

[DECISIONS THAT DETERMINE DESTINY]

[excerpt from **THE VANGUARD LEADER** by **FRANK DAMAZIO**]

Decisions determine destiny. Choose carefully and wisely.

And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of 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 (**Joshua 24:15**).

Life is full of decisions. They range from relatively small to major life-changing decisions. The decisions we make turn around and “make” us. The vanguard leader needs to become a wise man to make wise decisions.

A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel (**Proverbs 1:5**; see also **Proverbs 8:33; 9:8,9**).

The following ground rules will help guide decision makers in wisdom:

1. Become grounded in basic bible knowledge.
2. Become familiar with Godly principles that govern life and ministry.
3. Be open and sensitive to the Holy Spirit and seek a clear inner witness.
4. Be comfortable with your own gift of common sense.
5. Learn from wise men’s lifestyles and decision-making processes and seek mature counsel.
6. Learn from your own mistakes.
7. Ask yourself, “Does this harmonize with my personal desires? What special guidance can I discern?”
8. Pray. In prayer God’s voice can be heard, especially if prayer is a daily habit or addiction.
9. Research the subject you are considering and get all the facts. List out potential assets and liabilities.

Hindrances to wise decision making include being hasty, stubborn, self-willed, and double minded. Accounts of wise and poor decision making hold instruction for anyone who reads his Bible. Stories of Bible characters, all of whom made decisions, “were written for our admonition,” according to the apostle Paul (**1 Corinthians 10:11**).

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Men tend to take matters into their own hands. When this happens, God may let a man struggle in the darkness created by his decisions. Guard against quick decisions and snap judgments. Realize that subjective, personal biases can lead a man to interpret almost anything as a sign of God's approval and blessing on something he wants. Close friends whom you trust the most can lead you astray. Be aware of the subtle influence of your former lifestyle in determining the will of God. Always select methods and strategies that are at harmony with principles and guidelines of Scripture. Sometimes God gives you your request but sends leanness to your soul. The thing received becomes a trial and a constant reminder of the need to yield to God and His way.

God has no policeman walking around, grabbing Christians by the neck, and saying, "Read your Bible, go to church, and give to missions." God created man superior to all other creatures. He gave man the power and privilege of choice. With that privilege comes the terrible responsibility of living with the results or consequences of those choices. There may two sides to every issue, but there also are two sides to a sheet of fly paper, and it makes a big difference to the fly which side he chooses to walk on. The concert violinist at New York's Carnegie Hall said she became skilled through "planned neglect." She planned to neglect everything not related to her goal. Like Mary and Moses, we can choose the best things in life. We can choose eternal pleasures rather than sin's pleasures (**Luke 10:42; Hebrews 11:25; Proverbs 1:29**). The essential part of life is the fear of God.

Vanguard leaders are to move the people of God forward. In moving them forward, leaders need to have faith in God's sovereignty, and trust in God's wisdom. They need to keep God's wonderful goodness in mind. They need to allow the wisdom of God to permeate all decision making. Let us move forward.