

3 Important Questions to Ask Before Your Next Big Decision

Here you are, at the moment of the big decision.

You can choose this or that, move one way or the other, and sleepless nights are just one of the symptoms reminding you that you are not settled in what to do.

It's something we all experience at some time or another. Big decisions are not respecters of the human frailty in us, insecure about making the wrong choice. At some point, even the most decisive among us wants someone to give us the answer, tell us exactly what to do when the big decision looms.

I share this longing, as many times in my own life I have wanted God to tell me the exact path and plan, which way to walk and which yes to give. When He wouldn't oblige, my plan B became turning to people to ask their opinion, have them weigh in with their wisdom as to what I should do. It's never a bad idea to gather information from wise people, I've come to believe. But at a certain point, I am left with my choice. I must seek God, be honest with myself and take my own inventory, ask questions of myself to determine what is the right choice for me to make at the point of the big decision.

Enter the Best Choice Test: three questions to ask yourself before you make that big decision.

The Best Choice Test is not a magical formula that guarantees you will make the right choice. But I've found it to be a simple way to get the best out of me through truthful introspection. Most of our missteps are in not taking the time to be purposeful and slow down long enough to wrestle over important questions to hold us accountable in major life decisions. This test is about taking time to consider and

weigh the consequences, and help you think important things through.

(Side note: Honesty required. Telling ourselves the truth builds up spiritual strength and helps us see things clearly. It may feel uncomfortable and inconvenient at first. But lies lead to weakness, and we don't have time to be weak as we are making a crucial choice.)

Question 1: Is this wise? Has God led you to this choice through prayer, Scripture and the endorsement of spiritual accountability partners and authorities? At the end of the day, does the choice make your soul well? The questions are not "Do I want it? (Hang in there. We will cover this in the next question.) Is it my right to have it? Is it something a lot of other people do?" Pursuing wisdom first will ultimately keep us out of a lot of trouble. Proverbs 4:7 says it simply and brilliantly: "Wisdom is principal; therefore get wisdom. And with all your getting, get understanding."

Question 2: Is this about me? It's not that God doesn't want us to have our heart desires (Ps. 145:19). But here's the key: He doesn't want us to have those desires in lieu of obedience to Him. Many of us struggle to differentiate between temporal, worldly desires (momentary flesh wants) and true heart desires (godly longings when the heart is right with God) because the world is loud and good at convincing us that our every strong longing comes from the heart. (Flesh desire can be obnoxiously strong.) So many of our decisions are about us: what we want, what we think is best, what we feel we need in a moment of frenzy, what we believe we deserve and are entitled to. But decisions based on selfish desires will put us and other people at risk. Decisions based on God's will lead us to peace and joy.

Question 3: Is this God's best? Emphasis here is on the word *best*. We can choose from a lot of things every day. We can make many decisions. There are even good things to choose

from, and that gets more confusing. But for the believer in Jesus Christ, we are to be in pursuit of His best. He didn't go halfway for us; we can't go halfway for Him. We won't be perfect, and we won't make perfect decisions. But we must be praying for His best, asking for His best, not being willing to settle for something that looks good but we know in our hearts is not the best. It's tough to forgo the good for the best. But in the end, the good won't be good enough. It will be as bad as the bad if it's not God's best.

Life is full of decisions. Some of them are big and will take a higher level of prayer and careful consideration. We are wise when we take the time to ask ourselves the questions to help us maneuver the different paths in life.

Right choices—choices that carry with them lasting impact—are well worth a little extra time and effort. {eo}

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