

Small Decisions

For more than 30 years, I officiated high school, youth, and adult soccer games. I have first-hand experience of the number of decisions made by a soccer official during the course of a game. My games weren't as compelling as Premier League professional soccer games. The average referee makes 245 decisions during a 90-minute Premier League soccer match. That's a lot of judgement calls, but they are small compared to what we do in our everyday lives. Several sources quote the same figure: the average person makes 33,000-35,000 decisions a day – what to eat, wear, what to say, and how we'll say it. Most of our decisions are small, and many are habitual responses or made to please ourselves or others. The question is: When we make decisions, are we trying to please people or God?



On what basis do we make decisions? Do we choose the most popular option? Do we decide to push off the choice on someone else? Do we avoid deciding to avoid responsibility or to keep some situation from overwhelming us? Do we make choices based on priorities? Chances are, many of our decisions are a combination of many of these factors.¹

Looking at your daily decision-making from a faith basis, what rule of thumb do you use to help make good choices? If you constantly communicate with God, your decisions will likely differ greatly from those made by people in the secular world. You will make better choices as you seek to be aware of God's presence in your life. Years ago, the popular catchphrase was, "What Would Jesus Do?" That is a great way to live your life. Jesus made all the right choices, even in the most challenging situations. Jesus chose to make decisions that pleased God. We can, too. *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (Hebrews 11:6)*

Sometimes we don't know what to do. God can help us. *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. (Proverbs 5:6)*. Listen for God's guidance. *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. (James 1:5)*

Each decision has potentially good or bad consequences, so we want it to be the right decision. Allow God to be present in your life throughout the day, not just at bedtime. Stay in constant communication with Him. If we make 33,000+ judgements each day based on our faith, our minds must be focused on Jesus. Determine what will be pleasing to God. In the process, you will make better choices because His way is always the right way. Only Jesus can be perfect, but we can try to be more like Him in our everyday lives.

Question: Who are you trying to please?

Closing Prayer: Dear Lord. Let us focus our lives on You. We pray that we will make the conscious effort to seek your direction in our daily lives. Amen.

¹ Cornell University research of decision strategies