

- > **Great Day**.... We are so glad that you decided to join us today, for another message segment – brought to you by “**Discovery Crossroads Ministries**” – a place where “**Dead ends, become alive again!**” – a place where “**God can do the miraculous, in and thru us!**”
- > **Ok so, Who goes to the grocery store, and picks out rotten fruit to take home to eat - (maybe with a worm hanging out of it)? Who does that? Are we not pretty “picky”, about the condition of the fruit that we take home?**
- If we **ARE** so “picky” about the fruit that we take home from the grocery, then **Why are we NOT SO “picky”, about the fruit that we “allow” to get into our heart-home? We let a ton of junk, get into our heart!**
- **Look**, The seeds that we toss into ourselves, WILL produce something in us! Seeds are MEANT to produce, or reproduce, themselves! **Good glory**, I’m talking about the seeds that COME FROM outside influences, like: social media – songs – movies – TV – billboards – influencers – teachers – colleges - friends – strangers – family members – space (satellites) – cellphones – etc. – etc.
- Everyone of these, “INPUT” into our beings daily!

> **What is behind the scenes** (*within us*), that **drives** how we make choices?

**It is:**

1) what we **Physiologically** thirst for.

a) our **needs**...(*those things that we have to have, to live on*)

b) our **wants**...(*those things that we focus on, and desire from our heart – that lie outside of our basic needs*)

2) what we are **Taught**.

a) by **Social influences**...(*those things taught to us by our: families, friends, peers & media. Sometimes our choice influences, come from family or peer pressures.*)

b) by **Cultural norms**...(*beliefs, values & morals we choose to believe, that come from the culture we identify with*).

3) what we **Observe**.

a) by the **Herd mentality**...(*low: we make bad choices, just trying to follow the herd, to be a part of something!*).

4) what we **Experiment** with.

a) by our **Dabbling**...(*Don't we all experiment with life; dabbling with things we know nothing about? In our Dabbling, we make choices; some good, and some bad*).

(*Never make a choice (decision), when you have a UTI... No, not a Urinary Tract Infection - but when you are "Under The Influence"... Under the influence of*)

anything that has you "**out of your right (clear) mind**"!... Let me give you an example: I had an endoscopy the other day... following the procedure, I was drugged up pretty good... when I was ready to go home, the nurses told me not to: drive a car, or make any important decisions! What they were saying was: do NOT make any big decisions, when you are NOT in your right (*clear*) mind. *Do NOT make any big choices, while you are "Under The Influence" of anything, that can ALTER your clear thinking.*)

5) what our **Instincts** tell us.

a) by **Emotional-responses**...(*We make a ton of choices every day, based on our innate (deep-down, gut) thoughts & feelings. Some call this our "natural, or spiritual" sense. Truly, at some place & time, we all behave & make choices, based on our instincts. Some folks make choices based off of: Impulse – Anger – Fear – Happiness – Compulsion – Frustration – an Inner Voice – Shock – and a host of other feelings & emotions.*)

We ought NOT to make important choices, by way of our **feelings**, but by **facts**. And not by way of **emotion**, but by **experience** -(*tried & true*). And not by way of **pressure**, but by **prayer**.

6) what our **Security** needs are.

a) by our personal **Safety-net**...(*We all have an idea of what makes us feel safe, and what doesn't. We make choices, based on what threatens us*).

\* These are really just the "tip of the iceberg" of **what all** causes/directs "**How & Why**" we make choices or decisions.

> Let me clarify what I am after today... If we plant **the seeds** of an apple tree, **the outcome** will be that **the tree WILL grow apples!** **Likewise**, when we make a "**choice**" about something (*the planting of the seeds*) - that choice, or decision, WILL "**bear fruit**"...(*it WILL bring forth something - an **outcome***). So, the fruit is what comes **OUT OF** our choices/decisions... and what comes **OUT OF** the choices, might be **GOOD** fruit (*Good outcomes or consequences*), or it might be **BAD** fruit (*Bad outcomes or consequences*)! Truth; *NOT everything that we touch or taste, is beneficial for us!*

\* In reality: The fruit of our choices, will **either** bring us into the **darkness**, or into the **light**. How: They (*our choices*), bring us to a **dark** "condition" or a **light** "condition". Our choices can take us down long, dark, roads - or down fun, light & airy, roads! *Some people listening today would agree that: some of their choices, took them to some pretty dark roads!*

-- **Simon & Garfunkel** (in their song "**The Sound of Silence**") sang, "**Hello darkness, my old friend - I've come to talk with you again. Because a vision softly creeping, left its seeds while I was sleeping. And the vision that was planted in my brain, still remains (it never leaves our brain) - within the sound of silence."**

Every input that you receive (**take in**), **implants a notion or idea** into your head. Then the notion or idea, will **take root** and cause you to start **acting on** it. That action, brings forth **an outcome**, that takes us towards **light** (*something good*), or towards **darkness** (*something bad*).

**Casting Crowns** sings: "**Be careful little eyes what you see... it's the second glance that ties your hands, as darkness pulls the strings. Be careful little feet where you go... for it's the little feet behind you, that are sure to follow. Be careful little ears what you hear... when flattery leads to compromise, the end is always near. Be careful little lips what you say... for empty words and promises, lead broken hearts astray. It's a slow fade, when you give yourself away. It's a slow fade, when black and white have turned to grey. And thoughts invade, choices made, a price will be paid - when you give yourself away" .... **Flowers** grow in the sunlight, and **mushrooms** grow in the darkness... Just saying!**

- **The difference** in whether our choices bring us into the **Light** or into **darkness**, comes down to the “**KWU’s**” that we have within us, **helping/hindering** us, with making our choices!
- **So**, **What are “KWU’s”, you ask?** They are a set of “**Knowledge, Wisdom & Understanding**” **guiding principles** (**foundation**) that **operate/drive** our decision-making process. **For example**: A computer looks great from the outside, but without its “**software**” on the inside – it cannot function...(it takes the software on the inside, to tell the computer how to work).
- **Likewise**, we have built-in software (*everything that has gone into us, since birth*), and it is those things that guide our choices/decisions. **Now**, we can operate (*make choices*) from our “**worldly software & our intellect**” – or we can make choices from “**God’s Software (God’s Script for life) & His Spirit’s Intellect**”. Whichever software that “your spirit” ALLOWS to get into you, is the software that will make all your decides/choices for you. **So**, to have the **RIGHT** Knowledge, Wisdom & Understanding (**KWU’s**) guiding principles (*software*) in you, enables you to make the **RIGHT** choices/decisions, in life!
- .....I love the example of “**Lacking**” the Right KWU’s, found in **Proverbs 7:6-10**.... I’ve used this example many times, but

today it is spot on for this message. ***In the story***, someone was looking out their bedroom window, and noticed a group of Naïve young men standing on the street. ***But the author*** said there was one particular young man, that stood out more than the others – probably because he crossed the street, and got too close to the harlot’s house. ***The author*** went on to describe this young naïve man, as “***lacking common sense***” (***Lacking God’s Life Script***). ***I’ve always pondered*** this judgment, and I can only believe that: the author labeled this young man this way – because everyone else in the town, knew that this was the harlot’s house. ***This*** young naïve man obviously did not know that! ***WHY didn’t he know? WHY wasn’t he as prepared, as the other young men, who did not cross the road and get too close to sin? It’s obvious***, the naïve young man **LACKED** common sense – he **LACKED** good & healthy KWU’s **guiding principles** (***foundation***). ***And without*** the proper Good set of values & morals, this young man did NOT have all that he should have, to make a **RIGHT** (***sound***) choice. ***Now***, ***some people*** might say that his elevator did not go all the way to the top floor. ***I say***, his elevator did not go all the way to the basement... ***for*** in the basement, is where his good & healthy KWU’s should have been stored - to provide him a “***Sure, Steady, Steadfast, Foundation***”, for making Good choices!

\* Our KWU Foundation had better be strong enough, to support the weight of this world's choices, that we have to make!

**Like a house**... the foundation had better be built of **concrete**, instead of **sand** – for surely the beach house can quickly fail, when the high tide comes in! If the young man did not have a “**good & godly**” set of KWU's in him, then all his decisions would be made out of his “**unstable**” feelings, instead of “**stable**” facts! Unstable feelings will fool you & fail you, at every choice. **In fact**, I believe that the devil uses our feelings, just to toy with us! He will get us on a big high (*what I call: “a magic carpet ride”*), and then he will pull the rug right out from under us – laughing as we fall & hit the ground, shattering into pieces. He is such a punk!

- Our feelings “**shift**” like the wind, following: social & cultural norms, family & peer pressures, our wants, instincts, experiments, security issues, and more. Choices made thru **Good** KWU's, produce “**stable**” outcomes. But choices made thru **non-existent** or **bad** KWU's, produce “**unstable**” outcomes.

-- If what all goes into us (*that directs our choices, or our decision-making*), could be understood as a “**bowl of soup**” – then, **What all goes into our soup?**

....If you have nothing but carrots in your soup, then you don't have a lot of flavor going into your soup.... **low**: If you don't



have a lot of resources in your heart - then you are shorted on resources that you need, to help you make healthy choices or decisions. **I mean**, what fun is "Alphabet soup", if there is only "1" letter in it? I hope you understand, that I am using the "*bowl of soup*", to represent your "**heart**"!

- **Luke 6:45**, "*A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart.*" NIV ("The seed that was planted in my brain – still remains!")
  
- If you find that your heart's "alphabet soup" only has "1" letter in it (*it is **short** on Good KWU's*), then **ADD** more letters to your soup...(**ADD** the "*Word of God*", to your heart). When we add the "**Word of God**" to our life (*like adding new vegetables to our old carrot soup*), that is when our life begins to take on a new, exciting & good, flavor/meaning! Then, you can be assured of making good & healthy choices. God's Word is literally "***the Seasoning***", that adds "***flavor***" to your soup/life! Yes, the CURE for having corrupt principles & values, is to apply **God's Word** to our lives!
  
- ....It is literally God's Word, that **transforms** our heart... it gives our heart the resources that it needs, to live the Abundant life, here on earth! If we are on top of our life-game, we would thirst for (*crave*) God's Good, Life-altering, Word... And,

we would keep it (*treasure it*), as the most valuable Word that we could ever possess! [Proverbs 7:1-5a](#) says, "1 My son, **keep** my words, and **store up** my commands **within you**. 2 **Keep** my commands and you will live; **guard** my teachings as the apple of your eye. 3 **Bind them** on your fingers; **write them on the tablet of your heart**. 4 Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and to insight, "You are my relative." 5 They will **keep you from**.....whatever sin you might encounter in life." NIV

...God's **Wisdom**, is to be our sister.

...God's **Insight** (*His Knowledge & Understanding*), is to be our relative (*family*).

-- **Listen**, most of our choices are NOT made thru "**God's Word**", we make them **impulsively** – without much **thought** – not even **counting the costs** of the outcome, that could come out of our misguided choices. I am telling you, God's Word can totally help you **KNOW** what the **RIGHT** choice/decision is... it outlines what is: right & wrong, and good & bad.

....**Also**, most of our choices are hardly ever made thru "**Prayer**". Our brain says, "**Oh, that sounds good – let's just do it**" – but we so quickly exclude what God might tell us about choice! Folks, we should always send our thoughts up to God, to ensure they match what He is thinking!

....**Let me just close with this thought:** Making choices by way of: **facts** (*what is known to be Truth*), **experience** (*what's been tried & found true*), **Counting the costs** (*looking ahead to see if there are any traps or dangers ahead*), **prayer** (*asking God for His Divine Help*), all with **calm** (*having peace of mind & heart*) - will see us following the "**Paths of Light**", because we will make better (*wiser - more godly*) choices for our lives... our lives will experience less pain too, since we didn't choose the wrong (*hurtful*) paths, while we were NOT in our rightful (*clear*) mind!"

-- **It's all about**: the principles, teachings & experiences (*that we've encountered, or chosen to encounter*), that collaborates to persuade our mind & heart, to make a choice, one way or the other! **Whatever you do**: **DO NOT** stay asleep to the Bad or Negative seeds, that are always trying to plant themselves in your brain. **Instead**, stay alert & fight them off... use a big stick if you have too (*God's Word & the Power of His Spirit*)! **You** are the only one who has the power to decide (*choose*), what gets in and what is not allowed in! It's **your** choice! Choose the Choicest Fruit for your brain & heart!

-- **So**, **What set of KWU's are you allowing to get inside of you, that make your choices for you? Are they**

**"worldly" principles & values, or are they "Godly" ones? Are you really being "picky" - ensuring that only the "Choicest Fruit" (principles & values), gets into your mind & heart?**

- > The Bible says in **Isaiah 30:21**, "*Whether you turn to the right or to the left (when you go to make a choice), **your ears will hear a voice behind you** (the voice speaking from within you) will say, 'This is the way; walk in it' (this is the RIGHT choice!)"*
  
- The scriptures assure us that: with God's Word & His Spirit **ACTIVELY living within us**, that we WILL be able to make the Good/Right choices, every time! *May it be, for all of us!*

## Discovery questions:

- 1) Are you “picky” about the condition of the fruit that you bring home from the grocery store? Ok but, are you at all “picky” about what gets into your mind & heart?
- 2) Is it true that the nature (*purpose*) of seeds, is to sprout & grow something? Could you make the connection that everything you see, smell, touch, taste & hear, are seeds that plant themselves into your brain? This is what Simon & Garfunkel was alluding to in their song “sound of silence” – but do you agree or not?
- 3) Of the 6 “behind the scenes” choice-influencers, spoken of in this message – which of them gives you the most trouble?
- 4) The message stated that: the outcome of our choices (*the fruit*) comes with a “condition” – good or bad; light or darkness. So, do you believe that every choice that we make, either takes us down a road of light (*goodness*), or down a road of darkness (*sin & brokenness*)?
- 5) Have any of your choices led “you” down a deep & dark pathway? Can you share your experience with others?
- 6) The message talked about: us having “KWU’s” (*Knowledge, Wisdom & Understandings*) in our heart, that help us make choices; like software does for a computer. These KWU’s

come from all the inputs we've ever received in life. But, what "kind" of KWU's are you using to make your choices – "worldly" ones, or "spiritual" ones?

- 7)** Did the young "naïve" man, spoken of in Proverbs 7:1-10, help you to understand that we have to have "God's Word; His Life Script" in us, to help us make good & wise choices every day?
- 8)** Can our feelings really lead us to make wrong or unstable choices? Explain your answer.
- 9)** Explain the deep meaning in Luke 6:45 – especially as it speaks to good or evil, coming OUT OF what is stored in our heart?
- 10)** Did God provide the remedy for the terrible choices we make, found in Proverbs 7:1-5a? Explain your thought.
- 11)** Should any of us make "impulsive", "poorly thought out", choices – while we are "under the influence" of anything that keeps us out of our right (*clear*) mind? What kind of things would place us under the influence, causing us to make bad choices? How does being "impulsive" really affect our choice making? What happens if we do not "first", count the cost of our choices?