

Better Decisions, Fewer Regrets

Session 1

More Than A Decision

Overview

5 questions will be at the heart of this study.

1. The Integrity Question – Am I being honest with myself?
2. The Legacy Question – What story do I want to tell?
3. The Conscience Question – Is there a tension that deserves my attention?
4. The Maturity Question – What is the wise thing to do?
5. The Relationship Question – What does love require of me?

Key Summary in Session 1

In this first session, we discuss how your decisions determine the direction and quality of your life. If that's not motivation enough to focus more on the choice you make, consider this. Your decisions also determine the direction and quality of other people's lives – not just today but for generations to come.

I was first introduced to the power of decisions at a young age. When I was a kid, my dad (Charles Stanley) wouldn't tell me what to do. Specifically, he wouldn't tell me what to do when I didn't know what to do and wanted him to tell me what he thought I should do. Now, I know.... most kids don't want their parents telling them what to do. But on occasion, I wanted him to tell me what to do. And he wouldn't. Worse, instead of answering my questions, he asked me more questions!

His go-to question was: What are you going to do when I'm not around to tell you what to do? My go-to response was: But you are around, so tell me!

By opting for questions over direction, my dad helped me make the connection between good questions and good decision-making. It also led to fewer regrets. We've all heard someone say, "I should have asked more questions." That's because we know intuitively that the more questions we ask,

the more information we acquire.... which leads to greater insight and, hopefully, better decisions.

Your decisions, along with your responses to other people's decisions (which are also your decisions), are about the only thing you can control in life. This means we would be wise to stop at every decision-making juncture and consider the story we want to tell.

Perhaps even more compelling, we should consider what story we want told about us. The good news is that you get to decide one decision at a time, because that's how you write the story of your life...one decision at a time.

Questions

1. Which of the five questions are you most excited to learn about? Why?
2. When have you based a decision solely on your immediate happiness or gratification? Describe the decision – and the result.
3. Do you agree that there's not a correlation between what you know and what you do? Why or why not??
4. Every decision we make becomes a permanent part of our stories. If your story were a movie, for instance, what type of movie would it be?
5. When have you sold yourself on a really bad idea? What was your logic for proceeding with it at the time – and what was the outcome?
6. Can you think of a time in your life when you took a step back and by taking the extra time you made a better decision?

Closing

Truth is, we don't know what hangs in the balance of our decisions. We can't accurately predict outcomes. But we know with certainty there are outcomes associated with each of our decisions. Even the small ones. This exercise reveals the truth of this concept by considering the impact generational decisions have had on your life.

Perhaps your life would be very different if your dad hadn't chosen to keep picking up that bottle. You know someone whose life would be different if their mama hadn't run off and left the family. The opposite is true as well. Maybe your father is the one who conquered that habit and kept the family together. Maybe your mother chose to stay when another woman would have walked. This exercise isn't designed to case blame or shame on those who came before us...but simply to reveal the long-term impact of decisions.

How might this apply to your life? Take time to write your thoughts below.