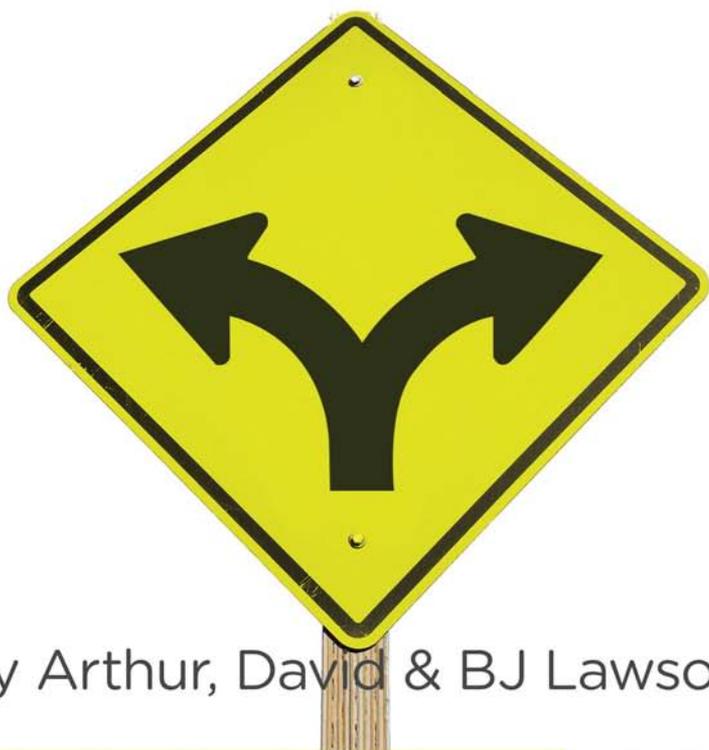


How to Make Choices You Won't Regret



Kay Arthur, David & BJ Lawson

4minute
BIBLE STUDIES

How to Make Choices You Won't Regret

Kay Arthur, David & BJ Lawson

PRECEPT MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL



WATERBROOK
P R E S S

HOW TO MAKE CHOICES YOU WON'T REGRET

PUBLISHED BY WATERBROOK PRESS

12265 Oracle Boulevard, Suite 200

Colorado Springs, Colorado 80921

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New American Standard Bible® (NASB), © Copyright The Lockman Foundation 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995. Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org)

Italics in Scripture quotations reflect the author's added emphasis.

ISBN 978-0-307-45764-6

Copyright © 2003 by Precept Ministries International

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Published in the United States by WaterBrook Multnomah, an imprint of the Crown Publishing Group, a division of Random House Inc., New York.

WATERBROOK and its deer colophon are registered trademarks of Random House Inc.

Printed in the United States of America

2009

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

SPECIAL SALES

Most WaterBrook Multnomah books are available at special quantity discounts when purchased in bulk by corporations, organizations, and special-interest groups. Custom imprinting or excerpting can also be done to fit special needs. For information, please e-mail SpecialMarkets@WaterBrookMultnomah.com or call 1-800-603-7051.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

This small-group study is for people who are interested in learning for themselves more about what the Bible says on various subjects, but who have only limited time to meet together. It's ideal, for example, for a lunch group at work, an early morning men's group, a young mother's group meeting in a home, a Sunday-school class, or even family devotions. (It's also ideal for small groups that typically have longer meeting times—such as evening groups or Saturday morning groups—but want to devote only a portion of their time together to actual study, while reserving the rest for prayer, fellowship, or other activities.)

This book is designed so that all the group's participants will complete each lesson's study activities *at the same time*. Discussing your insights drawn from what God says about the subject reveals exciting, life-impacting truths.

Although it's a group study, you'll need a facilitator to lead the study and keep the discussion moving. (This person's function is *not* that of a lecturer or teacher. However, when this book is used in a Sunday-school class or similar setting, the teacher should feel free to lead more directly and to bring in other insights in addition to those provided in each week's lesson.)

If *you* are your group's facilitator, the leader, here are some helpful points for making your job easier:

- Go through the lesson and mark the text before you lead the group. This will give you increased familiarity with the material and will enable you to facilitate the group with greater ease. It may be easier for you to lead the group through the instructions for marking if you as a leader choose a specific color for each symbol you mark.

- As you lead the group, start at the beginning of the text and simply read it aloud in the order it appears in the lesson, including the “insight boxes,” which appear throughout. Work through the lesson together, observing and discussing what you learn. As you read the Scripture verses, have the group say aloud the word they are marking in the text.
- The discussion questions are there simply to help you cover the material. As the class moves into the discussion, many times you will find that they will cover the questions on their own. Remember, the discussion questions are there to guide the group through the topic, not to squelch discussion.
- Remember how important it is for people to verbalize their answers and discoveries. This greatly strengthens their personal understanding of each week’s lesson. Try to ensure that everyone has plenty of opportunity to contribute to each week’s discussions.
- Keep the discussion moving. This may mean spending more time on some parts of the study than on others. If necessary, you should feel free to spread out a lesson over more than one session. However, remember that you don’t want to slow the pace too much. It’s much better to leave everyone “wanting more” than to have people dropping out because of declining interest.
- If the validity or accuracy of some of the answers seems questionable, you can gently and cheerfully remind the group to stay focused on the truth of the Scriptures. Your object is to learn what the Bible says, not to engage in human philosophy. Simply stick with the Scriptures and give God the opportunity to speak. His Word *is* truth (John 17:17)!

HOW TO MAKE CHOICES YOU WON'T REGRET

Ihate you! How can you stand there and say you love me? You don't call or come by except when you and your 'friend' don't have any plans or when I beg to see you! Don't tell me you love me!"

As his teenage daughter screamed, his heart was breaking. Finally he left, wondering, *How did I get to this point—divorced, with my daughter hating me? All I ever wanted was to be a great husband and father.*

Perhaps you, too, are wondering how you ended up where you are, whether your life would be better if you had made different decisions along the way. Maybe your current situation is great, but you're facing some difficult choices.

Every day we're faced with decisions, many of

which are benign, with no lasting consequences. Others have the potential to change the course of our lives—whether for good or bad. Certain avenues open to us are marked with hidden pitfalls or lead in harmful directions, and in some instances the wrong choice can even bring death. Where do you go for direction?

This inductive study will give you guidelines for making these difficult choices. By inductive we mean you will go straight to the source—the Bible—to see what God has to say. Knowing His Word for yourself will equip you to make choices that bring honor to Him and lead you to peace.

WEEK ONE

David was Israel's great and celebrated second king. His obedience had resulted in an unprecedented outpouring of blessing, not only on his household, but on all of Israel. A married man with a number of wives who had borne him many children, David had much about which to be thankful, but with his success came new opportunities and decisions. Let's take a look at this man David and the choices he made.

OBSERVE

Leader: Read aloud 2 Samuel 11:1-5.

- Have the group say aloud and underline every reference to **David**, including pronouns.

INSIGHT

It was normal for kings to go to war in the spring, which marks the end of the rainy season. The roads would be passable, there would be fodder for the animals, and an army on the move would be able to raid the fields for food.

DISCUSS

- What did you learn from marking *David* in verse 1?

2 SAMUEL 11:1-5

¹ Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem.

² Now when evening came, David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a

woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance.

³ So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, “Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?”

⁴ David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house.

⁵ The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, “I am pregnant.”

- What happened to David when he stayed home and didn't go to battle as kings should have?

INSIGHT

The woman David sees is “very beautiful.” The Hebrew phrase used here is reserved for people of striking physical appearance.

- What course of events led to Bathsheba's pregnancy?
- What choices could David have made to change the outcome of this story?

OBSERVE

Did David have any information that would have helped him make the right choice? According to Deuteronomy 17:18-20, every king who came to power was supposed to write his own copy of the Law—the first five books of the Bible, Genesis through Deuteronomy. This means David would have written out Exodus 20:1-17, which lists the Ten Commandments.

Leader: Let's read these commandments.

- *Number each of the commandments as you read them. The first commandment is found in verse 3.*
- *When you come to a commandment that involves sexual activity, number it and put a check mark beside it: ✓*

DISCUSS

- Did David break any of these commandments when he slept with Bathsheba? If so, which ones?

EXODUS 20:1-17

1 Then God spoke all these words, saying,

2 “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

3 “You shall have no other gods before Me.

4 “You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.

5 “You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth

generations of those who hate Me,

6 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

7 “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

8 “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 “Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

10 but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your

- Look back at what you marked about David in the passage from 2 Samuel. Was David made aware in any way that he would be breaking one or more of these commandments if he slept with Bathsheba?

- When David decided to sleep with Bathsheba, what was the basis of his choice?

- Do you see any similarities between what happened with David and Bathsheba and the choices many are making today? Explain your answer.

male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.

11 “For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

- When faced with a moral decision, what path are many people choosing and on what basis?

12 “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

13 “You shall not murder.

14 “You shall not commit adultery.

15 “You shall not steal.

16 “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

17 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

2 SAMUEL 11:6-13

6 Then David sent to Joab, saying, “Send me Uriah the Hittite.” So Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 When Uriah came to him, David asked concerning the welfare of Joab and the people and the state of the war.

OBSERVE

Let’s continue the story of David and Bathsheba.

Leader: Read aloud 2 Samuel 11:6-13.

- *Have the group say aloud and underline every reference to **David**.*

INSIGHT

According to 1 Samuel 21:4-5, David and his men “kept themselves from women” whenever they set out to do battle.

DISCUSS

- What do you think David was trying to accomplish in verses 6-8, and why?
- Did his plan work? Why or why not?
- Was Uriah faced with any choices in this situation? What were they?
- What does Uriah's behavior tell you about his character?

8 Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." And Uriah went out of the king's house, and a present from the king was sent out after him.

9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house.

10 Now when they told David, saying, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?"

11 Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in temporary

shelters, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? By your life and the life of your soul, I will not do this thing.”

¹² Then David said to Uriah, “Stay here today also, and tomorrow I will let you go.” So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next.

¹³ Now David called him, and he ate and drank before him, and he made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his bed with his lord's servants, but he did not go down to his house.

- How do you suppose David felt in this situation and why?
- What did David choose to do when Uriah wouldn't go home? Why?
- Have you ever seen or heard of a scheme like David's in verse 13? Describe what happened.