

7 Tips to Avoid Making Disastrous Family Decisions

In 2015 your family will very likely face some big decisions. Some decisions you'll see coming and others will need to be made without warning.

These big decisions can put a lot of stress on a marriage and family. Should you stay in your current job or chase a new one or keep looking for that job that seems so elusive? Should you stay in your church? What school should your kids be in? Is this the right house? Should you stay or move? Do you need to upsize or downsize your car?

Healthy decisions tend to be the ones that are made with your spouse involved in the process.

With that in mind, here are seven tips to avoid making disastrous family decisions:

1. Consult God in prayer. That should be a given for any believer. In my blog *The Key to a Close-Knit Family*, I talked about how important it is for a family to pray together and to worship together. Praying together as a family about a big decision will help you to be in one accord and to rely on God for His wisdom.

2. No big decision should be made without the full input and consideration of both spouses. When we make decisions without our spouse's input, we are communicating, "I don't value or need your opinion and perspective. I've got this."

Author Dr. Greg Smalley shared in this post about the importance of working with your spouse to achieve wise decision-making together. One of his points is to create "pros and cons" lists together.

3. Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know, but I'm going to research that." Sometimes we are reluctant to admit that we don't know it all. When it comes to making healthy decisions for your marriage and family, it's better to be humble enough to admit you don't know something than to fake it. And don't assume that a hard question from your spouse is a personal attack. Be willing to hear those questions and then find some answers.

4. Seek wise counsel. Needing to solve a financial decision? Trying to figure out a career choice issue? Why not find people who are wise and knowledgeable about those issues and get their counsel? Don't just do a quick Internet search and assume you've got all the facts.

5. Talk to the kids, especially if they are older. While our kids do not necessarily get a "vote" on decisions, you might be well served to give them a "voice" and hear what they have to say. They will then feel part of the process and may even have some good input.

6. Don't be too hasty to discount your "gut feeling" about things. What many call "gut feelings" may be promptings from God to do or not do something. So we should heed those promptings as part of the decision-making process.

7. Bring the heart and the mind together. It's not uncommon for each one of us to either lean towards emotional decision-making or intellectual decision-making. There is great value in both of those perspectives. Don't discount or discredit one over the other.

What are some other tips you have learned that help you make good decisions?

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