

SHOULD I? OR SHOULDN'T I? MAKING WISE CHOICES



PRIMARY SCRIPTURE

Philippians 4:6-7

SECONDARY SCRIPTURES

Proverbs 19:20;
Proverbs 12:15

TIP:

Think back to your high school days, however recent or distant. Think about your “label” and the different groups at your school. Most of us have been where your girls are today!

OBJECTIVES

- To discover what God’s Word says about making decisions
- To provide practical steps to making wise decisions

OVERVIEW

Should I date him? Should I go to the dance with him? If I do, what will people think? Do I get a job? Join a club? What do I want to be when I grow up? Where should I go to college? Should I go to college? Decisions – girls are bombarded with choices to be made at an age when most girls haven’t even figured out who they are. I have met a lot of stressed-out teenage girls. When faced with hard decisions they find themselves unsure – a lot of the time doubting what they know is true and right.

Take Lacey, for example. A star student in our ministry, she was a student leader even in junior high. She always knew the right answer and seemed to always make the right decisions – until her sophomore year, when along came a cute boy who gave her plenty of attention. I am not a huge fan of high school dating, but I’m even less of a fan when a girl decides to “missionary date.” At one point, Lacey wasn’t a big fan either, and she had even challenged friends about making that choice. But when the opportunity came her way she was unable to make a clear decision. In the end, it all worked out and Lacey says she learned her lesson – but it was a lesson that came with pain.

When these types of things happen I can’t help but ask “Why?” Why would a young girl struggle to make the right choice, even if she loved Jesus and knew the right things? I don’t know; I wish I did. I think we sometimes tell girls what decisions they should make without teaching them the whys or the ways to make decisions for themselves. Without the right knowledge it’s easy to make a

decision without realizing the effects of your choice. Without the right tools it's easy to make decisions because of what is socially acceptable or desirable instead of what is best for your girl's faith journey.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7 NIV).

LEADER'S STUDY

Let's take a quick look at the Scriptures used today in our Bible study:

TIP:

Ask your girls what they see as the connection between knowledge and wisdom. Can you have one without the other?

Proverbs 19:20 (NLT) - Get all the advice and instruction you can, so you will be wise the rest of your life.

This verse seems so simple: Listen and get instruction, and the result is that you'll be wise. Wise people make great decisions because they ask for advice and they actually listen.

Proverbs 12:15 (NLT) - Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to others.

When we make a decision quickly without asking God and others for insight, we can easily make a choice that leaves us feeling foolish and regretful. It's important to understand that God created us for community; when we seek guidance and wisdom from our community we make better choices.

Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV) - Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Making good decisions can be hard, and the process can leave us feeling stressed out. But God offers an alternative: peace. He wants to give us a peace that exceeds our understanding in the midst of making easy or hard decisions. And all we have to do is seek Him and His wisdom.

CHOOSING BEST

1. Stop

Some of the best decisions that I have seen made weren't made in haste. And just as that is true, some of the worst decisions I have made or seen made came without stopping.

TIP:

Remind your girls that prayer is a two-way conversation with God. We present our needs to Him, but we also need to listen and watch for His response.

2. Pray

We sometimes forget this simple but effective tool that can help us as believers. Present your situation to God – ask Him to make it clear which decision is the best one to make. You'll be surprised how many times He'll answer it while you pray.

3. Ask

Ask for advice from fellow believers. Surround yourself with friends who love God and who want the best for you, and then seek their advice and encouragement when

making decisions. Find a mentor – an adult who you look up to and trust – someone who has been there, done that, and can help you make good choices.

4. When Not To Stress

Sometimes making a decision is hard because both (or all) choices seem good and honoring to God. These are the times not to stress out but to seek God and others, providing you the confidence to make the right decision. Know that whatever path you choose in these situations, God can be honored in your life and in the decision.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (OPTIONAL)

A decision-making checklist...

(Answer these questions to help determine the right choice to make – use them alone, or with an accountability partner or a mentor)

1. Does it honor God?
2. Does it help me grow?
3. Does it help others grow?
4. Does it cause me or anyone else to stumble?
5. Do my Christian friends and family support me?
6. If not, why not?

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Open Up

TIP:

Ask your girls what they see as the connection between knowledge and wisdom. Can you have one without the other?

- Would you rather pick the movie or let your friends make the choice?
- What kind of bad decisions are famous teen girls making right now? Why do you think they make those types of decisions?
- How do you make a tough decision? How do you know if you made the right decision?

Dig In

Transition into your study by acknowledging that during their teen years, girls are faced with making lots of different types of decisions, ranging from choosing classes to choosing colleges, to date or not to date. These decisions can be overwhelming, but when we seek God and His Word we can find wisdom to make good choices. Share an example of a bad decision you made: how and why you made the decision and the consequences of that decision. The Scriptures point out that God is concerned and aware of our decisions. When we seek Him and ask for advice from other wise people, God provides us with wisdom and peace to make choices that honor Him and lead us in the best possible way.

Read and discuss Proverbs 19:20; Proverbs 12:15; Philippians 4:6-7

- What does it mean to “accept” instruction? And to “listen” to advice?
- How will listening and accepting lead to wisdom?
- What’s the key difference between the wise and the foolish?
- Why does someone become foolish when she won’t listen to wisdom from others?
- When making a decision that is difficult and can lead to anxiety, what does this passage from Philippians say about that anxiety?
- When you hear the statement “peace that transcends all understanding,” what do you think?
- How do you feel about experiencing that type of peace in your life?

CLOSE OUT

- What's the common theme from all these Bible passages about making decisions?
- What kinds of decisions make you feel anxious? What keeps you from presenting those situations to God?
- What is one decision in which you are currently trying to figure out God's best for your life? Are you seeking guidance from anyone?
- Is it hard for you to take advice from people? Why or why not?

