

CHAPTER NINE

A BIBLICAL MODEL FOR DECISION MAKING

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verse from memory.
- Explain the purpose of a model.
- Explain the value of a model for decision making.
- Use a Biblical model for decision making to help you make wise choices.

KEY VERSE:

**A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps.
(Proverbs 16:9)**

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a Biblical model for decision making. A model is an example of something. Its purpose is to provide an example for you to follow. A decision is a choice. You must determine an answer for a real life situation and choose what action you will take. This is called decision making. A model for decision making provides an example to follow when making decisions. Life is an endless succession of choices and decisions. Making choices is a responsibility. Constantly refusing to make a decision is in itself a decision.

The Biblical model presented in this chapter will help you make wise choices within the will of God:

**A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps.
(Proverbs 16:9)**

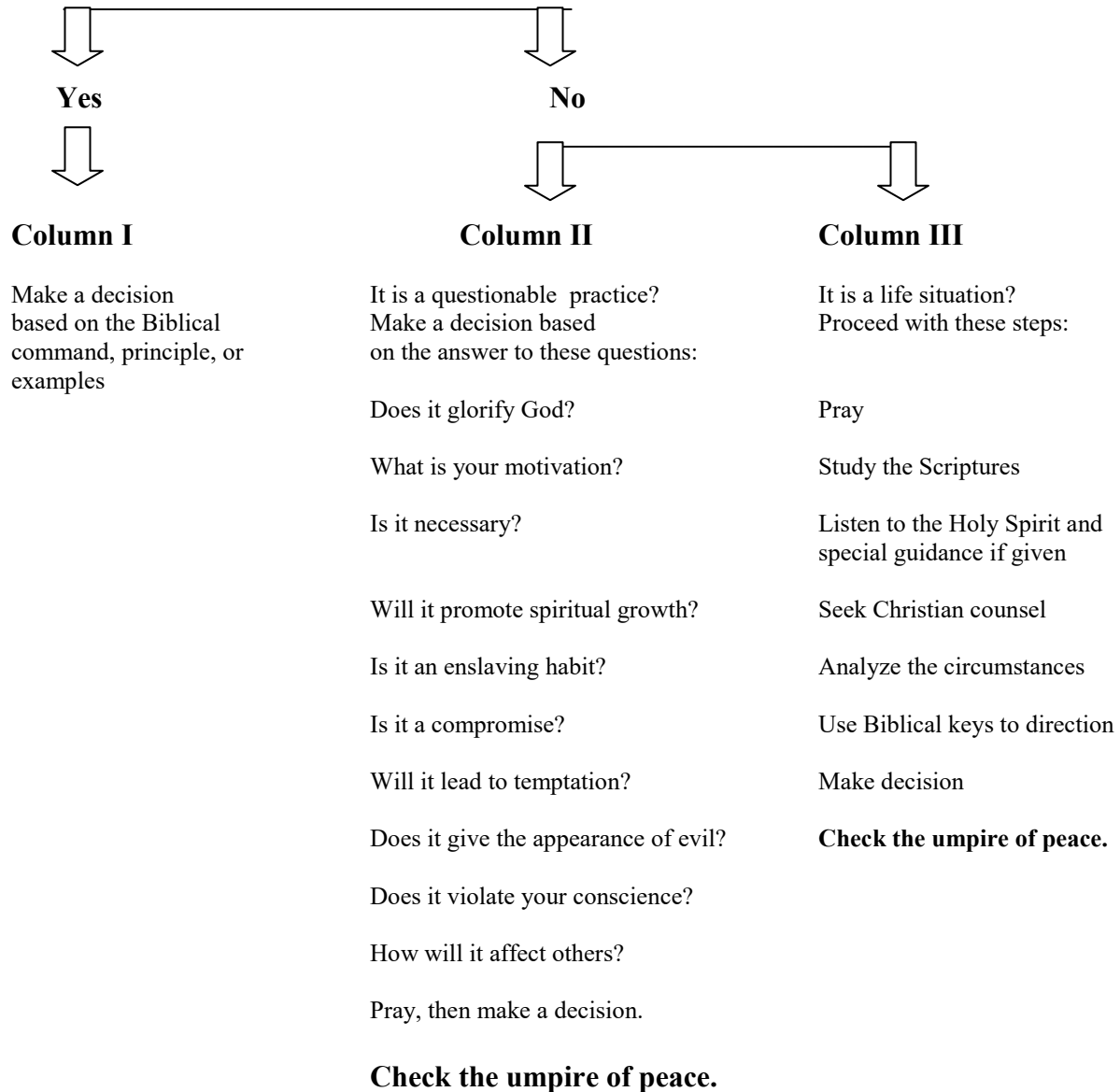
THE MODEL

Study the Biblical model for decision making on the following page. The chart summarizes what you have learned in previous chapters. Then proceed on to discussion of the model in the remainder of this chapter.

A BIBLICAL MODEL FOR DECISION MAKING

Identify the problem, question, or life situation for which guidance is sought.

Is it dealt with in Scripture by specific command, general principle or example?



If you do not have peace, continue to seek the Lord using the model.

USING THE MODEL

The first step in the decision making model is to identify the problem, question, or life situation for which guidance is sought. Next, search the written Word of God to see if the problem is dealt with by commandment, example, or general principle.

YES:

If the answer is "Yes, it is dealt with in the written Word of God," then make the decision based upon this written revelation. (See Column I on the model). Make sure your decision is in harmony with the Scriptures.

NO:

If the answer is "no," then proceed on with the decision making model under Columns I and II.

Here you will find two choices for situations not dealt with in the Bible. You must determine whether the decision to be made involves a questionable practice or a real life situation.

QUESTIONABLE PRACTICES:

A questionable practice is something not dealt with in Scripture as either right or wrong. It can involve a choice of entertainment or leisure activities, a habit, permissible food or drinks, style of dress, or day on which to worship.

If the decision with which you are faced involves a questionable practice, ask yourself the questions listed on the model under Column II. These are Biblical principles for guidance in questionable situations which were discussed in Chapter Eight. Answer each of these questions and pray, then make your decision on the basis of your answers to the questions on the model.

LIFE SITUATIONS:

A life situation can include, but is not limited to, decisions regarding marriage, ministry, occupation, residence, choice of churches, etc. It is a choice which can affect your future life in a major way.

For decisions on life issues, proceed down Column III on the right hand side of the decision making model. First pray about the decision. Ask God for His will to be accomplished in your life. Ask Him for wisdom to make the right decision. Praise Him for guidance to make the right decision. Ask others to pray with you. Study the Scriptures and as you study claim the promises for direction given in the written Word of God.

Listen to the inner voice of the Holy Spirit as He speaks God's will into your heart. Acknowledge supernatural revelation, should God choose to send it. These might include

dreams, visions, angels, an audible voice from God, or other special forms of guidance in harmony with God's Word.

Seek Christian counsel. Analyze the circumstances affecting the decision. Use the Biblical keys for direction you learned in the last chapter. (These are found in Proverbs 3:5-6). On the basis of agreement of these methods, make a decision.

THE UMPIRE OF PEACE

On decisions not specifically dealt with by Biblical command, principle, or example, the umpire of peace is your guide. When you make a decision on a questionable practice or life situation and you do not have peace in your spirit, continue to seek the Lord using the steps on the model. Do not make a final decision until you have the peace of God confirming your choice.

Never be in a hurry:

Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord. (Psalms 27:14)

My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. (Psalms 62:5)

Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him . . . (Psalms 37:7)

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31)

Saul was in a hurry and made a decision which cost him the kingdom. You can read about it in I Samuel 13. Nehemiah waited for direction from God and the right timing, and he became part of the rebuilding of a kingdom. You can read his story in the book of Nehemiah.

SELF-TEST

1. Write the Key Verse from memory.

2. What is the purpose of a model?

3. What is a model for decision making?

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Use the Biblical model presented in this chapter to help you make a decision about a problem, question, or life situation for which you need guidance.