

## MONDAY MANNA

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### DECISION-MAKING FROM THE HEAD – AND THE HEART

By Jim Langley

Those of us who work in the business world know life is filled with decision after decision. How we make decisions varies, but I have noticed most business decisions are made without much thought. Unfortunately, hastily made decisions may have a detrimental impact on businesses and the lives of those affected.

Consider some of the poor business decisions you have made in the past. What went wrong? Some of mine were very impulsive, giving little consideration for the effects they might have on those around me. I do not dwell on bad decisions, but have resolved to learn from tactical errors on my past. I have come to understand decisions have ramifications far beyond my interests. Now my top concerns are how God will see my actions – and how my decisions might affect the lives of others.

This is not to say we must weigh every decision for potential outcomes, but we would be wise to bring our hearts – as well as our heads – into the decision-making process. The Bible has much to say about this. For instance, in Psalm 90, described as a prayer of “Moses, the man of God,” verses 11 and 12 declare, *“Who knows the power of your anger? For your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you. Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”* Moses knew God intimately and learned from poor decisions he had made as the leader of Israel.

In 1 Samuel 13:14, the prophet recounts for Israel’s King Saul how an unwise decision he made would end his reign: *“But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord’s command.”* Saul had taken things into his own hands at Gilgal, not waiting the full seven days for Samuel to arrive and conduct the prescribed sacrificial burnt offering. Apparently, Saul was greatly concerned that his troops were losing heart with the Philistines preparing to attack.

King Solomon teaches in Proverbs 23:15-18, *“My son, if your heart is wise, then my heart will be glad; my inmost being will rejoice when your lips speak what is right. Do not let your heart envy sinners, but always be zealous for the fear of the Lord. There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.”* This is an important lesson we need to master. Fearing (having reverence for) the Lord is critical for coming to grips with the business decisions of the heart.

In James 4:13-16, business and professional people who claim to follow Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord are reminded, *“Look here, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town and will stay there a year. We will do business there and make a profit.’ How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog—it’s here a little while, then it’s gone. What you ought to say is, ‘If the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that.’ Otherwise you are boasting about your own pretentious plans, and all such boasting is evil.”* This truth is sobering – and helpful – for serving God in business.

There is much to be gained by making business decisions of the heart, rather than acting impulsively. The Lord desires for us to have a life-changing experience during our time on earth. Trusting in and following the Scriptures in our business life will make it much more meaningful.

The prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel both prophesied a new covenant that was forthcoming. We all can have a “new heart” that will enable us to see God and others in a totally new light. This new heart comes from a right relationship with Jesus. We should pray, seeking to let Him be intimately involved in all aspects of business and our personal lives.

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*Postal Address:*

PO Box 8168,  
Woolloongabba, QLD, 4102

*ABN:* 42 005 622 515

*Office Address:*

Suite CBMC,  
Sung Do Lawyers,  
12 Annerley Road,  
Woolloongabba, QLD 4102

*Email:*

admin@cbmcaustralia.com.au

*Phone:*

07 3172 9365

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### **Reflection/Discussion Questions**

Describe the process you use in making major decisions.

Do you tend to be impulsive, or more methodical, in decision-making? Can you think of a time you made an important decision hastily, on impulse, that you later regretted? If so, describe that situation and the consequences of it.

What does it mean to you to put our hearts into making decisions, as well as our heads? How difficult is it for you to do that on a consistent basis? Explain your answer.

Which of the Bible passages cited seems most meaningful to you? Why?

*NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:*

Psalms 119:9-16, 139:23-24

Proverbs 21:1-4

Jeremiah 24:7; 32:39-40

Ezekiel 11:19-20; 36:26-27