



POOR DECISIONS

What do we do when the people that we love are making bad decisions?

Do we try to correct them, or do we remain silent?

In today's study, we will see what the Bible has to say on the subject, and the first thing that we will point out is that the Bible teaches us not to judge them.

DO NOT JUDGE

There are many scriptures that tell us not to judge others. For our lesson, we have selected the following three:

“Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ and behold, the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye. – Matthew 7:1-5,

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.” – Luke 6:37-38,

“Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?” – James 4:11-12.

When somebody we love is making poor decisions, it is not our place to judge them.

Judgment is reserved for God.

SHOW COMPASSION

The second thing that we will point out in today's lesson, is that Christians are supposed to show compassion and not judgment.

People respond better to compassion than judgment.

We understand this when it comes to ourselves, however, sometimes we forget when it comes to others.

Jesus said:

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven.” – Matthew 5:14-16.

For us to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth, we need to understand and correctly apply the following scriptures about compassion:

“Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.” - Ephesians 4:32,

“When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.” - Mark 6:34,

“So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.” - Colossians 3:12,

“When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick.” - Matthew 14:14.

TEACH THE BIBLE

The third thing that we will point out in today’s lesson is the importance of teaching the Bible to others. Especially, when people are making poor decisions.

The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy:

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

We can teach, reproof, correct, and train without judging.

We accomplish this by quoting the Bible and letting the Bible speak for itself.

One of the best ways to help somebody that is making bad decisions is to share with them God's words, and God’s thoughts.

Sharing the right scripture at the right time is a blessing, provided the words are spoken in love, and without judgment.

PRAYING

The fourth and final thing that we can do when somebody is making bad decisions is to pray for them.

Throughout the Bible, we read about the importance of prayer, and yet our prayer life is something that can be easily neglected if we are not careful.

When somebody is making poor decisions, a fantastic thing for us to do is to lift them up in prayer!

As you read the following four scriptures, think about the importance of prayer:

“Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.” - James 5:16,

“With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit.” - Ephesians 6:18,

“For this reason, also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.” - Colossians 1:9,

“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.” - Matthew 5:43-44.

CONCLUSION

Watching somebody make poor decisions is a hard thing to do.

Especially if this person is a family member or somebody that we love.

In these situations, we need to search the scriptures and see what it says we are to do, and not to do.

In today's lesson, we highlighted four things, supported by scripture, that we must keep in mind when somebody we know is making bad decisions:

Do not judge them,
Show them compassion,
Teach them God's word,
Pray for them.

If we do these four things, we not only align with what the scriptures tell us to do, we put ourselves in the best possible position to be helpful.

We will end today's lesson with the following words spoken by Jesus during His Sermon on the Mount:

"In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets" –Matthew 7:12.