

Positively Speaking

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07/12/09

Making Good Decisions

Usually, it's not too difficult to make a good decision. Most decisions we make can be determined by plain old common sense.

The CEO of a major corporation once said, "95% of the decisions I make could be made by any intelligent fifth grader. I'm paid the big bucks for the other 5%."

Of course, as we have seen lately in the news, some CEO's are paid the big bucks and make crummy decisions anyway! An intelligent fifth grader understands values such as honesty, uprightness, and compassion.

Nevertheless, there are certain decisions in life that are not the "slam dunk" variety. Sometimes, it's really hard to know what to do.

When faced with a difficult decision, here are a few points to ponder:

1. Have you prayed about it? God can give you wisdom beyond your own for this situation. Most people panic first and pray later, "God, get me out of this mess!" It's much better to pray first, and then you won't have to panic later!
2. What is the bottom, bottom line? When all else is said and done, what is the single most important issue at stake in this decision?
3. What are all the possible courses of action? Often, people fall into the trap of thinking there are only two options. Usually, there are at least ten different ways to address a problem. List as many as you can. Try for ten! Which item on the list seems to be the best path to pursue first?
4. Do your heart and head agree? If not, why not?
5. What are the pro's and con's of each course of action. What is the most logical decision based on this? Do you have peace about that?
6. What do wise friends and counselors say? (Emphasis here is "wise" – There are plenty of people who will toss out unwise advice. You don't need that kind of influence. Think of the person you most respect. How would that person handle this situation?
7. Are your emotions clouding your decision making process? It's very difficult to make a good decision when you are angry, discouraged, fatigued or afraid. Sometimes, it's best to step back and for a fresh perspective.
8. When you've done the best you can, lie down and go to sleep. God is still awake.

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