



Welcome to Sharing Scripture

As promised, here is the new resource. Of course, the name is familiar, yet new to this resource. It makes sense, doesn't it? We are exploring Scripture and not only are we reflecting on it personally, we hope you're discussing what's here with others.

Sharing Scripture starts with a story in the news and links it with the Bible texts and topic of the Adult Sabbath School study guide that week. Then it provides questions for reflection. The four questions follow this cycle of learning:

Connecting: a question or two that moves you from personal experience into the Bible

Sharing: digging deeper into Scripture and understanding what it means

Applying: experimenting in fun and interactive ways how the Biblical concepts work for you

Valuing: a call to action in your life as God is prompting you to respond

If you appreciate using Sharing Scripture as a resource, and you know others who may be interested, please share these newsletters with a friend. Better yet, have that person sign up for this free resource personally. You can do that by calling by calling 800.272.4664 or by emailing us at creativeministryinfo@gmail.com.

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The Choices We Make

April 13, 2019

Texts: Ephesians 1:1-4; Matthew 22:35-37; Matthew 7:24-25; Proverbs 18:24;

Amazon's value crossed \$1 trillion in September 2018. CEO Jeff Bezos explained Amazon's success by outlining two types of decisions entrepreneurs and executives make. Type 1 decisions represent a door you walk through and can't go back, such as quitting a well-paying job to focus on your side passion. "These decisions must be made methodically, with great deliberation and consultation." Type 2 decisions represent a reversible choice, for example, testing a new product with a group of customers or the layout of a section on the Amazon store.

Bezos advises spending up to 10% of your work week on Type 1 decisions. These are draining and time-consuming. Don't make Type 1 decisions while feeling angry, hungry, lonely or because you're tired of the process. It's not a good idea to quit your job because you feel despondent on a Monday morning. You can make Type 2 decisions quickly, even delegating them to team members. Rather than letting emotions overwhelm you, learn what you can about the problem.

Plan to learn from failures. Amazon has taken many chances over the years. Some, like the Kindle, paid off. Others, like the Amazon Fire Phone were expensive flops. Bezos believes failures are part of the job. "You're still going to be wrong nine times out of ten. In business, every once in a while, when you step up to the plate, you can score 1,000 runs. It's important to be bold. Big winners pay for the many previous experiments." After all, entrepreneurs or executives who embrace their choices learn far more than the people who run away. [1]

This week's lesson examines the choices we make. Scripture gives us vital counsel on how to make good choices in life. It's important to understand that we really do have our God-given freedom of choice. Our life's course (including eternal life) is not predestined by God, or some impersonal force of fate. Even when our lives seem to be spiraling downward, we can regain an element of control over our lives by taking charge of our own choices.

Often, it's small, seemingly insignificant choices that can lead to big changes in our life's course. Choosing the right friends—like Mom always advised us—may seem like a small thing, but those influences affect our ability to see the bigger picture later on in life. We have a great amount of latitude to choose who and what will influence our thinking, and ultimately our ability to make good choices. The simple basics like prayer, Bible study and the counsel of God-fearing friends can always provide the proper perspective to make those choices.

~cb

[1] <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bryancollinseurope/2019/03/07/jeff-bezos-says-successful-people-make-these-two-types-of-decisions/#4497d95063bf>

For Reflection

Connecting: Discuss this old riddle: Imagine there are 2 doors. Behind one door is eternal bliss, and the other leads to a horrible death. I give you two clues: 1) Door #2 opens to eternal bliss, and 2) I always lie. Which door do you choose, and why?

Sharing: After reading Ecclesiastes 2:1-11, why do you think so many people—even Bible-believing Christians—choose to run after worldly pleasures?

1. We each one think that we can resist the harmful effects of these pleasures
2. It's human nature to turn a blind eye to the potential long-term damage of something harmful that we really crave
3. Occasionally we see someone who doesn't seem to be harmed by their sinful choices
4. Like the Teacher of Ecclesiastes, we rationalize that we are just testing ourselves to discover if something is really as bad as people say

5. Humans, without the uplifting influence of the Holy Spirit, naturally tend toward bad choices

6. Other:

Applying: Your best friend tells you about a wonderful investment opportunity. He is withdrawing all of his retirement savings to invest in this scheme, and he wants you to do the same. What counsel would you give your friend?

Valuing: As you look back over the course of your life, have you made primarily good choices? Not so good? Whichever path you find yourself on, pray for God to lead you to learn from your past and choose wisely as you move forward in life.



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