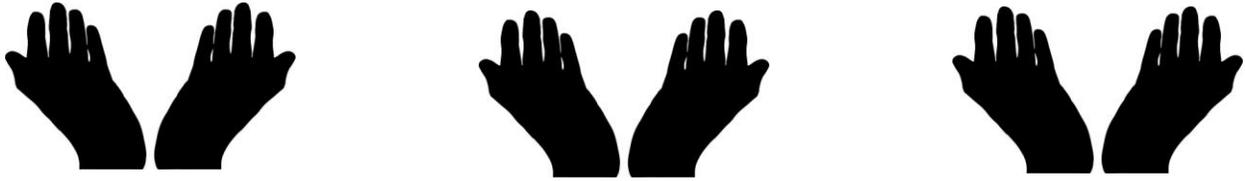


# Praying for Our Decisions



**Psalm 37:23-24 (NIV)** The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; <sup>24</sup> though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand.

## 1. Lacking Wisdom?

### The Good Shepherd and Our Wisdom...

**John 10:11 (NIV)** “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

**1 Corinthians 1:30 (NIV)** It is because of him [*God*] that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.



- Pray and give thanks to God for Jesus who is our Good Shepherd and our Wisdom
- Pray and give thanks for the sacrifice of Jesus which provides our righteousness, holiness, and redemption

### Asking God for wisdom...

**James 1:5–8 (NIV)** If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. <sup>6</sup> But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. <sup>8</sup> Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

**Isaiah 48:17 (NIV)** This is what the LORD says— your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: “I am the LORD your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.



- Pray for God to remove any doubt in our hearts so we can pray in full faith and trust.
- Let us now lay before God any decision/s we are facing knowing God will provide the wisdom and direction we need.

## 2. Hearing God’s Voice

### Stripping Away Strongholds...

- We can ask for wisdom but how do we know when God answers?
- Hearing God’s voice requires us to remove anything that distracts us from keeping our eyes upon Jesus.

**Hebrews 12:1-2** (NIV) Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, <sup>2</sup> fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**Philippians 2:3-4** (NIV) Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, <sup>4</sup> not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.



- Pray for God to remove anything in our hearts or mind that hinder our ability to hear God's voice.
- Pray God will remove any strongholds, selfish ambition or conceit, and help us to focus and fix our eyes upon Jesus.

- So, first we pray for our hearts and minds to be cleared next we have to learn how to listen.

### God's still small voice...

**1 Kings 19:11-12** (NIV) The LORD said [to Elijah], "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by."

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. <sup>12</sup> After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.

**1 Samuel 3:9** (NIV) So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.



- Pray and Ask God to still our hearts and direct our focus so we can hear his voice rather than looking for earth shaking signs.
- Pray God will give us the ability to submit ourselves to him and just listen.

### 3. Understanding God's Wisdom

- Asking for wisdom, trusting God for that wisdom, and listening for God to speak gets us on the road to making good decisions. However, there's more yet to do.

- Paul spoke of this in his letter to the believers Corinth...

**2 Corinthians 4:4-6** (NIV) The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

- So, we need to know how to distinguish between God's wisdom and the lies of Satan that are often disguised as our own wisdom or that of the world.

### God's wisdom is from above.

- God's wisdom, true wisdom, comes from above as seen in James chapter three..

- In these verses can also learn about the qualities that make up God's wisdom.

**James 3:13–18 (NIV)** Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. <sup>14</sup> But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. <sup>15</sup> Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. <sup>16</sup> For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

<sup>17</sup> But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. <sup>18</sup> Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

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- Pray for God to reveal any selfish ambition or envy in our hearts.
  - Pray for the ability to acknowledge the truth of what's in our heart and, if necessary, repent of any negative thoughts or feelings and then ask for forgiveness.
  - Pray for a humble and sincere heart. Ask God for a submissive, loving, and considerate heart filled with mercy, good fruit, impartiality, and sincerity.
  - Pray for the ability to be a peace maker.

- Up to this point we've learned God will provide us with wisdom, we can pray and ask for God's wisdom, and we know what God's wisdom is like.

- Now we need to know how we can receive it? What makes that possible?

- Receiving God's wisdom requires us to have the mind of Christ-to see, hear, and understand things from God's perspective.

- As we've already seen, it comes down to our hearts and now we can also include our minds.

### Having the Mind of Christ . . .

**1 Corinthians 2:15-16 (NIV)** The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, <sup>16</sup> for, "Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

**Philippians 2:1-2 (NIV)** Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, <sup>2</sup> then make my [Paul] joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.

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- Pray that our thoughts and desires would be that of Jesus so we may receive and know his wisdom, his direction, and his purpose for our life.
  - Pray that we will have the same love as Christ, be one in Spirit, and one in mind.

### Letting Go and letting God...

- Putting God's wisdom to use requires us to fully embrace what we've come to understand about God's wisdom and allow nothing to stand in our way of following and using that wisdom.
- When it comes to decisions, especially life changing decisions, we are often carrying a heavy burden as we consider all the potential risks and sacrifices involved.
- But God reminds us how to handle that...

**1 Peter 5:7** (NIV) Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

**Hebrews 11:1** (NIV) Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

**John 16:31-33** (NIV) "Do you now believe?" Jesus replied. <sup>32</sup>"A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

<sup>33</sup>"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

**Ephesians 1:22-23** (NIV) And God placed all things under his [*Jesus*] feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.



- Pray and give every anxious thought and fear over to God concerning any decisions that need to be made.
- Pray for the confidence, hope, and assurance that God will provide direction even though we can't see at this time how it will all turn out.
- Give God praise knowing all things have been placed under the feet of Jesus and he has overcome the world and any obstacles related to our decisions.

### 4. Waiting for an Answer

- Even when we're doing all the right things needed in making a decision, sometimes waiting for an answer is the toughest part.

**Psalms 130:5-6** (NIV) I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope. <sup>6</sup>I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning.

**Isaiah 40:31** (NIV) but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.



- Remember with thanksgiving and be encouraged by all the past instances of God's wisdom and guidance you've received.
- Pray, that as we wait, we can stay focused in and on God's Word so we can spend our time right now, being all we can for God in our current circumstance.
- Pray for God to renew our strength daily as we wait, trusting his answer will come.

## 5. Confirmation

- Knowing Satan is always looking for ways to deceive us and lead us astray it's a good practice to seek confirmation for the answers we have received concerning our decisions.
- We can seek confirmation in God's Word as well as with other believers.

**Psalm 119:105** (NIV) Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** (NIV) All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,<sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**Romans 15:30-32** (NIV) I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me [*Paul*] in my struggle by praying to God for me.<sup>31</sup> Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea and that the contribution I take to Jerusalem may be favorably received by the Lord's people there,<sup>32</sup> so that I may come to you with joy, by God's will, and in your company be refreshed.



- Pray for God to provide confirmation for your decision, as you search the Scriptures knowing they will be a light for your path.
- Pray God will direct you to the right people so you can ask for their prayerful insights and support.
- Pray God will open your eyes to see his confirmation no matter how it may come.

## 6. The Follow Through

- Once we're convinced that we have God's answer and direction for our decision, there's just one thing left to do...
- We must determine in our heart to walk in obedience to follow and fulfill whatever direction God has given.

**Psalm 119:34** (NIV) Give me understanding, so that I may keep your law and obey it with all my heart.

**James 2:21-23** (NIV) Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? <sup>22</sup> You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. <sup>23</sup> And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called God’s friend.



- Pray and rejoice in God’s faithfulness to hear and answer our prayers.
- Pray for the courage to take the steps necessary to obediently follow God’s direction so our faith will be complete and we can be righteous in the eyes of God.