

Decision Making and the Will of God

Lesson 8: What Do Godly Counselors Say? Safety in Counsel -- Proverbs 15:22 (with Proverbs 11:14)

There is a particular kind of loneliness in a hard decision. You turn it over and over in your own mind, late at night, running the same arguments in the same circles, until you can no longer tell whether you are thinking clearly or simply talking yourself into what you already wanted. We have all been there. And the strange thing is how often we stay there, wrestling alone, when God has provided exactly the help we need in the people around us. The wise believer has learned a humbling, freeing truth: we were never meant to decide everything by ourselves.

Solomon says it plainly, and more than once. "Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed." And again, "Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety." Notice the words he chooses. Without counsel, plans fail. With many advisers, there is safety. This is not presented as a nice optional extra for the especially humble. It is presented as the difference between a plan that collapses and a plan that stands, between falling and being kept safe. To seek wise counsel is not weakness; it is one of the basic disciplines of a person who wants to decide well.

Why do we need it so badly? Because every one of us has blind spots. We cannot see our own faces without a mirror, and we cannot see our own hearts without help. Our desires distort our reasoning. Our fears exaggerate some things and hide others. We are remarkably skilled at constructing airtight arguments for what we already crave. Other people, especially godly, honest, loving people who know us well, can see what we cannot. They can spot the rationalization we have missed, name the motive we have buried, and ask the question we have been carefully avoiding.

But not all counsel is created equal, and this lesson will be honest about that too. The goal is not simply to gather opinions, or to collect enough voices to drown out our conscience, or to keep asking until someone finally tells us what we want to hear. The goal is godly counsel, the wisdom of people who fear the Lord, who know His Word, and who love us enough to tell us the truth. A foolish king named Rehoboam once traded the counsel of seasoned elders for the flattery of his friends and tore a kingdom in two. So we ask the question carefully and humbly: What do godly counselors say? And then we have the humility to listen.

Group Discussion: Why do you think we so often wrestle with decisions alone, even when wise help is available? As a group, talk honestly about the difference between truly seeking counsel and simply looking for someone to agree with us. Who are the godly counselors in your life, and what makes their counsel worth trusting?

Personal Reflection: Think about how you actually make important decisions. Do you seek out wise counsel, or do you tend to decide in isolation and tell people afterward? Be honest about why. Is there a decision right now that you have been carrying alone that you need to bring to a godly counselor this week?

Read Proverbs 15:22 and Proverbs 11:14

Study Questions

1. Solomon writes, “Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed” (Prov. 15:22). Why does God design us in such a way that we genuinely need the counsel of others? What does it say about wisdom that even good plans tend to fail without it?
2. Be honest about your own pattern: do you naturally seek counsel before deciding, or do you prefer to decide alone? What is really behind that tendency for you, and where has it helped or hurt you?
3. The companion proverb says, “in an abundance of counselors there is safety” (Prov. 11:14). What kind of safety does counsel provide? How do other people help protect us from the blind spots, rationalizations, and self-deception we cannot see on our own?
4. Is there a decision you have been working through mostly in your own head, where you can sense you may be missing something? Whose eyes and honest input do you need on it, and what is keeping you from asking?
5. Scripture distinguishes between the counsel of the wise and the counsel of the foolish or wicked (see Psalm 1:1). What makes counsel genuinely godly rather than merely worldly? Why does the character and faith of our advisers matter as much as their willingness to give advice?
6. Look honestly at who actually shapes your decisions, the voices you listen to most. Are they people who fear the Lord and know His Word, or mainly people who reinforce what you already want? What might you need to change about whose counsel you seek?
7. King Rehoboam rejected the counsel of the experienced elders and followed the young men who told him what he wanted to hear, with disastrous results (see 1 Kings 12:6–15). How does pride lead us to resist hard counsel, and how does the temptation to surround ourselves with agreeable voices endanger our decisions?
8. Recall a time you sought counsel mainly hoping to be told what you had already decided. What would it look like to genuinely invite, and actually receive, counsel that challenges you, even when it is not what you want to hear?
9. Scripture commends safety in an abundance of godly counselors, and God has given the church, including its elders and mature believers, as a community of wisdom (see Heb. 13:17). How does seeking counsel within the body of Christ help us decide well, and how do we honor godly counsel without surrendering our own God-given responsibility to make the decision and answer for it?
10. Look back across Proverbs 15:22 and 11:14. God has not left us to decide alone but has surrounded us with the safety of wise counsel. Name one specific way you sense Jesus

forming you through these verses. What is the single truth here that you most need to carry into your next decision?

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: Proverbs 12:15, the way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice; Proverbs 19:20, listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future; 1 Kings 12:6–15, Rehoboam forsaking the elders' counsel for the flattery of his peers; 2 Timothy 4:3, the danger of gathering teachers to suit our own passions and itching ears; Hebrews 13:17, obeying and submitting to those who keep watch over our souls

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