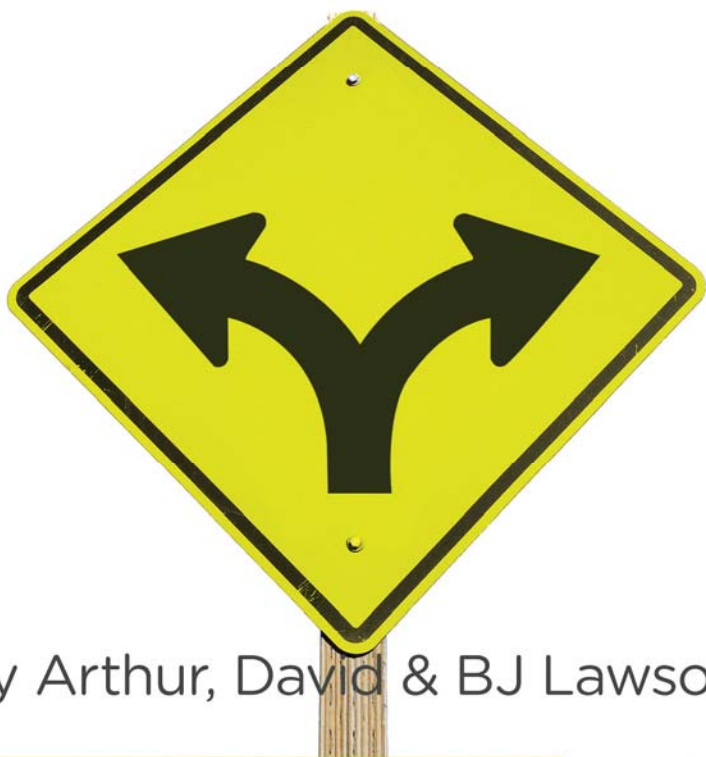


How to Make Choices You Won't Regret



Kay Arthur, David & BJ Lawson

4minute
BIBLE STUDIES

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PRECEPT MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL



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P R E S S

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HOW TO MAKE CHOICES YOU WON'T REGRET

I hate you! How can you stand there and say you love me? You don't call or come by except when you and your 'friend' don't have any plans or when I beg to see you! Don't tell me you love me!"

As his teenage daughter screamed, his heart was breaking. Finally he left, wondering, *How did I get to this point—divorced, with my daughter hating me? All I ever wanted was to be a great husband and father.*

Perhaps you, too, are wondering how you ended up where you are, whether your life would be better if you had made different decisions along the way. Maybe your current situation is great, but you're facing some difficult choices.

Every day we're faced with decisions, many of

which are benign, with no lasting consequences. Others have the potential to change the course of our lives—whether for good or bad. Certain avenues open to us are marked with hidden pitfalls or lead in harmful directions, and in some instances the wrong choice can even bring death. Where do you go for direction?

This inductive study will give you guidelines for making these difficult choices. By inductive we mean you will go straight to the source—the Bible—to see what God has to say. Knowing His Word for yourself will equip you to make choices that bring honor to Him and lead you to peace.

WEEK ONE

David was Israel's great and celebrated second king. His obedience had resulted in an unprecedented outpouring of blessing, not only on his household, but on all of Israel. A married man with a number of wives who had borne him many children, David had much about which to be thankful, but with his success came new opportunities and decisions. Let's take a look at this man David and the choices he made.

OBSERVE

Leader: Read aloud 2 Samuel 11:1-5.

- *Have the group say aloud and underline every reference to **David**, including pronouns.*

INSIGHT

It was normal for kings to go to war in the spring, which marks the end of the rainy season. The roads would be passable, there would be fodder for the animals, and an army on the move would be able to raid the fields for food.

DISCUSS

- What did you learn from marking *David* in verse 1?

2 SAMUEL 11:1-5

¹ Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem.

² Now when evening came, David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a

woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance.

3 So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, “Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?”

4 David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house.

5 The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, “I am pregnant.”

- What happened to David when he stayed home and didn't go to battle as kings should have?

INSIGHT

The woman David sees is “very beautiful.” The Hebrew phrase used here is reserved for people of striking physical appearance.

- What course of events led to Bathsheba's pregnancy?
- What choices could David have made to change the outcome of this story?

OBSERVE

Did David have any information that would have helped him make the right choice? According to Deuteronomy 17:18-20, every king who came to power was supposed to write his own copy of the Law—the first five books of the Bible, Genesis through Deuteronomy. This means David would have written out Exodus 20:1-17, which lists the Ten Commandments.

Leader: Let's read these commandments.

- *Number each of the commandments as you read them. The first commandment is found in verse 3.*
- *When you come to a commandment that involves sexual activity, number it and put a check mark beside it: ✓*

DISCUSS

- Did David break any of these commandments when he slept with Bathsheba? If so, which ones?

EXODUS 20:1-17

1 Then God spoke all these words, saying,

2 “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

3 “You shall have no other gods before Me.

4 “You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.

5 “You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth

generations of those who hate Me,

6 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

7 “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

8 “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 “Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

10 but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your

- Look back at what you marked about David in the passage from 2 Samuel. Was David made aware in any way that he would be breaking one or more of these commandments if he slept with Bathsheba?

- When David decided to sleep with Bathsheba, what was the basis of his choice?

- Do you see any similarities between what happened with David and Bathsheba and the choices many are making today? Explain your answer.

- When faced with a moral decision, what path are many people choosing and on what basis?

male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.

11 “For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

12 “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

13 “You shall not murder.

14 “You shall not commit adultery.

15 “You shall not steal.

16 “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

17 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

2 SAMUEL 11:6-13

6 Then David sent to Joab, saying, “Send me Uriah the Hittite.” So Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 When Uriah came to him, David asked concerning the welfare of Joab and the people and the state of the war.

OBSERVE

Let’s continue the story of David and Bathsheba.

Leader: Read aloud 2 Samuel 11:6-13.

- *Have the group say aloud and underline every reference to **David**.*

INSIGHT

According to 1 Samuel 21:4-5, David and his men “kept themselves from women” whenever they set out to do battle.

DISCUSS

- What do you think David was trying to accomplish in verses 6-8, and why?
- Did his plan work? Why or why not?
- Was Uriah faced with any choices in this situation? What were they?
- What does Uriah's behavior tell you about his character?

8 Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." And Uriah went out of the king's house, and a present from the king was sent out after him.

9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house.

10 Now when they told David, saying, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?"

11 Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in temporary

shelters, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? By your life and the life of your soul, I will not do this thing.”

¹² Then David said to Uriah, “Stay here today also, and tomorrow I will let you go.” So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next.

¹³ Now David called him, and he ate and drank before him, and he made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his bed with his lord's servants, but he did not go down to his house.

- How do you suppose David felt in this situation and why?
- What did David choose to do when Uriah wouldn't go home? Why?
- Have you ever seen or heard of a scheme like David's in verse 13? Describe what happened.

OBSERVE

Leader: Read 2 Samuel 11:14-17 aloud.

Have the group do the following:

- Underline every reference to **David**.
- Draw a box around every reference to

Uriah:

DISCUSS

- What was David's next strategy in regard to Uriah?
- Who was he involving?
- Why was David going to all this trouble?
- What was the end result of this strategic move, and how did it measure up to the Ten Commandments? What had David just done?

2 SAMUEL 11:14-17

14 Now in the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah.

15 He had written in the letter, saying, "Place Uriah in the front line of the fiercest battle and withdraw from him, so that he may be struck down and die."

16 So it was as Joab kept watch on the city, that he put Uriah at the place where he knew there were valiant men.

17 The men of the city went out and fought against Joab, and some of the people among David's servants fell; and Uriah the Hittite also died.

2 SAMUEL 11:26-27

26 Now when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.

27 When the time of mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house and she became his wife; then she bore him a son. But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of the LORD.

OBSERVE

***Leader:** Read aloud 2 Samuel 11:26-27.*

Have the group do the following:

- *Underline the references to **David**.*
- *Circle every reference to **Bathsheba**.*

DISCUSS

- What did you learn from marking the references to Bathsheba?
- What did God think about all that David had done?
- Discuss one by one the things David did that God considers evil.
- Review the choices David made at each juncture, beginning with not going to war when it was time for kings to do so, right through to the last scripture you read. As you discuss this, talk about the choices he should have made.
- What have you learned from the events in this chapter that you can apply to your life today?

WRAP IT UP

God refers to David as “a man after His own heart” (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22). This description is reflected in David’s earlier choices to follow God’s commands and statutes, choices that resulted in blessings not only for him but for the entire nation of Israel. But in his life we also see a series of choices to go against God’s commands, commands with which he was intimately familiar.

David could have chosen to obey God’s Word at any point in time, but instead he chose to continue on a path that took him further and further into danger. A seemingly insignificant choice to stay home from battle led to his coveting a neighbor’s wife, which in turn led to adultery and murder. David’s actions were evil in the sight of the Lord.

What about you? Are you known as a man or woman after God’s heart, or have you done evil in the sight of the Lord? Are you making choices based on the Word of God or on your own desires? If the latter is the case, know this: You can choose to follow the Word of God at any time and turn from the path that leads to disaster.



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