

3 Ways to Make Wise Decisions

by Shane Idleman

Shane Idleman shares three essential steps to making wise decisions: recognizing your need for wisdom, asking God for guidance, and holding on to His promises in faith.

Duration: 31:35

Scripture: Proverbs 4:7, Philippians 4:6, James 1:5

Topics: "Decision Making", "Wisdom"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes three key ways to make wise decisions amidst the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. He highlights the importance of recognizing our need for God's wisdom, asking for it in faith, and persevering through trials with patience and humility. Idleman encourages listeners to seek God's guidance rather than relying on worldly advice, reminding them that true wisdom comes from a heart aligned with God's Word. He calls for a collective humility and prayerfulness as a nation, urging everyone to turn to God for direction and support during these turbulent times.

Transcript

The message I have for you right now is three ways to make wise decisions, three ways to make wise decisions. And I want to say something up front. With the current COVID-19 pandemic, I read something, it was so true, it made this point that we're all in the same storm, but we're not in the same boat.

And I think that's where a lot of anger and fighting and bickering is coming from. We're all in the same storm, but we're not in the same boat. What I mean by that is some people receive a stimulus check, others lost their job.

Some people are experiencing terrible family dynamics. Others are realizing that they were too busy and they want to stay at home a little bit longer. Others are seeing death and decay in our hospitals, while others are mocking the stats.

And we see this same storm, but different boats. So my call to you is to be gracious and loving to each other. I've messed up.

I've been frustrated myself. We have to calm this storm. We can't react and go out and rebel.

We have to be very careful and methodic and we need to be prayed up. We need to be fasting and contending for the heart of God, honestly. So with that said, three ways to make wise decisions.

We were in James briefly, and I read this last week. My brethren, actually two weeks ago, because last week was Resurrection Sunday. I want to encourage you to listen to that message.

We've been hearing from people, it's really impacting them at a very deep level. But James said this, my brethren counted all joy when you fall into various trials. And I talked about that two weeks ago.

So watch that message. Knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience, but let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. And two weeks ago, we talked about how we have to allow this trial to break us.

I believe there's still too much pride, there's still too much anger, there's still too much relying on self. And we have to get to a point where that we just allow this to break us and crush our pride and crush our self-reliance. And also talked about making attitude adjustment.

We have to make an attitude adjustment. We have to adjust our attitude. And then number three, just to refocus or to recap, we have to stay under the load.

We have to stay under the load of this storm to get through we have to basically persevere. And I believe I truly believe that it's time to like many of you to open our nation to open America and these steps I'm going to talk about are there's just three these steps are not only important to opening reopening the country. They're very important in our daily lives.

I'm pretty sure most of you want to know how to make wise decisions. You're at the end of your rope. And you're saying, I can't continue holding on.

I need direction. I need to make wise decisions in the area of finances and relationship and my personal health and in church and there's so many different areas out there. But I want to just throw this statistic out there.

If we if we allow this quarantine to keep us from not going back to work, how many I saw this as well actually Jack Hibbs, a friend of mine, Jack Hibbs, Pastor Jack Hibbs texted me this information. How many of the 1.8 million cases of new cancers each year will go undetected for months because routine screenings and appointments have been postponed? How many heart and kidney and liver and pulmonary illnesses will fester while people's lives are on hold? How many drug and alcohol deaths can we expect as America stews in their homes? How many new cases of obesity related diabetes and heart disease will emerge as Americans are banished from outdoor recreation? The point is and the point that I'm trying to make is at some point, we've got to continue to pray that God would open a huge door and that this the unfruitful works of darkness would be exposed so we can get back to what we are called to do. But until we do that, we've got to have the right attitude, have the patience and the understanding and we have to have wisdom.

So here we go. You ready? Three ways to make wise decisions. Verse five that we just finished from and James, if any of you lacks wisdom, pay attention.

This is so important. Young adult before you get married, or if you're older and or you've messed up your life, you're in your third recovery home, or you're probably not there, you're probably at home. But if you're on your way to your third recovery home or your third marriage, heading for divorce, listen, this is so important.

If any of you lacks wisdom, if any of you lacks wisdom, make sure to turn on CNN and Fox News. And what is Dr. Phil saying and Oprah? No, if any one of you lacks wisdom, let him look at Facebook. No, we all know let him ask God.

So if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all liberally and without reproach. That's gonna be important in just a minute without reproach means God doesn't mock you. He doesn't say, you asked me for wisdom.

Last week, what's wrong with you? Knucklehead, get back up. What's and there's not a reproach. There's not a rebuke.

It's he gives it liberally. And it will be given to those who ask. But here's the key.

Let him ask in faith with no doubting. For he who doubts is like a wave and you have this idea wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. I actually have this thing at home you can stand on it.

There's a little ball underneath it. And it's for core stabilization training. My kids have it.

Well, it's strengthening your core. And it's like you have to try to stand on it straight and it moves in all directions. And I thought of this verse.

And that's how we are. We're double minded. And we want to trust in God.

But then we we fall back to this and we want to trust in God and we we fall back to this and we get our prescription for Xanax. And then we we get confused. And then we it was just it's a life of confusion.

I believe God wants to bring that to an end in the lives of many people. So that person who doubts is like the waves in the sea. And then he said for not let that man or woman, of course, manhood suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord.

So if you're double minded, and we're lacking in faith, we won't receive anything from the Lord. Why? Because he is a double minded man, which means that we're double minded. If we had time to look up in the Greek, it's of two minds, the mind who trusts in God, and then the mind who looks to the world, the mind who trusts in in the things of God and God's Word.

I remember the Bible when I was little, but then also my mind goes to the things of the world and what my friends are saying what others are saying. So that person is a double minded man, he's unstable, and God will not be able to give that person wisdom. So what do we do? Well, I'm glad you asked.

Here we go. Number one. Now, none of these are going to be aha moments.

All of us know these things, but they're so important to making wise decisions. Here's number one, and I had a problem with this one growing up in my 20s. I could not say, I need help.

I need help. One of my kids, I'm not going to say who just in case they're watching me said they think they know it all. They know everything.

And so the first thing in gaining wisdom is this. If anyone lacks, so your first step is to see your need. If anyone lacks wisdom, ask God.

So the first step to making wise choices is this is what I do. God, I don't know. I don't know.

I lack wisdom in this area. I'm not smart in this area. And what you're doing is you're humbling yourself.

So it has to start there. Without that, you might as well throw out the rest of these points in the trash. Because what's God going to do with a man or woman who already knows what they're going to do? They're not open for correction.

They've got their plan. And here's what they're going to do. And then they're going to ask God to bless that.

Have you ever done that? Hey, God, here's what I'm going to do. Would you bless this? Instead of saying, God, I lack wisdom in this area, it takes humility, especially as men. That's why they say men don't want to pull over and ask for directions.

Now, you can ask my wife, I'm actually the complete opposite of that. I want to get where I'm going. I want to get there quick.

And I will stop and ask directions very quickly. I don't want to drive around and lose time for an hour. But that theme with men is so true.

We don't want to ask for direction. We don't want to ask for advice. Anytime I build something, I rarely look at the owner's manual until it's too late.

And I have to go back and retake it apart and look at the owner's manual. And so it is so crucial. If anyone lacks, let him ask God so you have to see your need that we are dependent upon God.

I wish I could get this message to all the governors in our nation to Washington. We are desperate for God. We have to be consumed with God's direction.

We have to ask for God's wisdom. This week, the New York governor told CNN this, our behavior has stopped the spread of the virus. God did not stop the spread of this virus.

God did not stop the spread of this virus. And as soon as I heard that, read that, I thought of Sennacherib. You say, who is Sennacherib? Well, he is an Assyrian king.

Assyrians were bad news. They would put skulls of their enemy. They would build pyramids of skulls.

They would remove the children from the womb of the mother. The Assyrian army was terrible. Here is Sennacherib.

Sennacherib. And he's standing, looking at the people of Judah, and he's ready to attack them. And he said, who is your God? Who is your God? No God can defeat me.

Look at all the other gods of all the other nations that we have wiped out. Who is your God? Oh, Israel. And Hezekiah, I believe it was, went to prayer, went to fasting, and they called down the fire of God Almighty.

And the death angel that night slew 185,000 of the most ruthless soldiers that ever lived at that time. That's the God we serve. You cannot mock God.

Our nation needs to be bowing our knee to Jesus Christ. We need to be calling upon God in the Bible. We need to say, Oh God, heal our land, restore our marriages, restore our churches.

Oh God, we cry out to you. If anyone lacks wisdom, cry out to God. You must see your need.

You must see your need. Oh, this is resonating so deep within me because so many people are prideful and arrogant. They don't see their need.

Did you know, this is a key. The very first step, I don't know where you're at listening. I don't know where you're at with God, I should say.

Obviously, I don't know where you're at. But if you don't know him, you're not sure. The first key, the first step to being saved, to having salvation, to knowing, this is going to make sense in just a minute.

The first step for you to truly know God is your Lord and Savior, that being Jesus Christ. The first step is always to see your need. Isn't that interesting? You have to see your need.

That's the first step for wisdom. And you have to see your need for God. That's your first step to salvation.

Why is that? Because to rely on God, you have to turn to God. I love a song, Casting Crowns. They have performed it before.

The title is Love Moved First. In one of the lines, he says this, you didn't wait for me, talking about God, you didn't wait for me to find my way to you. God, you didn't wait for me to find my way to you.

I couldn't cross that distance, even if I wanted to. You came running after me when everyone else would have left me at my worst. Love Moved First.

See, that's the theme of the Bible. God moves, man respond. God loves, man responds.

It's the God who rescues, the God who redeems, the God who sets free. See your need. I don't want to wait until the end of the sermon, because you might tune me out by then.

But I wanted to just not only encourage people that need wisdom, Christian men and women that need wisdom, you must humble yourself and see your need and be open to what God wants to do. But if you don't know God, you must see your need, see the sin and the depravity, the burden you're carrying, and you cry out to God to save you. It all starts here.

That's the first step. And that's very interesting. The second step is right after that.

Let him ask of God. It's very, it's very healthy to say help. God, I need you.

So you see your need, and you call out to God, not others, okay, not doctors, not accountants, not media, you ask God for direction. Now you say, well, Shane, that sounds pretty simple. It sounds simple, but it's not easy.

Most people are not looking to God for direction. They're asking their accountant, they're asking their lender, they're asking their hairdresser, maybe not right now, but at some point, and they're asking these people, are they still called hairdressers? I don't know, maybe something, maybe a different name there. But I just just had a reality check this week with my daughter.

She was talking to her, whatever they call a guidance counselor or something online about getting ready to go into college. And the lady was asking her, well, what do you want to do? And she said, I just want to be a mom. And they look at her like, what? That's not good.

Why? What do you mean you want to be a mom? What? Don't you want to be this? And don't you want to be that? And don't you want to be pursue this and and have this and no, I just want to be what God has called me to be. See, you start to listen to all these other voices. And you could go to the wrong school, you can make the wrong career decision, you have to ask God, Lord, what do you want me to do? And God may not give you the money, but he will give you wisdom.

He may not give you the healing, but he will give you wisdom. He may not give you that job, but he will give you wisdom, ask and you shall receive. God gives wisdom liberally.

We go back to what I just read in the scripture, God gives wisdom. So here's wisdom. Actually, Proverbs says that wisdom is the principal thing.

Therefore, get wisdom and all your and all you're getting, get understanding, she will exalt you, she will promote you, she will lift you up. See, I think we forgot about that in the church. We're well led by the Spirit.

You know, and that's good. I'm led by the Spirit too. But you've got to have wisdom.

Well, if it's odd, it's God, it just felt right. No, you have to use wisdom. What does God's Word say? God's Word was given to direct us.

So God gives wisdom liberally. What does that mean? Well, it means in abundance, God will give you enough wisdom to get you through the next task and or to get you through that task to the next step. So what does it look like in our current situation, especially for churches, there's a lot of Christians listening.

He's giving us wisdom, especially pastors to he's giving us wisdom, liberally, liberally, meaning abundant wisdom on what to do. Well, Shane, what are you going to do then? I'm going to wait. There's nothing there's nothing you can do right now.

You were in a waiting mode. And remember, waiting is not wasted time. Waiting time is not wasted time.

So God will give you that wisdom in abundance. But remember, he doesn't give you too much at one time. In other words, if I knew if I knew half the stuff that was going to happen to me, I would have never pursued certain things.

I would have never read wrote some of my books. If I knew the painstaking editing process, I would have never. Well, I want to be careful.

I better not say too much. You know, I would have never done some of the things I've done had I known how hard and difficult it was going to be. So God gives you that wisdom in it when you need it at the time you need it.

And it's not going to be just Oh, God, that's not enough. He gives it in abundance. And then it says and without reproach.

Remember, God doesn't mock us. He doesn't mock us. He's not going to say I just gave you wisdom last week.

Shane, what's wrong with you? Brant, what's wrong with you on the piano? Other people? What's wrong with you? I just gave you wisdom, you knucklehead. And there's not a reproach. In other words, the

reproach could also mean reproof.

There's not a correction. God's not slapping our hand and saying now I told you, come on, I told you get with it. It's this image I see in reading this of God who gives you the wisdom you need when you ask for it, and he's not going to condemn you for it.

And then number three, it says it will be given, it will be given. Let me even read that to let that sink in. For just a minute back in James, if you write there in chapter one, if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him, it will be given to him.

So the third step I want to tell you, I talked about this a few weeks ago, too, about about persevering. But it's key here, you have to hold on to that promise, you have to see that's faith. See, it says God will give you the wisdom.

So you have to hold on to it, even when it doesn't look like it, even when your your your eyes don't see it, even when you don't feel it, you have to hold on to that wisdom. Hold it. Absorb this again, what we just read.

But let him ask in faith, ask in faith with no doubting. So okay, Lord, you said you're going to give me wisdom, you're going to give me enough wisdom, you're not going to scold me for it. And I'm going to hold on to that promise in your word.

See, it's not about me, it's about the promise in God's word. And so he said, so let him ask in faith, meaning Lord, you're going to show me, I trust in that I don't see it, I don't know how it's going to play out. I trust in that with no doubting.

Now, I should encourage you here for just a minute. Because I've been doubting a lot. Many of us have been doubting a lot.

But what he's talking about here, it's a lifestyle of doubting. It's Debbie doubter. It's that Oh, woe is me, I don't think God's gonna move.

See, that's different than doubt coming into my mind and yours. And I say, you know what, I'm not going to entertain that thought. I'm not going to focus on that.

I'm not going to allow that to shape me. I'm removing that I'm taking that thought captive to the obedience of Christ. What would Christ want? That's not a good thought about doubt.

I'm casting it away. And I'm again embracing God's faith. Now that I've embraced God's faith, I know God is going to see true biblical preaching churches through this pandemic.

I think he's going to weed out some churches as well. And he's going to bread raise up other churches that are going to preach his truth. And I'm holding on to that promise.

But then as the week goes on, here comes doubt here comes down. See, I'm still okay. I'm still in his will, because I'm casting that away.

I'm not allowing it to shape and direct me. So it's okay to doubt. Most people struggle with doubting.

So again, I'm not talking about a lifestyle of doubting or a or a it's a person's character. They're not you know, come on, you've met them. It might be you.

Always down. Always critical. Always negative.

Always a naysayer. Always the skies falling. Always that you're you're doubting no wonder you don't receive wisdom from God.

Because you're like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. So correct that course immediately while you're listening, repent back to step one, see your need and say, God, I've been wrong. I've been doubting you.

You've taken me through the hardest storms. You've been there through the biggest struggles. I don't know what's going on.

I'm losing everything. But I'm holding on to you. If you're hanging on by a thread.

Listen, if you're hanging on by a thread, if that's you hanging on by a thread, make sure it's by the hem of his garment. Make sure you're looking to the cross. Make sure you're holding on to Christ because he won't let you go down.

He'll be that rock that lifts you up and put you back up. You might feel like you're going underwater, but he reaches down and he pulls you up in his strength. You have to look to him and him alone.

Doubt entertains thoughts that oppose God. So it is so simple this I realized that this week wisdom making wise choices is so simple. Now if I had now I know it's not easy, but it's simple.

What I mean by this is and I wish I had more time to get into it. But you have to make choices according to God's Word. So when you when you see your need, you say God help me let God and you continue to walk in faith as you're walking in faith.

You've got to walk according to what God's Word says. So I don't believe that God leads us as much through inner voices, or I should say the leading of the Spirit, which he does, I believe he does. There's some things that you just need to be led of the Spirit.

There's a deep impression. I won't talk about that now. But the majority of the time he leads us according to the truth in his Word.

And if there is that leading of the Holy Spirit, it will always, always, always line up with the Word of God. Always see this all the time, especially in churches where a person is walking with God, and then they they're single and then they meet someone. They say why I know the Bible says we shouldn't be unequally yoked.

I know it. He's not a Christian, but I feel led. Oh, here we go.

I feel led I think this is no what is God's Word say do not be unequally yoked. Now those who are listening who are married, and you're unequally yoked. Don't, don't undo that.

Don't undo that you're getting now before you say I do you have the decision to leave after you say I do now you have to remain to that commitment. As long as God keeps you in that and there's no infidelity and

and other things that that could happen there and I'm going to get into a whole nother sermon if I go down that direction. So let's get back to this.

Doubt entertains thoughts that oppose God. So if you are fearful all day long, if you're anxious all day long, if you're bitter all day, if you're angry, you will not be able to make wise decisions. Because wise decisions flow from a composed heart who's trusting on God.

They make decisions according to God's Word. For example, those who've got their stimulus check, saying what's a wise decision, put it in savings until you know what to do with or give it to a family or need you can't go wrong, giving it to those who need it. And and using wisdom, don't go out and just buy whatever.

I mean, this is so clear sometimes should Shane, should I buy it? I've had people tell me, Shane, should I buy a house? Is it within your budget? Not really. But I think if we stretch this and we do no, no, no, no, that's not a wise decision live below your means not above your means. So there's so much here.

According walking according to God's Word. But that's the main thrust of this ending. But let him ask in faith with no doubting.

But this is encouragement. If you doubt take it to God say cast, cast that doubt out of your mind. You can't anchor your boat to God and they cut the rope.

You can't fill your mind with the world all week and neglect the Word of God. You can't talk to everyone but God and expect direction. Let me tell you how this works.

When I'm looking at the news all day long, like many of you are. I mean, you don't know what to believe. China, Bill Gates, chips, implants, one world government, deep state.

It's like, wow, this is too much. I even get into the conspiracy theories yet. But you're taking all this in and I'm neglecting God's Word.

I have no direction. I have no compass from my heart. I have no, no grounding.

I have no biblical support. So now I'm being led away by all these fear, fear things like what about this? What about this? Why are you going to get vaccines? Are you going to do this? And you start to get make unwise decisions because now you're reacting and I'm reacting and I'm reacting. I'm not responding according to God's Word.

Now all those things are important. I think there's an agenda. I think more is going to come out about what's really going on.

I think there's going to be all hell is going to break loose until the November election. The demonic element, the demonic element is having a field day. The works of darkness are on high alert and we must expose the unfruitful works of darkness.

But let me just give you an encouragement here. Before you protest, before you start to do all these different things and post negative things, make sure you're filled with the power and the presence of God. Make sure you've been praying and fasting.

So when you speak, you speak the truth of God's Word. You don't speak anger and frustration and fear. You speak because of the deep reservoirs of a prayer life that's been drenched in your heart and you come up and saying, thus saith the Lord, I shall not fear man.

What can man do to me? I shall not, shall not worry because worry is a sin. I shall walk in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. I would encourage most of you take a media fast.

Take a turn the stuff off for a season, whether it's half a day or whatever it is and let God rebuild you. So in closing this message, here's the recap. Humbly ask God for help.

That's how our nation can reopen. Can I get amen? Our president, our Congress, the governors, we need to say, God, we don't know. Help.

We need your help. God, we humbly, we humble ourselves and we repent of our sin. We repent of wrong knowledge.

We repent of fear. We repent of double mindedness. We repent of all these things.

And Lord, I, and we need to say, we see our need. We see our need God for you. And then what you do is you walk in obedience, walk in obedience in according to God's word.

So if you say, Oh, I humbled myself, Lord, I need wisdom, but you're not walking in obedience. I'm going right off the camera probably. But see, I just walked right out of God's will.

Maybe that's a good analogy. I'm just walking right out of God's will. But I want to stay in God's will.

I'm humbling myself. I'm humbling myself. And God, I see my need.

Would you lead me? And then you walk outside of his will. How does that work? That doesn't work. You have to stay.

You have to look. So what does it say? You need to live in it. I think it was A. W. Tozer said, you need to live in the word like the fish lives in the sea.

You need to let this build you up. You need to let this strengthen you. You need to know about more about Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, that you do CNN, Fox News, and NBNC and all these other, all these other things where we're allowing the wrong voices to speak to us.

That's why there's so many angry protests and anger. And we've got to do this. And all those things might be fine and dandy.

I don't know, we have the right to do that. But it better come from a right heart or it's not going to be productive. We need to get back to that famous, famous verse.

Ask, ask and you shall receive. Ask for wisdom, he says here. Ask for wisdom.

Ask for the filling of the Holy Spirit. Let me just, let me just close this for a minute. We need to start asking God, God, we need your help.

Would you save my daughter? Would you save my husband? Would you open the eyes of what's going on in our nation? God, we ask of you. We petition our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We're calling down

heaven.

We have signed up for marching orders. We are not cowering back. Your Bible, your word says to do business until you return.

We are not going to just lay down and take it. We are going to fight this battle. How do I fight this battle? With arms lifted high, prayer closets full, heads bowed down to the almighty power of God in our lives.

Seeing our, have our kids see us praying and seeking the heart of God. Ask, ask, ask and God will open that door. Ask with the right heart.

Ask and you shall receive. Seek and you will find. We got to get back to that desperation.

Oh, if we are desperate again. Oh, if we are desperate again. Desperate people do desperate things.

And it's obvious we're not desperate for God. Because desperate people do desperate things. They stay up all night and they pray.

Then plug their computer. They kill their porn habit. They give up their addiction because they're desperate to hear from God.

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