the way. If we are angry or emotional in our decision making, we will overreact or underreact and emotionally based decisions are oftentimes regretted later. Now, the process of decision making includes judgment that are influenced by the mind and emotions and keep in mind that the decisions we make reflect the desires of the heart (Psa. 119:30), but as David said, "Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee" (Psa. 119:11). So before making the decision, will you please yourself or the Lord? Consider the words of Joshua, "And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve,

whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” (Josh. 24:15). Let us remember that our decisions are not to be “...conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Rom. 12:2).

There are many other mistakes one can make in their decisions. This is why we need to seek God first. It is God who leads us in the paths of uprightness (Prov. 4:11). It is He who states whatever you do it must be done for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31). And, we cannot forget God’s promise that if we lack wisdom for a solution, we should ask God (Jam. 1:5). Decision making can range from easy to painful at times. And, sometimes the right course of action will hurt us in some way and it is during these difficult times where we need grace the most because as a Christian, you make decisions by the will of God (1 Pet. 4:1-2). So, seek God in your decisions. “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” (Prov. 3:5-6).

Robert Notgrass

# God gave you a gift of 86,400 seconds today. Have you used one to say **THANK YOU?**

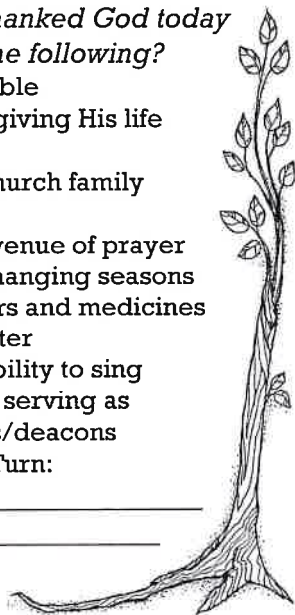
*Have you thanked God today  
for any of the following?*

- The Bible
- Jesus giving His life for us
- Our church family
- Jobs
- The avenue of prayer
- The changing seasons
- Doctors and medicines
- Laughter
- The ability to sing
- Those serving as elders/deacons
- Your Turn:

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# Being a Disciple

G E W A D T H R L C A I Q V A G K X F A  
Q L B H C U B M S Q V W Q T H S J E O T  
Z K V H Q T K Q F L K J V C Y U Q T A F  
O R Z Z D C R X M E S W K T W H I S M E  
U G L P M L I G H L C V J H N A R D B C  
K S D Z X I X J S I U G L O D B W C Q C  
R T S W Z D D S S S U N U U U Z X Z Y Q  
H R S Y S Q K O X T W J G S J M D Y U T  
J I B T F R A C Z N L O X A G N E H S F  
N G D W A W A J N B C O U N T G D F X B  
C O H J T X B W T S J O K D C I B X E Y  
H T S L H E I D Q V F S S Y P B D K G Q  
I B A L E T N E R S C S B R K V Q K A M  
L I F E R C E Y F I K W X C X K N R I Y  
D X N N V O V L Z S K K Q T O W E R L N  
R V V Z F I R R I T S U T O P I U C Y F  
E Q M J W K C Y J E X I Q Y A F P R V A  
N V M E Z Q M Y C R D D J O R E F O B A  
P Z B R O T H E R S A D E A C W Z W D L  
W O X M O T H E R N D Y Q Q Y K C D D C  
A W F A S P S E G D B Y W C R O S S F G

**DIRECTIONS:** Look up the scripture in the Bible, and find the answer in the crossword above.

Luke 14:25, *These accompanied Jesus*

Luke 14:26, "if anyone comes to me and does not hate his own \_\_\_\_\_"

Luke 14:26, and \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 14:26, and \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 14:26, and \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 14:26, and \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 14:26, and \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 14:26, yes, and even his own \_\_\_\_\_, he cannot be my disciple."

Luke 14:27, "...bear his own \_\_\_\_\_ and come after me..."

Luke 14:28, "For which of you, desiring to build a \_\_\_\_\_..."

Luke 14:28, "...does not first sit down and \_\_\_\_\_ the cost..."

Luke 14:31, "able with ten \_\_\_\_\_ to meet him who comes against him..."