

## 3 Foundations of Biblical Decision Making

The Bible is not primarily about you. Neither is it primarily about me. When we recognize this, it not only changes the way we read the Bible; it changes the way we approach the Bible entirely. While God's Word does tell us the truth about ourselves, and who we are meant to be, it primarily tells us about God – who He is, what He desires, and what His plan is for the universe.

That truth is fundamental to understanding how the Bible helps us make decisions. Because the Bible is primarily about God, we see ourselves in light of God. We view our lives as a part of His ongoing plan. We make decisions based on who God is and what He desires, and we find both of these things in the Bible.

Now that's not the easiest way. There have been lots of times in my life when I've faced a big decision that I've thought it would be easier to turn to a page in the Bible and see the specific answer to my question about my life magically appear on that page. But it doesn't work like that. You won't find in Scripture the specific answer to who you should marry, what job you should take, or what city you should live in. But that doesn't mean the Bible doesn't help us make decisions. It certainly does, and here are three ways how:

### 1. The Bible is a mirror for our motives.

The Bible is God's revelation of Himself. And when we read God's Word, we find a God who is holy in all He does, and in all He is. When we encounter this kind of God, we are like Isaiah in Isaiah 6 – we suddenly see ourselves in light of His holy perfection. The Bible, then, exposes us. It cuts us deeply and shows us the true thoughts and intentions of our hearts.

This is what we really need if we are trying to make decisions that honor the Lord. We need that from God's Word because we can't be trusted to know our own hearts. We can so easily trick ourselves into thinking and believing that our motives are pure and right when in actuality they are tainted with all kinds of selfish ambition, greed, and self-protection. The Bible exposes all these things in more, and in so doing, leads us to an attitude of repentance and humility so that we can make a decision with our eyes fully open to exactly why – or why we are not – choosing one thing over another.

### 2. The Bible broadens our perspective.

When we have a big decision set before us, it's so easy to get tunnel vision. That decision consumes our thoughts, our feelings, our prayers, and everything else. It becomes the one thing that concerns us both day and night, and when it does, we forget that redemptive history does not rest on whether we move to Omaha or to Pensacola. The Bible helps us with this.

When we read the Bible, we are reminded of our God whose plans cannot be thwarted. Of the One who has both the wisdom and the power to carry out all He desires. It's not that our single decision doesn't matter; it really does. But it does remind us that this one decision fits inside of a much larger plan, one that has been going on and will keep going on long after we finish

unpacking that U-Haul. A good dose of perspective is never a bad thing because it frees us up to move forward in confidence, not in our decision-making ability, but in a God who will continue on with His unchanging plans.

### **3. The Bible reveals the will of God.**

Finally, the Bible helps us make decisions because the Bible reveals the will of God. True enough, the Bible isn't going to tell you the name of the person you're supposed to marry. But the Bible will tell you the kind of person you are supposed to marry. And the Bible won't tell you what job to take, but the Bible will tell you the purpose and value of work in general. In fact, the Bible will tell us about 95% of God's will for our lives.

As we weigh the options before us, we should do so with this 95% in mind. We should make this decision knowing that God has already told us a tremendous amount about what we should do in life – that we should be faithful and generous and contributing church members. That we should be about sharing the gospel. That we should utilize both our talents and gifts for the sake of the kingdom. Any decision we make ought to fulfill these aspects of God's will, and if one of the options before us hinders any of God's revealed will, then we ought to look in another direction.

In other words, God will not tell us to do something that violates what He's already told us to do.

Look to God's Word, friends. Look to it when you need to make a decision. But don't expect to find some magic formula there. Instead, expect to find His book that shapes the way we think, and therefore shapes the way we make decisions. In the end, that's a better way because God's end for us is not just about positioning us somewhere, but making us into a certain kind of person.

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