Destructive Decision Making

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1. Our glorious God and loving Father gave us rules for our success (Josh 1:8; Ps 1:1-3).
    1. He knows our sin natures and temptations perfectly; His word is to overcome them.
    2. A pastor that trusts and studies the Bible can be a perfect teacher (II Tim 3:16-17).
    3. Solomon wrote Proverbs to give children and nation success (Pr 4:3-12; 8:17-21).
    4. For the sake of this study, we will use only Proverbs verses, ignoring many more.
    5. The wisdom here presented has been taught over and over in daily commentaries.
    6. Solomon taught to slow down and only make decisions with good prudent research.
    7. The text clearly teaches quick decisions are sin … and lack of research is also sin.
    8. If you think … *it is not good* … is not sin, just compare the two coordinated clauses.
    9. If you think … *it is not good* … is not sin, compare the folly verses before and after.
    10. If you think … *it is not good* … is not sin, please study the figures *litotes* and *meiosis*.
    11. If you think it not sin, what of *without understanding* (Jer 5:21; Rom 1:31; Pr 24:9).
    12. For more about the title text above, please see our detailed commentary of it … the Proverbs 19:2 commentary.
2. Let the context help you appreciate the opening text by the folly verses before and after.
    1. The verse begins with *also*, saying ignorant haste as another trait of a fool (Pr 19:1).
    2. The next verse also identifies this fool; his folly perverts his way against the LORD.
    3. God will not let fools succeed, other than exceptions, and so they fret against God.
    4. The first three verses are related, and the three errors are foolish perversion and sin.
    5. These three verses are God's holy and inspired rules via Solomon the son of David.
3. Differences in success among men are not by birth, intellect, opportunities, race, etc.
    1. The Bible does say God rules time and chance of human success (Eccl 9:11; 7:14).
    2. However, this is a minor factor, or God's rules for success would have no meaning.
    3. Ecclesiastes 9:11 in no way excuses folly or sloth or mocks wisdom and effort; it is a reminder God may work against ordinary rules of success to humble vain man.
    4. Character and conduct are most important for natural and supernatural favor in life, for this is the overall theme of Proverbs (and the Bible) for the benefit of believers.
    5. Fools make decisions without knowledge (Prov 4:26; 13:16; 14:8,15; 15:28; 22:3).
    6. Fools make decisions hastily (Proverbs 14:29; 18:13; 21:5; 25:8; 29:20; 7:21-22).
4. The main difference among men is whether they make **emotional – impulsive choices**.
    1. **Emotional** = decisions by feelings, desires, thoughts … not knowledge, prudence.
    2. **Impulsive** = decisions by haste, circumstances, spontaneity … not slow with study.

3. Poor decisions – emotional and impulsive – will keep a man from making progress.
4. Poor decisions accumulating over time will show up as a man behind the age curve.
5. Some men by parental example, habits, and pride cannot make profitable decisions.
6. They are fools, and most cannot be helped (Prov 17:10,12; 26:11; 27:22; 29:9,19).
7. If successful men give powerful advice, their pride rejects it (Prov 26:16; 28:26).
8. Fools hate instruction and correction and will be scorners (Prov 12:1; 14:16; 26:3).
9. Their only hope is God's intervention, but He has not promised it (II Tim 2:24-26).

5. How can you stop being hasty and ignorant? The answer is truly quite easy and simple.
    1. Stop making decisions … **Stop!** … do not change anything in your life on your own.
    2. Ask successful men – several of them – about any decisions before you make them.
    3. It does not matter if their advice is different; you should carefully weigh all advice.
    4. Unsuccessful men – with little for their age – do not know how to make decisions.
    5. A multitude of counselors can save fools from themselves (Pr 11:14; 15:22; 24:6).
    6. This simple rule is incredibly easy and also valuable (Proverbs 1:5; 12:15; 19:20).
    7. Read the daily Proverb commentary and put its wisdom in regular practice … the Proverbs commentary index.
6. **Slow down!** There is no reason to hurry choices, decisions, and actions. **Slow down!**
    1. As shown above from Proverbs, haste is a sin and is destructively wrong for action.
    2. Like in evaluating a new job. The first two weeks, or more, do not count as valid.
    3. The virtuous woman *considered* a field before buying it (Prov 31:16). A wise rule.
    4. No one should ever think a person is marriage material without extensive research; prospects need to be tested, interviewed, examined, and objectively measured.
    5. Read the daily Proverb commentary and put its wisdom in regular practice … the Proverbs commentary index.
7. What kind of choices or decisions are being addressed by this warning from the LORD?
    1. Minor choices like what to have for lunch are irrelevant, for they do not affect life.
    2. Major choices like how to be an employee or husband are already decided by God.
    3. Decisions like these need caution … selling a house, quitting a job, starting boy-girl relationship, when to have children, how many to have, taking a job, buying a house, making big purchases, career choice, investments, starting a business, which college, which college degree, etc. *Decisions with financial or life-altering effect.*
    4. The farther behind you are … clearly bad decisions … even small choices need help.
8. What should wise men do? Identify fools, warn them, reprove them, then avoid them.

For Further Study:

1. Commentary for Proverbs 19:2 … the Proverbs 19:2 commentary.
2. Making Wise Decisions (slides).

3. Making Wise Decisions (chart).
4. Commentaries for all Proverbs verses … Proverbs by Chapter.