

SMART "PICKS" IN 2026

Deuteronomy 30:15-16, Jeremiah 29:11-13, Luke 2:52

- *"For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future."* (Jeremiah 29:11)
- **God has great purposes and plans for our lives, but His plans and purposes for us are impacted by the decisions we make.**
- **The reason many people live defeated and discouraged lives and miss out on God's plans for their lives is because of the wrong choices they make.**
- Moses - *"Today, I'm giving you a choice. You can choose life and success, or you can choose death and disaster. I am commanding you to love the Lord your God, to live the way He has told you . . . If you obey Him, you will live and you will become successful and powerful."* (Deuteronomy 30:15-16)
- **In our SMART CHOICES series we're going to learn how to make the kind of choices that lead us to experience the great plans God has for our lives.**
- *"Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people."* (Luke 2:52)
- ***What are some choices that Jesus made that we need to make in 2026, so that we will become more like Jesus and live healthier and happier lives?***

To Make The Right "Picks" In 2026 We Need To:

MAKE SOME GOOD <u>MENTAL</u> DECISIONS

- *"Jesus grew in wisdom . . ."* (Luke 2:52)
- ***How do we obtain God's supernatural wisdom for our lives?***
- **Wisdom comes to us as we *Pursue the Scriptures*.**
    - *"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip His people to do every good work."* (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
    - **We learn and live by God's Word as we 1) Read it (1 Timothy 4:13), 2) Hear it (2 Timothy 1:13), 3) Study it (Acts 17:11) and 4) Believe it (Romans 10:17).**

    - *"Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do."* (Joshua 1:8)
- **Wisdom comes to us as we *Pray Steadfastly*.**
    - Jesus - *"When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth."* (John 16:13)
    - **When we pray with intensity, persistency and expectancy, the Holy Spirit will give us the wisdom that we need for our lives.**
    - *"Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you."* (Matthew 7:7)
- **Wisdom comes to us as we *Consult with Godly Christians.***
    - *"Get all the advice and instruction you can, so you will be wise the rest of your life."* (Proverbs 19:20)
    - **We all need the counsel of mature Christians to help us make the best decisions, and oftentimes that counsel is found in Life Groups.**
    - *"Plans succeed through good counsel; don't go to war without wise advice."* (Proverbs 20:18)
- ***What's one step I can take in 2026 to obtain more wisdom for my life?***

To Make The Right "Picks" In 2026 We Need To:

MAKE SOME GOOD <u>PHYSICAL</u> DECISIONS

- *"Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature . . ."* (Luke 2:52)
- **Many people in today's world are not in good health because they're overweight, they're addicted to alcohol or drugs or because they haven't taken the necessary steps to pursue physical health.**
- *"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit . . .? Therefore honor God with your body."* (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NIV)
- **To experience more physical health we need to: 1) make smart choices when we eat or drink (Galatians 6:7), 2) evaluate our body regularly (Mark 2:17), 3) exercise consistently (1 Timothy 4:8a), and 4) deal with our addictions (1 Corinthians 6:12).**
- The Apostle John - *"I hope all is well with you and that you are as healthy in body as you are strong in spirit . . ."* (3 John 2)
- ***What's one step I can take in 2026 to become healthier?***

To Make The Right "Picks" In 2026 We Need To:

MAKE SOME GOOD <u>SPIRITUAL</u> DECISIONS

- *"Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God . . ."* (Luke 2:52)
- **To deepen our relationship with the Lord we need to spend time with Him, and be willing to submit every area of our life to Him.**
- Jesus - *"Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need."* (Matthew 6:33)

- **Prioritizing the Lord brings to us supernatural wisdom as well as direction, provision and protection.**
- Jesus - *"A person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God."* (Luke 12:21)
- ***What's one step I can take in 2026 to deepen my relationship with God?***

To Make The Right "Picks" In 2026 We Need To:

MAKE SOME GOOD <u>RELATIONAL</u> DECISIONS

- *"Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people."* (Luke 2:52)
- **We won't experience God's best in 2026 if we don't have some healthy relationships in our lives; and those relationships are built through loving others as the Lord has loved us.**
- Jesus - *"<u>Just as I have loved you, you should love each other</u>. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are My disciples."* (John 13:34-35)
- **To love other people like Jesus has loved us we have to be willing to: 1) accept others the way He has accepted us (John 6:37), 2) value others the way He has valued us (Luke 12:6-7), 3) forgive others like He has forgiven us (Colossians 3:13), and 4) believe in others like He has believed in us."**
- *"Love never gives up, <u>never loses faith</u>, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance."* (1 Corinthians 13:7)
- ***What's one step I can take in 2026 to strengthen my relationships?***

- **Some good financial decisions in 2026 could include: 1) working hard (Proverbs 22:9), 2) living by a budget (Proverbs 21:5), 3) reducing debt (Proverbs 22:7) and 4) giving generously (Luke 6:38).**
- "People who become committed Christians and follow Biblical principles for financial management experience newfound financial freedom in their lives." - J. Milton Young, *Sociology and Christianity*
- *"Commit your actions to the LORD, and your plans will succeed."* (Proverbs 16:3)
- *"Take delight in the LORD, and He will give you your heart's desires. Commit everything you do to the LORD. Trust him, and He will help you."* (Psalm 37:4-5)
- ***What is the Lord saying to me today, and what steps am I going to take to apply this message to my life?***