

Decisiveness

vs. Double-Mindedness

Decisiveness is choosing to do what is right based on accurate facts, wise counsel, and clearly defined goals.

Definition

When Daniel faced a decision in Babylon about whether to obey the king's edict or God's commandment, it was not a difficult choice, because he had predetermined that he would obey God, whatever the cost. "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank" (Daniel 1:8).

The Hebrew word translated *purposed* in this verse means "to establish, ordain; to determine." God wants each of us to determine early in life that we will choose to do what is right, whatever the cost. He said, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19).

The Foundation of Wise Decisions

The first step in decisiveness is choosing whom we are going to serve with our lives. Our natural inclination is to serve money with our time, energy, and creativity. We believe that by getting money, we can enjoy all the material possessions that money can buy. We may realize, however, that it is wrong to serve money, and we may try to serve God as well as money. However, Jesus warned,

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon [money]" (Matthew 6:24).

Deciding to follow God means setting aside everything that competes with Him. "Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served . . . And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:14–15).

The Cause of Foolish Decisions

The greatest hindrance to decisiveness is double-mindedness. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways" (James 1:8). He is like a wave of the sea that is driven by the wind and tossed to and fro.

The Greek word for *double-minded* is *dipsuchos*, which means "two-souled, vacillating." *Psuche* is the root for the English word *psychology*, and it involves the mind, will, and emotions. A double-minded person has divided desires. On the one hand, he wants to do what is right, but on the other hand, he wants to enjoy the pleasures of sin, which last only for a short season. (See Hebrews 11:25.)



Life is a continuous series of exchanges based on wise or unwise decisions.

We exchange energy for money, money for food, and food for energy. The same is true on a spiritual level. We exchange temporal things for more of Christ or eternal riches for temporal things.

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."

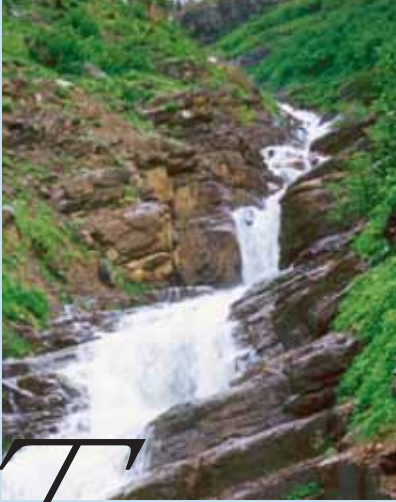
—Philippians 3:8

"Difficulties are overcome when our hearts are ready to do the Lord's will, whatever it may be."

—George Müller

The Four Ds of Decision Making

1. **DON'T**—If it is the responsibility of others, let them do it.
2. **DELAY**—If it should be done at a better time, wait.
3. **DELEGATE**—If others can do it better, let them.
4. **DO IT**—If none of the above apply, do it! —Dr. Glen Heck



The little decisions we make now determine the big decisions we will make later.

Little choices determine character, which will dictate future responses.

Those who avoid decision making thereby decide to let circumstances and others make decisions for them.

The **badger** is a quick decision maker when facing a predator. If it decides not to flee, it will expend all its energy in the fight.



Moses conquered double-mindedness by making a lifetime decision to identify with God and His people. “By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season” (Hebrews 11:24-25).

Decisiveness is based on wise and careful consideration of all available options. Moses considered and determined that the “reproach of Christ [was] greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward” (Hebrews 11:26).

The Value of Seeking Wise Counsel

To have the confidence that our decisions are wise and correct, we must seek out wise counsel, obtaining it as inexpensively as possible. Others have paid a high price for it through wrong decisions. They will usually give us the benefit of their experiences if we simply ask. They then gain some redemptive value for the pain and loss due to past mistakes.

- “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise” (Proverbs 12:15).
- “Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established” (Proverbs 15:22).
- “Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end” (Proverbs 19:20).
- “Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety” (Proverbs 11:14).

How to Base Decisiveness on God’s Word

Wise decision making must be based on God’s will, not on our own natural inclinations, because “there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 14:12). Therefore, God warns, “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered” (Proverbs 28:26).

Every decision that Jesus made was based on His Heavenly Father’s will. He stated, “I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me” (John 5:30). God’s will on a specific matter will be based on universal, non-optional principles of life that He established throughout all His creation and that He explains and illustrates in the Bible. These principles can be incorporated by asking the following questions when making a decision about a specific issue:

1. **Is my use of resources consistent with the purposes for which God created them?** (money, food, clothes, marriage, family, time, friends, etc.)
2. **Whose jurisdiction am I under for this decision?** (parents, employer, government, or church) Decisiveness must never violate the overall jurisdiction of God and the moral principles of His Word.
3. **Can I make this decision with a clear conscience?** Any caution from conscience or the counsel of authorities must also be considered.

4. Am I in harmony with all those involved in this decision?

Decisions based on bitterness or anger are wrong and costly.

5. Have I yielded my rights on this matter?

George Müller was a great man of faith and learned to understand the will of God in specific decisions. He explained that the secret was getting his own heart in such a state that he had no will of his own. A practical way to accomplish this is to list all of the benefits of each choice and to purpose to thank God for whatever choice He indicates is His will.

6. Will it weaken or damage anyone else?

We are not to do anything that will cause a “weaker” brother to stumble, be offended, or be made weak. (See Romans 14:21.) Because of this, we are to even “abstain from all appearance of evil” (I Thessalonians 5:22).

7. Is this fulfilling God’s calling on my life?

God calls each believer to fulfill an important role in the advancement of His kingdom and the damage of Satan’s kingdom. Every decision we make must be in harmony with these objectives. One’s calling will involve praying for and serving all authorities with good works and assisting the fatherless and widows, as well as the poor and those from other nations.

Our primary calling is given in the Great Commission: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have

commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:19–20).

How Fasting Enhances Decisiveness

To increase spiritual alertness for decision making, especially when making critical decisions, it is wise to set aside a day, or several days, for prayer and fasting. Jesus promises that if we fast secretly, He will reward us openly. (See Matthew 6:18.)

One of the many rewards of fasting is an increase in discernment and wise judgment. God promises that through fasting “thy light [shall] break forth as the morning . . . and thy darkness be as the noon day” (Isaiah 58:8, 10).

Personal Evaluation

How decisive are you?

- Have you made a commitment to do what is right, regardless of the cost?
- Have you decided to serve God rather than money, fame, or pleasure?
- Do you seek wise counsel before making a decision?
- Have you purposed to discern God’s will in every decision and then to do it?
- Do you fast and cry out to God for wisdom in decisions?
- Do you make decisions based on impulse or on *rhemas* from God’s Word?
- Do you reject advice that is contrary to Scripture?



Decisiveness is focusing on the destination, rather than focusing on distractions.

The more clearly we define our goals, the more skilled we can be in making wise decisions.

“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” —Philippians 3:14

“I determined never to stop until I had come to the end and achieved my purpose.”

—David Livingstone



We build decisiveness when we refuse to reconsider a decision that we know is right.