

Using Wisdom, Judgment, and Faith

In football, there is a place called the huddle. Here, the team stands in a small group and receives the play from the sideline. At this point, each player knows his assignment, i.e. what he is supposed to do to make the play work. If he is a lineman, the play might tell him to block the person to his right or left. If he is a receiver, he might run certain patterns to get open to be thrown the ball. After the huddle, the offense lines up against the defense in anticipation for the play to begin.

There is a trend in college football for teams to look to the sidelines to see if the coach wants to change the play based on how the defense is lined up. This makes for good strategy because they play selected by the coach may not be as successful given how the defense wants to guard the offense. Frequently after they lineup, the defense will shift, generally because they only wanted to deceive the offense and make them run an ineffective play. Once again, the offensive players look back to the sidelines for another play from the coach.

While this is effective at winning games, it is very ineffective at making great football players. The best players generally come from a system where the coach, instead of micromanaging every play, gives the players the tools they need to make good decisions on their own and learn from those decisions; good or bad.

God is much in the same way. When we are facing the schemes of the devil, we don't always have a chance to look to the sidelines to get the new play. We have to know God's will and use good judgment. God gives us all the tools we need. His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness (2Pet 1:3).

God doesn't tell us which car to buy, but He does tell us how to use our money and possessions. He doesn't tell us who to marry, but He gives great examples of good and bad marriages. God doesn't tell us what job to take, but tells us how to be good employees. He lets us use wisdom to make good decisions and to trust Him as we do His will.

In Acts 15 an issue arose where men were claiming that to be a faithful Christian, one had to be circumcised and follow the Law of Moses. After much debate between the apostles and elders, a decision was made according to their best judgment. Even the apostles had to make a judgment call. When they saw the schemes of the devil, they prayed and used wisdom from the Lord and were ready to act in holiness.

We can't simply look to our preachers and elders to tell us what God requires of us. We must study and grow in our faith to make wise and holy decisions based on our own faith in The Holy One, Jesus.

--Alex Swango