IT’S MY DECISION

Darren Wright

“In the Habit” session for use with devozine meditations for September 14–20, 2015.

MAKING THE CONNECTION
“How many decisions do we make every day?
How many do we make on the spur of the moment?
How many decisions are encouraged by marketing?
How many are impulsive?
How many decisions do we make that affect others?
How many decisions do we make after turning to others for guidance?
How many decisions did you make this week before you could seek a mentor’s advice?

“Many of us don’t think too much about the decisions we make day to day; perhaps it’s time we do.” —Darren

MEET THE WRITER
Darren Wright is a Uniting Church Youth Worker serving in the Riverina Presbytery in New South Wales, Australia, as the Presbytery Education and Discipleship Worker. Darren has previously worked in congregational ministry, high school chaplaincy, and in local government as a youth worker. His interests include music (Radiohead, Ben Harper, The National, Of Monsters and Men, Ryan Adams, Laura Marling, All India Radio, Florence and the Machine), film (Avengers, MegaMind, Harry Potter, How to Train your Dragon, Scott Pilgrim, Big Hero 6), TV (Chuck, Doctor Who, Big Bang Theory, Community, Agents of SHIELD), theology, pop-culture, working with young people in at-risk areas, and the connection between the church, theology, and pop culture. Check out his blog at www.digitalorthodoxy.com.

STUFF YOU WILL NEED
• pens
• markers
• paper
• a Bible
• (optional) snacks, pillows, candles to make space inviting
PLUGGED IN

+ *WingClips* offers a long list of video clips that focus on the theme “Choices.” (http://www.wingclips.com/themes/choices)

+ *The Work of the People* offers short videos on a variety of topics:

  > “Choosing Life” — Parker Palmer talks about vocation, identity, and making life-giving decisions or death-dealing decisions. (http://www.theworkofthepeople.com/choosing-life)

  > “Rotting Dog” — Miroslav Volf says that “his mother told him ‘the most important decisions in the world are made in each person’s heart to see beauty.’ How can seeing beauty in the other help us to make important decisions? How can we learn to see beauty where beauty is difficult to see?” (http://www.theworkofthepeople.com/rotting-dog)


+ “Making Good Decisions,” from the website *Ignatian Spirituality*, offers a selection of resources that can be used to explore decision-making. (http://www.ignatianspirituality.com/making-good-decisions)

CHECKING IN
Create an inviting space with coffee, tea, cookies, candles, cushions—you know the drill. Make the space comfortable and welcoming.

As group members gather, give them a large sheet of paper and a pen or marker and invite them to list all the decisions or choices they have made in the last twenty-four hours. Perhaps they would like to draw a time line of their day to help them focus.

Next, invite group members to recall the many decisions they made during the last week.

Then discuss these questions:

  How easy or difficult was the task of remembering the decisions you made?
  Were you surprised by the number of decisions you made during the day? during the week?
  What was the smallest decision you made? What was the largest?
  What was the most difficult?
  What decisions did you think were insignificant?
  How many decisions affected another person? (for instance, buying anything affects other people)
EXPLORING THE WORD

Scripture: 1 Samuel 3:1–10

Read aloud the story of Samuel’s call in 1 Samuel 3:1–10 (NRSV):

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called, “Samuel! Samuel!” and he said, “Here I am!” and ran to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call; lie down again.” So he went and lay down. The Lord called again, “Samuel!” Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.” Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.

Questions for discussion:

To whom do you go when you want to talk through tough decisions?

What do you look for in a person in whom you would confide or whom you would ask for advice? Why are the characteristics you chose important?

What kinds of decisions would you seek help or advice in making?

How big does a decision need to be before you pray or ask someone for advice?

What can we do as a group to help one another make better decisions?

SHARING IN PRAYER

Invite group members to gather in a circle for a time of prayer. Ask each person to spend five minutes in silent prayer for the person on his or her left. After the time of silent prayer, invite each person to say aloud a one-line prayer for the person on his or her left.

Conclude the session by saying a prayer for the group or by inviting the group to say a prayer together.

TAKING IT FURTHER

Invite discussion about how the group could create a space where they could reflect on big decisions together.

— from devozine In the Habit (September/October 2015). Copyright © 2015 by The Upper Room®. All rights reserved.