

Whether you turn to the right or to the left,  
you will hear a voice saying, "This is the road!  
Now follow it."

Isaiah 30:21



## Decisions

Liberty Towers Church of the Nazarene

Men's study

**MEN TO MEN**  
**M2M**  
REAL MEN...REAL ISSUES...REAL FAITH

## Study Question Methodology



- ▶ Shine – anything stand out, big idea, revelation
- ▶ Question – Any questions that have not been addressed
- ▶ Cross – Any thing that revealed Jesus and his will to you
- ▶ Think – Any thing that caused to you to stop and think and will required additional study
- ▶ Apply – did you find something to apply to your life this week.

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Worksheets

Fill in the areas as you go

Any thought, idea or concept that could make a difference should noted on this worksheet

We will review them again next week

\*\* may well be used for personal bible study



## Decisions and how we make them

- ▶ I make decisions as I see fit
  - ▶ I am a free being
  - ▶ I have needs
  - ▶ I have my concept of the truth
- ▶ I follow the law

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Wine glass... bottle of wine.

What?

I am a Christian, I have been made righteous by God's mercy, I study to show my self approved rightly dividing the words of truth. I make my decisions according to the will of God as I understand it.

What is wrong with drinking alcohol at Bible Study? Some of you drink coffee and there are some Christians who would tell you it is a sin. Catholics drink wine. Jesus made wine. What is wrong with a little wine for my stomach's sake?

*If I make a decision to drink a glass of wine in Men's bible study what are the things that may well change?*

Every decision we make changes things, people around us, our circumstances and our lives.

Each of us have ideas, concepts of what is right and wrong. Most of these value judgements have been nurtured through our lifetimes. We have allowed peer pressure and societal norms mold us into making decisions that may or may not be the best.


There are hundreds of factors that could be assessed as we make our daily decisions. From what color of socks we put on in the morning, to what would be the best tire to buy for a 2006 Jeep Liberty Renegade.

There is a war going on in our lives. Free will and the law

The world is very concerned with the law. If it doesn't suit us then change the law. For everyone....

Christians we have to place something at the end of our self constructed teeter totter.  
Want to balance it all

But the law seems always be the more weighty end.  
Life seems to be all about the law  
Life seems to be all about doing.  
Two boxes. What I can do and what I can not do



## The law vs Free will

Romans 4:13-15 New International Version (NIV)

- ▶ 13 It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith means nothing and the promise is worthless, because the law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

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We expend our lives in exasperation using our own strength and personal resources keeping the law.

We have not moved the world and its expectations from the top end we have just added a whole lot more.

The law is seen as a burden

Something that has to be kept. Something we have to do. As if by compulsion.

“Here are the rules, it is up to you to keep them.”

BUT IF IT IS ME that is making me righteous what is God supposed to do.

Our righteousness has no value to God.....It is a waste

Romans 4: 13-14

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God promised Abraham a special miracle: Father of many nations. To become the example to all the world.

But this promise was no based on what Abraham could or would do; it was based upon the righteousness of faith.

It was not based upon the law

If it was based upon the law the promise is void. V14

IF OUR DECISIONS ARE BASED UPON THE NORMALCY OF MAN OR EVEN OF KEEPING

THE LAW THE PROMISES MADE TO HIS CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM ARE VOID.



# Salvation is a God thing

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ILLUSTRATION. CUPCAKE.

Our joy, is not the pretty frosting on the cake.  
Not something to added to give us a little happiness.  
The promise of Jesus is not something added.  
Our decision making is not something we can add in to our experience.  
If you are settling your Christianity on a decision made  
And there is nothing more you do not have Christ.

We are not saved simply by a personal decision

Salvation is a godly work

It is a causal point for God to do HIS work

It is a change in being

It is a transformation of the heart and mind

It is an ever whelming affection of God

It is a ever diminishment of the affection for the World.

Salvation is not my mind doing what I can do to attain perfection.

Salvation is a miracle

It is God

The infinite, all loving, righteous, holy, all knowing, everywhere

present God in YOU and IN ME.

It causes our affections to change

It causes me to fall in love with God

And falling out of love with the world

Salvation is an inner delight

It is not the icing on the cake..... IT IS the cake

NOT something added on

Not the last car on the train

Not something you can do without

Not an attitude of ambivalence

It is not something to take or leave

Your salvation is more than an intellectual exercise

Your life become more than a hope of joy someday.

Our decisions are now based upon a new measuring stick.

Not the law

Not the social mores of our society

Not the political correctness of those around us.

**It is not the letter of the law but the very spirit of the law**

**Our first decision criteria is not a criteria at all it is a mindset.**

In Matthew 5:20-44, Christ showed that obeying the “letter of the Law” is a matter of physical action, whereas obeying the “spirit of the Law” requires more than just outward actions—it also involves an attitude of the mind—referred to by the Apostle Paul as “circumcision of the heart” (Rom. 2:28-29).

For example, Christ showed that to merely refrain from adultery is obedience to the “letter of the Law,” but to obey both the spirit and letter of the Law, one must also exercise self-control (“temperance”—Gal. 5:23), and not even lust after someone (committing “adultery in his heart”).

Another example (not mentioned by Christ in Matt. 5) is in the keeping of the Sabbath Day. To merely “remember the Sabbath, to keep it holy” (Ex. 20:8), “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together” (Heb. 10:25), is in obedience to the letter of the Law. But to also rejoice in the Sabbath and call it a “delight” (Isa. 58:13) is keeping the spirit of the Law, as God intends. This principle applies to all of God’s laws.



Definition of decision

- ▶ A conclusion or resolution after consideration
- ▶ Formal judgement

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Decisions whether done well or not so well require thought

**Decision making is a craft to be mastered. Not an art that will never be perfect**

The more you do well the easier and more quickly the process

becomes

Brain synaps and pathways. Becomes a way of thinking

\*\*\*\*\*We all need to slow down our decision making process to allow fofo

consideration

These next six weeks is about slowing down

These next six weeks is about understanding the decisions you have made in the past

These next six weeks is about understanding the decisions you will make in the future




## Decisions: Class Foundation

- ▶ Decisions are a inevitable part of humanness
- ▶ My life is the sum total of my personal and willfull decisions.
- ▶ God has a plan for My life
- ▶ God wants us to make good decisions
- ▶ We all have made bad decisions, some have been very bad
- ▶ God is still our guide

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- **All my decisions no matter how they were made, have not been always the best.**
- **I have made lots of bad decisions in my life.**
- **These decisions were made when I was young and not so young.**
- **Some were made in the ministry, while others were made in the business world.**
- **I have made bad decisions pertaining to my family and even in my marriage.**
- **I have never set out to make a bad decision.**
- **My methodology of decision making changed over the years but sometimes a decision will raise itself up and bite me on the behind.**
- **Some bad decisions I have made resulted in personal despair and some have even been repeated with an expectation of better results; but not very often has the result changed.**
- **So what can I do to improve my decision making process?**
- **How can I make them and significantly increase the quality?**



## 1. Decisions and belly buttons

- Decisions are an inevitable part of humanness
- Everyone faces them
- They come in all shapes and sizes
- Challenge:
  - Examine your decisions
  - Discover the why of your decisions

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Free choice means we have to choose.

Kids can decide to cheat on a test

Teens to attend a party with classmates with dubious reputations

Parents choose which guidelines and rules will be for the family

Employees choose to arrive on time or be always a little late

Employers choose what to do about the habitual late comers.

Shapes and sizes

Eating, exercise use of our time

It is not a decision of whether we eat or not. It is how much

The next six weeks I need you to be conscious of your decisions.


Decide to examine your decisions.

Driving down the street – decision to be courteous, decision to drive with due care, concern for your safety,

Watching the television – is this the best use of my time, DECISION, is what I am watching the best for me

Eating – We all have to eat, but how much is the best decision.

Relationship with your family – decide to be loving or critical or just no interaction.



## 2. Decisions not conditions

- My life is the sum total of my personal and willful decisions.
- I am not a product of my circumstances, I am a product of my decisions
- We are not grass to be blown from side to side by every breeze.
- My life is more than fate.

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I am a Godly decision  
I am created in God's image  
His image is portrayed in my decisions

### 3. plan for man



HOLD YOUR  
HEAD UP HIGH,  
AND KNOW GOD  
IS IN CONTROL  
HE HAS A  
PERFECT PLAN  
FOR YOUR LIFE.

PictureQuotes.com

- God has a plan for My life
- Hashtag #GODWILLING
- God's plans are always the best
- Sometimes the process is painful and hard
- Sometimes your plans don't workout because God has better ones
- Sometimes we must accept that God has a better plan

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God's plan is not a mandate. Within that plan are still decision points

#Godwilling

*Just finished interviewing for the teaching position!!! #godwilling*

*Big news on the way! Let's see if all of these singing lessons pay off... #godwilling  
I'm finally able to afford to go on a mission trip, but waiting on the Lord to release me! #godwilling*

*Mom's heading into surgery. If you pray, pray for a miracle. #godwilling*

All of these situations, even though they are all based on different hopes or desires, have one thing in common.

They desire God's will to be in line with their own, and they leave enough room in their hopeful prayer to respect

that the Lord is still in control, even if it doesn't go the way they hope.

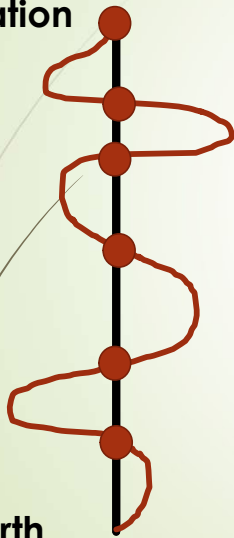
Each situation shows an expressed belief that God has a plan and a purpose for our lives yet reveals

that they believe we are called to do something along with Him until we get to the point where it's out of our hands.

From then on, it's God's will if the outcome happens the way we want, and it's God's will if it doesn't.

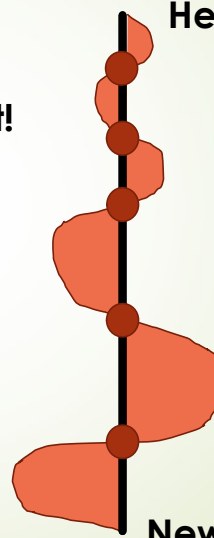
4. Decisions come at intersections of life

Salvation



God's plan is a  
Straight line.  
Our lives are not!

Heaven



Birth

New Birth

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## 5. God wants you

- ▶ The way we live life is important to God
- ▶ God is more concerned with your future than you are.
- ▶ Your plan may well include some rocky detours but they are still important.
  - ▶ Jeremiah 7:23 Walk in obedience to all I command you, that it may go well with you
  - ▶ Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts your think toward you, says the lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.
  - ▶ I John 3:1 behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of god!

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God did not just start the earth spinning, populate it with animals, and people and went on vacation.



## 6. Good is better than bad

- ▶ We all have made bad decisions, some have been very bad
- ▶ Free choice will lead to bad decisions
- ▶ Statistics – extra marital affairs
- ▶ WHY?

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Who likes making bad decisions?

Has anyone made a bad decision?

Has anyone made a wrong decision?

Has anyone made a willful transgression against the known will of God?

WHY?

America extra marital affairs

84% of the population state that they are unacceptable

6% of the population state they is acceptable and normal

10% simply states it doesn't matter.

YET 25% of all married men responded as having an extra marital affair

17% of all married women also responded as had one


That is 42% of all married couples made a decision that was unacceptable.

Jesus said if you just look on a woman in lust you have sinned.

98% of all men state they have lusted

89% of all woman






## 7. The how of the why

- ▶ God is our guide
- ▶ God's purpose for you is bigger than your mistakes
- ▶ God's will always help in your decisions
  - ▶ If you let him
  - ▶ If you know the how of the why

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## 8. Decision making process includes specific priorities

- Relationship over things
- Intellect over emotion
- Joy over happiness
- Future over the past

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### 1. Relationship over things

- People are always more important than things
- Things come and go
- People are forever
- Wives are more important than a type of clock. Illustration

### 2. Intellect over emotion

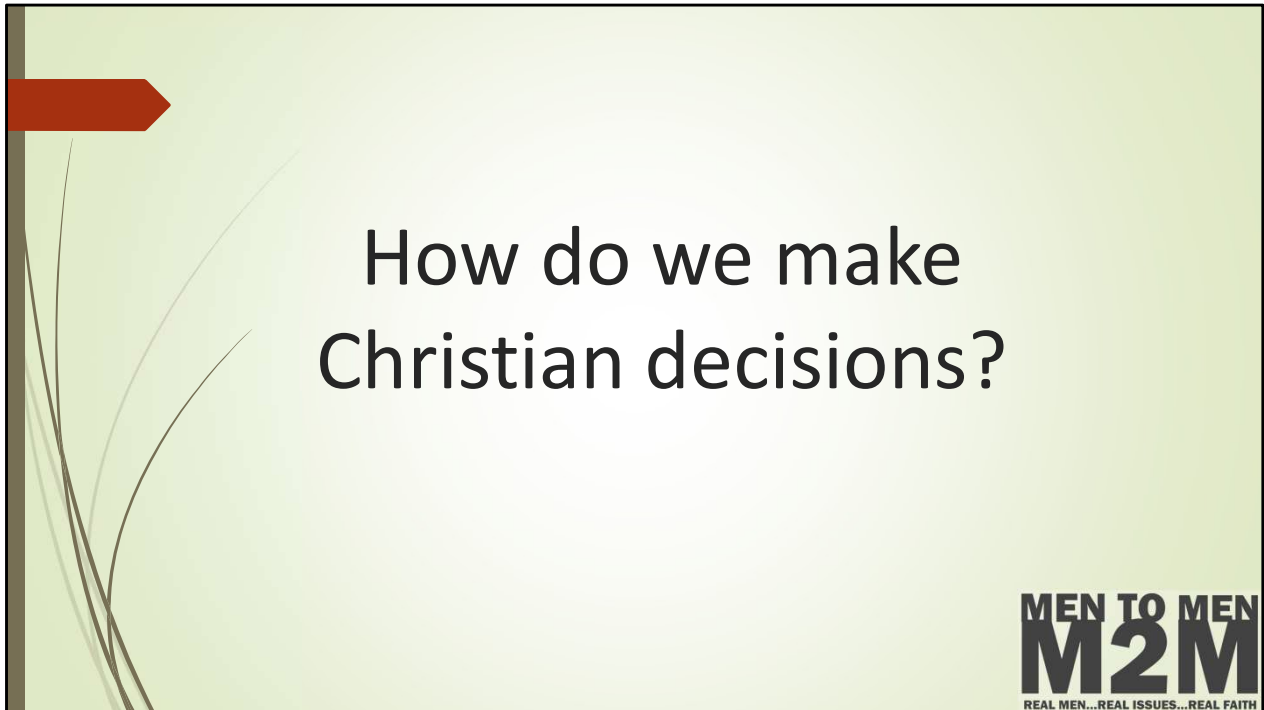
- Emotions rule the immediate.
- Slow down let the emotion subside
- The intellect allows the spirit to speak
- The intellect allows the soul to make the decision

### 3. Joy over happiness

- Happiness is short term
- Joy comes in abiding
- Our desires will change the longer we abide in Him
- Joy is beyond a smile – I Thess 5:16
- If you seek happiness it will disappear
- Happiness is a good thing but when it is rooted in joy it is the best.
- We can't always have happiness but we can always have joy.

### 4. Future over the past

- The past is over. Can't change that, But it can be forgiven
- The past does not necessarily dictate our future
- Our habits of yesterday can be broken
- The future is based on decisions



White Board exercise.....

Decisions come in all shapes and sizes

What you will eat

If you will get exercise today

The use of your time

Regular decision made every day over and over again

Become habits Become the way I am

Be a consistency of action

Two things that will kill the decision making process in church, in business, or life are:

We have always done it that way

And

We have never done it that way

We are a sum of our decisions

Good decisions at the time may well seem good but sometimes turn out very bad

2000 YEARS SINCE THE LIFE AND TEACHING OF JESUS

our neighbors, our friends, our relatives, some even here in our church are living broken lives because of decisions

They are living with broken hearts

Some with shattered dreams

Some are living in a dark night that never seems to end

ALL BECAUSE OF DECISIONS....

So how do we do it

education.....career...location ... marriage... relationships...church

Theories of Christian Decision making

Our decisions must be based on two things.

- General calling
  - For every christian
- Specific calling
  - Individual situation

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Do not get confused about the word calling

used in many different ways in church today.

I have even heard someone say they were called to stack chairs.

Almost every time the concept of calling or being called in scripture is toward God or to salvation.

The general call is one to all Christians.

We will talk about the second in the next five weeks. The specific calling

The General call is specific, measurable, concise, without shadow, without interpretation, without grey edges

Without fungibility.

Next week we will be discussing this General calling

It should