

Making a Difference – The Power of Decisiveness

We have been examining how each of us can **make a difference** in our own world (the sphere of influence we live in). I'm sure none of us has been put on this earth to make up the numbers. We all have a predetermined destiny that God Himself has mapped out for our lives. And if we desire to stand out in the crowd we need to be more decisive. God is very decisive and He wants us to be exactly as He is concerning both spiritual and natural matters.

Being decisive about what you do, how you do it and even your giving will significantly enhance your life. And every decision you make should be done with your heart as well as your head. ***“Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” – 2 Corinthians 9:7.***

Every great leap forward in life is preceded by a clear decision, and decisive commitment to action. The ability to make good decisions is one of the most important skills you can possess. You must decide what you want and then make definite decisions. After that, you must take specific actions to turn your decisions into realities.

Decision making is said to be a mental action or process leading to the selection of a course of action among variations. It connects commitment to action.

In your personal life you may use one of many decision making techniques. These include:

- listing the advantages and disadvantages of each option you've identified,
- flipping a coin or any other random method,
- accepting the first option that seems like it might achieve the desired result,
- prayer, revelation, or other forms of prediction
- concurring with a person in authority or an “expert,”
- calculating the expected value of each option available

But whatever technique you end up using the result will always be the same - a commitment to action. After having acquired the degree or measure of knowledge you believe necessary for that specific situation, you become fully committed to an action. But a word of caution, your emotions usually play a larger role than acquired knowledge. So try not to make decisions based on how you are feeling. Its fine to make decisions based on God's word as this is “faith in action.” However, faith and feelings won't necessarily line up.

Try to remove emotion and switch off your feelings. People who know how to control their feelings always act decisively. Therefore, you must decide exactly what you want and then make the right decisions to turn it into reality, but without emotional attachment.

Developing the habit of decisiveness (one that's centred around your knowledge of God's word), can be the critical factor which enables you to take command of every situation, and in turn, live a victorious life of faith! A decisive person is one who exercises good judgement by making sound and well-informed (Bible-based) decisions. Being decisive means making effective and timely choices, and it is something you should respect and desire to use effectively throughout your life.

Decisiveness is often defined as being “characterised by firmness in selection.” Being decisive means that you have the ability to decide, and the strength to be fully committed to your decision. From the fortitude of a clear decision, you have the ability to act. Decisiveness then simply means being in control of your own life. Decisiveness is both a skill you can build and an internal state you can summon when you need it.

Decisiveness does not mean being stubborn, arrogant or hasty. Decisiveness is simply the ability to decide with speed and clarity. In any situation the ability to decide is crucial. Whether it concerns spiritual, physical or material matters, without clear decisions there can be no action and no consequently results. Inside your head sits the most powerful processing unit in the known universe, but without *decision* it goes unused. God gave you this powerful tool, but He also gave you a free will to use it. Like faith, any decision without action is dead!

Often the reason people aren't decisive isn't because they don't have an effective strategy for problem solving. Indecisive people act that way simply because they assume others will make better decisions for them. These people end up being subjected to the whims of others and have to rely on the thinking power of others to survive. What a sad state of affairs! God expects you to, at the very least; make the small decisions on your own. *“Have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you”* – Exodus 18:22. Decisiveness means being able to make clear decisions on your own quickly. Until you have made a clear decision for yourself, you are simply procrastinating and wasting time.

Being decisive is simply the most rational way to take on any problem. You observe the information you have available and then you decide what would be the most successful course of action. If it is possible to get more information, you must decide how to get it. If you can't get more data, you simply pray and then decide with the facts available to you. Instead of being decisive, most Christians use delaying tactics. They won't spend more time in prayer, and simply avoid the decision entirely. Asking someone who's lazy or discontent what he plans to do about it, will usually respond in a confused way. Without a clear decision no progress can be made.

You must decide even in the face of uncertainty. The best decision is the best one you can make with the information that's available at the time.

Certainty doesn't exist in the natural world - it only exists in God through Christ Jesus. And remind yourself, the majority of decisions you face will not necessarily have huge repercussions for any mistakes. Often you will face greater consequences by making no decision at all than by making a bad one. Even if the decision was poor, that was simply the sacrifice necessary to make a better decision next time. What's more, God looks at your heart, so He will probably work all things together for your good - but to His glory!

Decisiveness as a Skill

The ability to make firm decisions quickly is a skill that can be practised. You can start by simply timing how long it takes you to make decisions. Minor decisions, such as what movie to see or restaurant to go to, should be made in thirty seconds to a minute. Major decisions should be made in less than five, even if that decision is to acquire more information (or to pray) so that a decision of *action* can be made more effectively.

The next time you are deciding what to eat time yourself and only give a minute to answer. Once you get used to making decisions fast you will start to realise that clear, firm decision making often results in better

decisions than ones where you process the same information over and over again. Running around in circles is usually procrastination and not problem solving. And this attitude definitely doesn't reflect or express any faith in God!

Decisiveness as a Heart Matter

Decisiveness is more than just a skill, it's a heart matter. God encourages you to act in a fashion that's in line with what you've already decided *in your heart* (**2 Cor. 9:7**). Head knowledge doesn't necessarily have to drive your actions, and nor do your emotions have to play any part. With God, every decision must have its origins in Him. And God, through His Spirit, speaks to your heart. But a word of caution, you must train yourself to be able to hear His voice clearly if your decisions are going to be 'Spirit led'. This means spending time with God in prayer and spending time in His word. The more you do this the more certain you will become about the decisions you make "in faith."

So don't look at the certainty in the world before deciding to act. Don't wait for others to make decisions for you. Operate from an internal source of strength and choose the right course of action by listening to your heart! Be decisive and purpose to choose for yourself. By being decisive you place a stake in the ground, a point from which you can measure both spiritual and natural progress. Life's journey needs to be measured correctly if you are to fulfil your destiny in God. So decide to be decisive about all matters of life.

"Decisiveness is a characteristic of high-performing men and women. Almost any decision is better than no decision at all." (Brian Tracy - American Author)