

# Fitted to Choose

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Comparison is a fact of life. It is the means by which we determine value, put things in their proper order, give emphasis and meaning to priorities. The person who makes good choices is thought to be wise. And with good reason—he's using his abilities for good. The person who operates purely on instinct, conversely, is not always wise. He will often fail, for his choices are based on shallow reasoning.

The Christian must make comparisons. His relationship with God demands proper choices. He is fitted for such. For instance, he must compare the life of sin with that of righteousness, then choose the better. He has to compare himself to the divine directive and, seeing his deficiency, ascertain from that word what is necessary to right his course. Even after having been baptized into Christ, he still must seek those things which are spiritual in nature and make sure his inclinations and affections are spiritually based and motivated. That calls for serious considerations and careful comparisons (see Colossians 3:1-5).

When a person decides to sort out his own values without consulting God's help, he makes foolish choices indeed. Paul, in II Corinthians 10:12, speaks to such foolishness. "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some, who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise," he says. Actually, when you use yourself as the standard, all you have to do to be right is to change the standard when you feel the occasion calls for it. It works every time. If you don't measure up, change the measuring stick. It's as simple as that.

God's method is different. It requires that the character be molded in accordance with His standard. Only when one measures himself by God's standard can he know for sure if he is pleasing to God. That standard will thoroughly furnish that person to "every good work" (II Timothy 3:17).

Another possible inhibiting factor in proper measurement is personal integrity. It's just hard to be honest when you're measuring yourself—especially if you're measuring yourself by yourself. You just lose your objectivity. If we're not careful, we're constantly engaged in some sort of self-justification. No matter the problem, it's not my fault. No matter the problem, I had a reason, or I wasn't treated fairly, or something else. It's not

easy to stand off from yourself and honestly measure yourself.

Self-justification or dishonest scales aren't conducive to the making of right choices. If we don't view ourselves as to what and who we really are, we can't make wise choices because that decision does not treat the needs of the real me. Oh, we may make a judgment that "gets us out of a jam," or that makes us look good again, but in the long run, dishonesty is not a good basis on which to make sound judgments.

I said earlier that man is fitted for choice. He's made that way. What makes him different from everything else God made is this special fitting. Rocks don't make choices, flowers don't make choices. Dogs operate on an assigned frequency, one from which they are not allowed to deviate. But people are different. We operate on a purely autonomous basis. Man is free from the restraints of necessity. He can and must control himself. 'Scuse the pun: he has no choice. He is designed to meditate, contemplate, weigh, compare, and then decide. Having made his choice, he may then decide when, where, with whom, even why he will do what he has decided. While this is a great blessing, it imposes certain very serious obligations as well; and in the contemplation of the one, let not the other be forgotten. Man is not only privileged to choose, he is obligated to choose wisely.

What would you think of a man who, having positive and viable alternatives set before him, deliberately chooses a wrong course of action? That's foolish, you say? That's man. Paul had man in mind when he said, "...because although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts and their foolish hearts were darkened. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which were not fitting (Romans 1:21, 28).

God will not force you to choose Him. It's up to you to make that choice.