

# Making Biblical Decisions

RESOURCES

STUDY GUIDES BY SECTION



MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS  
STUDY GUIDE 1.1  
Lesson 1: Ethics in Scripture  
Section 1: Definition

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

Introduction

I. Definition

A. God and Blessings

1. Divine Nature

2. Divine Actions

B. Breadth of Issues

C. Depth of Issues

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the general understanding of ethics?
2. Write out and memorize Dr. Frame's definition of Christian ethics.
3. Describe the uniqueness of the Christian understanding of ethics.
4. What is Dr. Frame's definition of theology?
5. List the areas mentioned in the lesson as being subject to moral evaluation.
6. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

1 John 1:5-7

Leviticus 26:14-16

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Matthew 5:22

Matthew 5:28

Mark 7:21-23

Romans 8:5-9

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Reflect on the way you usually make ethical decisions. Do you see any difference between your method and the teaching of the lesson? Explain.
2. Are there some areas of your life that you tend to consider "amoral," not subject to ethical evaluation? What do you think about them after studying the lesson? Is there anything you need to change?
3. Why should we think of application as part of theology? What dangers exist when we do not include application in our definition of theology?
4. Do you agree that even our attitudes, thoughts, and emotions can be sinful? How can we control our attitudes, thoughts and emotions?
5. Did any of the Bible passages studied in the lesson speak to you in a special way? Explain how.

MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS  
STUDY GUIDE 1.2  
Lesson 1: Ethics in Scripture  
Section 2: Threefold Criteria

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

II. Threefold Criteria

A. Proper Motive

1. Faith
2. Love

B. Proper Standard

1. Commands
2. All Scripture
3. General Revelation

C. Proper Goal

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain the teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith regarding the works of unregenerate people.
2. What are the three basic criteria for making a moral evaluation?
3. According to the lesson, what two key elements are necessary before a motive can be considered good?
4. What is our standard for making a moral evaluation? Explain the different aspects taught in the lesson.
5. According to Scripture, what should be the ultimate goal in all that we do?
6. What does Dr. Frame teach about whether the commands of Scripture are still binding today?
7. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

Matthew 7:9-11  
James 2:14-20  
Hebrews 11:6  
Romans 14:23  
1 Corinthians 13:1-3  
Matthew 22:37-40  
James 2:9-10  
1 Corinthians 10:31

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. How do you tend to feel about the actions of non Christians? How has this lesson changed the way you evaluate them? Does this change your attitude toward non Christians? Explain.
2. How do you tend to evaluate your own actions, attitudes, thoughts and feelings? How has this lesson changed the way you evaluate them? Does this make you sense a greater need for Christ? Explain.
3. Reflect on the mixture of motives you often have for making decisions. What are some of the most common influential motives? How can you change and develop better motives?
4. How do most non Christian people you know normally make moral decisions?
5. Do you see a difference in the way Christians normally make ethical decisions? How is it different?
6. What do you normally tend to use as a standard for making moral decisions? How has this lesson changed your view of where you should find your standards?
7. What has been the main goal in your life? What should it be? Is there anything you need to change in this regard?
8. Did any of the Bible passages studied in the lesson speak to you in a special way? Explain how.

MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS  
STUDY GUIDE 1.3  
Lesson 1: Ethics in Scripture  
Section 3: Threefold Process

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

III. Threefold Process

A. Tendencies

B. Perspectives

1. Situational

2. Normative

3. Existential

C. Interdependence

Summary

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain the three common tendencies in Christian ethics. What does each one emphasize? What Scriptural support could be given to defend each of these tendencies?
2. Make sure you learn and understand Dr. Frame's definition of an ethical judgment.
3. Describe the emphasis of each of the three perspectives in Christian ethics as taught in the lesson. Give examples from the Bible for each perspective.
4. How should the three different perspectives be used, according to Dr. Frame? Why do we need all three perspectives? How do they interact with each other? What happens when one perspective is used without the others?
5. Which perspective is also called the "teleological" approach?
6. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

Romans 6:2-4

1 Peter 2:21

1 John 3:23

1 John 3:21

Galatians 5:16

Romans 14:14

## QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What is your strongest tendency when you make or evaluate ethical decision? Do you tend to focus on one aspect and ignore the other two? For example, do you tend to ignore the situation and the personal aspects and focus only on the teaching of Scripture?
2. How do you think this lesson has changed the way you make and evaluate ethical decisions? Explain.
3. What is the most important thing you have learned in this complete lesson?
4. Did any of the Bible passages studied in the lesson speak to you in a special way? Explain how.

## 5. THE TOURIST AND THE FISHERMAN

In a short story by Heinrich Böll, "Anecdote Concerning the Lowering of Productivity," a tourist finds a fisherman resting on the shore, and begins to give him advice about improving his income. He says that instead of just sitting there, he could go out again and catch more fish. But the fisherman isn't excited about the idea. He is content with the money he has. Why would he go fish again to earn more money?

The tourist continues his dialogue with the fisherman, insisting that he could buy another boat, and eventually build his own factory and open a restaurant.

"Then what?", the fisherman asks.

The tourist explains that he could relax and enjoy life, sitting in the sun, gazing out at the sea.

-- "But I'm already doing that!" replies the fisherman.

[Heinrich Böll, *The Stories of Heinrich Böll*, tr. Leila Vennewitz. Northwestern University Press. pp. 628–630.]

Analyze the story:

What is the point of the tourist?

How would you describe the fisherman's response?

What is the difference in the ethical focus of the two?

Which of the two men would you identify with most? Why?

If you could talk to both the fisherman and the tourist, what would you say to them? What ethical principles would guide you as you consider what to say to them?

What point do you think the author is making with his story?

Do you agree with the author? Why?

6. How would you describe the purpose of work? Explain your view.

MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS  
STUDY GUIDE 2.1  
Lesson 2: The Normative Perspective: God & His Word  
Section 1: God as Standard

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

Introduction

I. God as Standard

A. God in Himself

1. Personal Attribute
2. Ultimate Standard

B. God as Judge

C. Implications

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain the illustration about the girl who wanted to eat candy just before meal time.
2. Make sure you have memorized Dr. Frame's definition of ethics, as found in lesson 1.
3. Explain what Dr. Frame means when he says that God is in Himself the ultimate standard for ethics.
4. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

Mark 10:18  
Daniel 4:37  
Matthew 5:48

5. Why do some people think that God is not good? Explain the examples given in the lesson.
6. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

1 Peter 1:15-16  
Matthew 5:44-48  
1 John 1:7

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Do you tend to think about ethical standards as being independent of God, or maybe above God? Has this lesson changed your thinking about that? Explain.



2. What if you thought that God wanted you to do something that somehow didn't seem quite right to you? How would you deal with that conflict? Explain why. Explain how this shows your process of making ethical decisions.

3. Have any of the passages quoted in the lesson spoken to you in a special way? Explain how.

4. What is your view of abortion? In what moment does a fetus become a living person? Are there situations that justify an abortion? If so what situation? Defend your view with biblical norms.

MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS  
STUDY GUIDE 2.2  
Lesson 2: The Normative Perspective: God & His Word  
Section 2: Word as Standard

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

II. Word as Standard

A. Three categories

B. Normative Character

1. General Revelation
2. Special Revelation
3. Existential Revelation

C. Unity

Summary

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain how Dr. Frame divides revelation into categories. How many are there? What does he call them? Explain the differences.
2. Give examples of each category of revelation. Explain how they communicate ethical standards.
3. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following passages:

Matthew 5:44-45  
Acts 17:30-31  
Romans 1:18-20

4. What is the difference between "illumination" and "internal leading," according to the lesson?
5. How do the different kinds of revelation relate to each other, according to the lesson?
6. Which of the three forms of revelation is "sufficient" to instruct us in ethics?
7. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following passages:

1 Corinthians 2:11-12  
Romans 2:14-15  
Philippians 2:13

8. According to the lesson, what is the supreme standard to judge all controversies?

9. What is the teaching of the lesson regarding the authority of councils and agreements among Christians?

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. How has this lesson changed the way you think of revelation?
2. In what ways have you experienced the communication of ethical standards through general revelation?
3. In the past, have you considered "existential" revelation as a category of revelation? How do you feel about this category?
4. How have you experienced "illumination"?
5. How have you experienced the "inward leading" of the Holy Spirit?
6. Do you find general revelation and existential revelation sometimes difficult to understand? How can you avoid misusing them?
7. Have any of the passages quoted in the lesson spoken to you in a special way? Explain how.

#### 8. THE TROLLEY PROBLEM

A moral dilemma is presented in a video called the "Trolley Problem." In the first situation, a trolley is headed down the tracks toward four men who are stuck and cannot move. They will be killed if nothing is done. The engineer is incapacitated, and the engine can't be stopped. You are near a switch, and the only apparent solution is to switch the trolley to another track. However, on the second track, there is another man stuck, who will inevitably be killed. You must choose to either do nothing and let the trolley kill the four men on the first track, or switch the train so that it will kill one man on the second track.

[You may wish to watch the video found in the link below, "Trolley Problem #1". We can't guarantee that it will always function properly, and we are not responsible for the legal rights of the video, nor for the ads that may appear. We simply offer you the link.]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=6&v=w--ShKr3d9E>

If you were faced with this decision, what would you do?

In the second "Trolley Problem," a similar situation is presented. Again, there is an unstoppable trolley heading toward four men stuck on the tracks who will be killed. But this time, there is no second track, and no switch to change the direction of the trolley. Nevertheless, there is a possible solution. You are on a bridge above the tracks with another man. The other man is large enough that, if he were to fall on the tracks in front of the trolley, it would stop it. If you pushed him over, only one man would die instead of four.

[It is not necessary, but you may wish to watch the video below, "Trolley Problem #2." We can't guarantee that it will always function properly, and we are not responsible for the legal rights of the video, nor for the ads that may appear. We simply offer you the link.]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zp11WLOPVOI>

If you were on the bridge with the second large man, would you push him onto the tracks? Explain your answer.

9. Do you think there are situations in which it is ethically permissible to kill? In what kind of circumstances? Explain and defend your view.

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 3.1

#### Lesson 3: The Normative Perspective: The Attributes of Scripture

##### Section 1: Divine Authorship

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### Introduction

#### I. Divine Authorship

##### A. Power of Scripture

1. Examples
2. Implications

##### B. Authority of Scripture

1. Claim of authority
2. Implications

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What does Dr. Frame teach about the power of the Word of God? What does it empower us to do?
2. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

Psalm 33:6-9  
Isaiah 55:10-11  
Romans 1:15-16  
Luke 16:29-31

What do they teach us especially about the power of God's Word?

3. What does Dr. Frame say about the authority of the gospel? Does it depend on the speaker being infallible?
4. What point does Dr. Frame make by quoting Genesis 2 and 3, Exodus 20, John 17:12, and Romans 12:19?
5. What point does Dr. Frame make by quoting 2 Peter 1:19-20, James 2:10-11, John 13:20, and 2 Thessalonians 3:6?
6. What are the implications of the fact that God's Word is authoritative?

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. How have you seen the power of God's Word in your life?
2. What are the practical implications of Romans 1:15-16?
3. Do you sometimes "select" the commands of God that you obey? Which ones are especially tempting to avoid?
4. Do you feel that you sometimes obey God simply out of duty, and not out of love? What can you do to avoid this?
5. Did any of the Bible passages quoted in the lesson speak to you in a special way? Explain.
6. Analyze the following sentence, according to Dr. Frame's teachings in this course on ethics: "What seems right to you is right for you, and what seems right to me is right for me." Is there any truth in this? Is there something incorrect? Explain and defend your answer.

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 3.2

#### Lesson 3: The Normative Perspective: The Attributes of Scripture

##### Section 2: Human Audience

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### II. Human Audience

##### A. Clarity of Scripture

###### 1. Nature

###### 2. Implications

##### B. Necessity of Scripture

###### 1. Salvation

###### 2. Faithful Living

###### 3. Implications

##### C. Sufficiency of Scripture

###### 1. Purpose

###### 2. Misunderstandings

###### 3. Silence

#### Summary

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the three attributes of Scripture studied in the lesson, that refer especially to how Scripture applies to the human audience. Explain the meaning of each attribute.

2. What goal did God have in mind for inspiring Scripture?

3. What does "perspicuity" mean?

4. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

Deuteronomy 29:29

2 Timothy 3:15-17

2 Peter 3:16

5. Make sure you are familiar with the teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith in sections 1.7 and 1.10, as quoted in the lesson.

6. What does Dr. Frame mean when he says Scripture is necessary for salvation and for living the Christian life?
7. How was the controversy regarding the Gentiles finally settled in the Council of Jerusalem, according to Acts 15?
8. How does Dr. Frame explain the meaning of the "sufficiency" of Scripture?
9. What is the meaning of "adiaphora"?
10. Explain Dr. Frame's teaching regarding moral neutrality or moral indifference.
11. According to the lesson, what mistake did Thomas Aquinas make regarding the sufficiency of Scripture?

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What difference does it make to you personally to know that Scripture is clear, necessary, and sufficient? Give examples of circumstances in which these attributes are important to you.
2. What should you do when something in Scripture does not seem clear to you?
3. What should you do when you cannot find a Bible passage that tells you explicitly what moral decision you should make in a particular situation?
4. Was any passage of Scripture quoted in the lesson especially meaningful to you? Explain why.
5. Do you agree with Dr. Frame's position regarding moral neutrality? Why or why not?
6. What was most helpful to you in this whole lesson?

#### 7. KANT ON SUICIDE

There was a video (no longer available) that tried to portray the ethical perspective of the famous German philosopher, Immanuel Kant. His ethical view has been called the "categorical imperative."

A young lady confesses to a man that she is considering suicide. He asks her, "Have you considered whether this action would violate your moral duty?" She admits that she hasn't thought about it that way. The man continues, "If you were to commit suicide, what maxim or policy would you be following?" She answers that she simply sees more pain and suffering ahead if she continues living.

The man argues that she is contradicting herself. She is going to kill herself to avoid pain. "Because you love yourself so much, you will destroy yourself." He asserts, "The greatest moral rule is that you should only behave as you would like everyone to behave."

How does the man try to convince the young lady to not commit suicide?



When the woman who is considering suicide says that to continue living would cause too much suffering, which ethical perspective is she using most?

- Normative
- Situational
- Existential

When the man argues that she should act on policies that every rational person could adopt, what ethical perspective is he using most?

- Normative
- Situational
- Existential

8. In the lesson, Dr. Frame explains that for Christian ethics, Scripture is our supreme authoritative source of ethical norms.

Do you believe that the Bible tells us whether suicide is ethically correct?

If you believe that the Bible gives us ethical guidelines about suicide, write down the passages and explain what you believe they tell us about suicide.

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 4.1

#### Lesson 4: The Normative Perspective: Parts and Aspects of Scripture

##### Section 1: Variety of Scripture

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### Introduction

#### I. Variety of Scripture

##### A. Language

###### 1. Extraordinary

###### 2. Ordinary

##### B. Literature

##### C. Implications

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. In what ways does the Bible display variety?
2. What are the different kinds of language used in the Bible? What kinds of literary genres?
3. How did many people during the Middle Ages understand the extraordinary nature of Scripture?
4. What does Dr. Frame teach about Matthew 6:11?
5. How does Dr. Frame interpret Amos 4:4?
6. Explain Dr. Frame's teaching regarding the ethical aspect of narrative passages of Scripture.
7. According to the lesson, which genres of literature in Scripture give us ethical instruction?
8. What implication does the lesson highlight from the fact that Scripture contains a wide variety of language and genres of literature?

### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Did this lesson change the way you study the Bible? For example, do you normally take into account the kind of language or the genre of literature of a Bible passage that you are studying? Explain how this might help you.
2. Think of an example of a narrative passage of the Bible, and mention ethical teachings you can find in it.
3. Mention examples in the Bible of sarcasm, hyperboles, and symbolism.

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 4.2

#### Lesson 4: The Normative Perspective: Parts and Aspects of Scripture

#### Section 2: God's Law in Scripture

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### II. God's Law in Scripture

##### A. Ten Commandments

##### B. Three Types of Law

###### 1. Qualifications

###### 2. Value

###### 3. Application

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How does Dr. Frame use the term "law" when he speaks of the Bible?
2. List the Ten Commandments in the order they are found in Exodus 20.
3. Explain what Dr. Frame means when he speaks about the "historical primacy" and the "theological primacy" of the Ten Commandments. Mention the evidence that he gives for each sense of primacy.
4. Explain the distinction between three categories of the law. What does each category represent?
5. Explain Dr. Frame's view of the threefold distinction of the law. What does he say about the application of each aspect today?
6. What office in Israel is associated with each of the three aspects of the law?
7. According to the lesson, what important lesson can we learn from the story of Zelophehad's daughters in Numbers 27?
8. Explain the teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith regarding the ceremonial aspect of the law and the civil aspect of the law.
9. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

James 2:10-11

Matthew 5:18-19

Exodus 20:1-17

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Which of the Ten Commandments is the most difficult for you to keep?
2. Do you agree with the distinction between the moral, civil, and ceremonial aspects of the law? Is this distinction helpful for you? Explain how.
3. Was the teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith regarding the ceremonial and civil aspects of the law helpful for you? Do you see any difference between what the confession says and what Dr. Frame says? Explain.
4. Read Leviticus 25:8-13. Identify ceremonial, civil, and moral aspects of the law in this passage. Explain how you would apply this passage today.
5. Do you agree with Dr. Frame regarding the priorities and exceptions in keeping the law? Was his teaching on these areas helpful for you? Explain how.
6. Do you think there are situations that make it permissible to lie? If so, mention an example.
7. Do you think there are situations that make it permissible to steal? If so, mention an example.

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 4.3

#### Lesson 4: The Normative Perspective: Parts and Aspects of Scripture

##### Section 3: Unity of Scripture

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### III. Unity of Scripture

##### A. Commandment of Love

##### B. Gospel of Grace

##### C. New Covenant

##### D. Harmony

##### Summary

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the common teaching of Matthew 22:37-40, Romans 13:9-10, Galatians 5:14 and Deuteronomy 6:1-6?
2. Explain the three uses of the law, as explained in the lesson.
3. What does Dr. Frame teach about the use of the Old Testament law under the New Covenant?
4. Explain the teaching of the lesson regarding priorities and exceptions in keeping the ethical principles of Scripture.
5. What point does Dr. Frame illustrate by referring to Matthew 5:23-24?
6. What point does Dr. Frame illustrate by referring to Acts 5:29?

### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. In what ways did the law help you become a Christian?
2. In what ways do you think the law of God as found in the Scripture can help make better civil laws for your country, or for society in general?
3. In what ways does the law of God help you live a better Christian life? What would your life be like without the help of God's commandments?
4. Read Leviticus 19:28. Explain how you would apply this passage today. Remember to consider the context of this verse.

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 5.1

#### Lesson 5: The Situational Perspective: Revelation and Situation

##### Section 1: Content of Revelation

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### Introduction

#### I. Content of Revelation

##### A. Facts

##### B. Goals

##### C. Means

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Which of the three ethical perspectives is under consideration in this lesson (normative, situational, or existential)?
2. According to Dr. Frame, all three types of revelation (special, general, and existential) communicate content in the form of \_\_\_\_\_.
3. What are the three elements of the situational content of revelation, according to the lesson? Give an example of each.
4. Dr. Frame says that, from a situational perspective, \_\_\_\_\_ is the "ultimate fact."
5. Which types of revelation provide goals for ethical decisions?
6. What writer from the sixteenth century is known for saying that "the end justifies the means"?
7. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

1 Corinthians 10:31

Philippians 2:13

James 2:15-16

1 Corinthians 11:1

### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. 1 Corinthians 10:31 says, "Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." How can we glorify God in the mundane activities of life (i.e. brushing your teeth, making the bed, driving a car, etc.)?
2. Can you give an example of something you did that may have been a good action, but with improper goals and motives? Explain.

3. Can you think of an example of something you tried to do with a good goal in mind, but you used the wrong means? Explain.

4. Did any of the Bible passages studied in this lesson speak to you in a special way? Explain how.

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 5.2

#### Lesson 5: The Situational Perspective: Revelation and Situation

##### Section 2: Nature of Revelation

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### II. Nature of Revelation

##### A. Inspiration

##### B. Example

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Which type of revelation communicates ethical norms that are not found in the other forms of revelation?
2. Dr. Frame says that the Scriptures are like \_\_\_\_\_ to interpret general and existential revelation.
3. Dr. Frame says that Scripture has a \_\_\_\_\_ over general and existential revelation.
4. Explain the teaching of the lesson regarding the inspiration of the Scriptures. What role does the human author play? What role does the Holy Spirit play?
5. According to the lesson, what aspects of the original situation should be considered as we interpret a passage of Scripture? Give examples of each aspect.
6. What point does Dr. Frame make from 1 Corinthians 10:5-11 in the lesson?
7. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

2 Peter 1:20-21

Matthew 22:41-45

1 Corinthians 10:5-11

8. What does Dr. Frame say about considering not only things that are explicitly expressed, but also things that are implicit, such as the author's intentions, in our interpretation of a passage of Scripture?

### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. In the past, how have you thought that God inspired the Scriptures? Did this lesson change the way you understand it? How?
2. How does the fact that God has included the human aspect in the Scriptures affect the way you interpret them?
3. Can you think of ways that some people and some churches do NOT give Scripture the priority over general and existential revelation? Give examples.



4. Can you think of concrete ways that we can consider things that are implicit in a passage of Scripture, such as the author's intentions?

5. What is your view of homosexuality? Is it a sin? What do you think about those who say they were born with that tendency? What do you think about those who say some people have an attraction to the same sex, but it is not a sin, as long as they do not practice homosexual relations? Should people of the same sex be allowed to marry?

MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS  
STUDY GUIDE 5.3  
Lesson 5: The Situational Perspective: Revelation and Situation  
Section 3: Strategies Toward Revelation

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

III. Strategies toward Revelation

A. Strategy of Laxity

1. Description
2. Consequences
3. Correctives

B. Strategy of Rigor

1. Description
2. Consequences
3. Correctives

C. Strategy of Human Authority

1. Description
2. Consequences
3. Correctives

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Name and describe the three erroneous strategies for dealing with the situational character of revelation.
2. Explain the illustration of the house with an open area around it and the wilderness farther out. Explain where the fence is located in each of the three strategies studied in the lesson.
3. Describe the consequences of each of the three strategies explained in the lesson. Mention the examples given in the lesson.
4. Explain Dr. Frame's suggestion for correcting the errors of each of the three strategies.
5. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

Matthew 5:28  
2 Timothy 3:16-17  
Deuteronomy 29:29

Mark 2:27  
Acts 17:11

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Which of the three strategies explained in the lesson tends to be your most common error in making application of the ethical teachings of Scripture? Give an example.
2. What can you do to avoid this error and make better application of the ethical teachings of Scripture?
3. Which of the strategies is the most common error of the Christian community in which you live? Give an example. How can you help avoid this tendency?

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 5.4

#### Lesson 5: The Situational Perspective: Revelation and Situation

#### Section 4: Application of Revelation

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### IV. Application of Revelation

##### A. Facts

##### B. Goals

##### C. Means

##### Conclusion

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain the difference in the dietary laws in each biblical period: the time of the exodus, in the Promised Land, and in the New Testament Church.
2. What facts were similar throughout these three periods, according to the lesson?
3. Explain the differences in the goals for the dietary norms in each of the three periods.
4. What goals were similar throughout these periods?
5. Explain the differences in the means used to obtain the goals during each of the three periods.
6. What means were similar throughout the three periods?
7. What is Dr. Frame's general recommendation for modern application of biblical ethical norms? Do the norms themselves change, or just the application? Should we always imitate the pattern of the New Testament Church?

### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Think of another example of ethical teachings of the Bible besides dietary laws, and try to discern how the application may have changed in different periods of time. Consider the facts, the goals, and the means. Mention the similarities and the differences in these areas during the different periods.
2. In the past, do you think you have taken into account how the facts, goals, and means might change during different periods of time as you apply Scripture and make ethical judgments? Did this lesson change the way you will make ethical judgments in the future? How?
3. In this lesson as a whole, what has been the most significant insight you have gained? How will this affect the way you make ethical decisions?

#### 4. THE SABBATH DAY

The Seventh-Day Adventist Church teaches that we should still observe the Sabbath Day in much the same way as the Jews were to do in the Old Testament. A key distinctive doctrine of their church is that we should observe the Sabbath rest, beginning at sunset on Friday, until sunset on Saturday.

[You may wish to investigate their own literature or web sites to understand their views.]

Do you agree with their view?

In the lesson, Dr. Frame explains that there are different "strategies" for dealing with the "situational character" of revelation. Which strategy do you think is represented in the Seventh Day Adventist view of the Sabbath?

- The strategy of laxity
- The strategy of rigor
- The strategy of human authority
- None of these strategies
- I'm not sure

Look up passages such as Matthew 12:1-8, Romans 14:5-6, and Colossians 2:16-17. Write down what they teach us about the way they were to keep the Sabbath during the time of the New Testament.

Find other passages related to the subject, and write down your thoughts.

Explain your view: How do you think we should keep the fourth commandment now? Support your view with biblical references

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 6.1

#### Lesson 6: The Situational Perspective: Pursuing Our Goal

##### Section 1: Circumstances of the Kingdom

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### Introduction

#### I. Circumstances of the Kingdom

##### A. Importance of the Kingdom

1. Beatitudes
2. Lord's Prayer
3. Earthly Needs

##### B. Components of the Kingdom

1. King
2. People
3. Covenants

##### C. Development of the Kingdom

1. Initial Peace
2. Rebellion
3. Final Peace

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. According to Dr. Frame, what is the highest goal of Christian ethics?
2. Explain how the Beatitudes focus on the theme of the kingdom of God.
3. Explain how the Lord's Prayer focuses on the theme of the kingdom of God.
4. What are the main components of the kingdom of God?
5. What does "suzerain" mean?
6. What was man's task in the Garden of Eden?
7. How did the focus of the kingdom of God change at the time of Abraham?

8. What was the focus of the kingdom of God at the time of the New Testament?
9. What did ancient kings establish to administer their empires?
10. What are the main aspects of a covenant?
11. Name the six major covenants of the Bible.
12. What are the phases of the development of the kingdom of God?
13. What is the "protoevangelion" (sometimes spelled "protoevangelium")?
14. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

1 Timothy 1:17  
Matthew 6:31-33  
Psalm 47:9

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What practical difference does it make for you to know that the highest goal of Christian ethics is the glory of God through the triumph of His kingdom on earth?
2. Did the lesson help you understand the Lord's Prayer better? How does it affect the way you pray?
3. Describe a practical example of how paying proper attention to the kingdom of God might help you make an ethical decision.
4. What is your view? In what kind of situation should divorce be permitted? In what situations should a person be able to marry again after being divorced? Defend your view.

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 6.2

#### Lesson 6: The Situational Perspective: Pursuing Our Goal

#### Section 2: Life in the Kingdom

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### II. Life in the Kingdom

##### A. Glorify God

1. Glory of God
2. Glorification of God

##### B. Enjoy God

1. Role of Humanity
2. Role of Law

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Make sure you have memorized the answer to question #1 of the Westminster Shorter Catechism.
2. Write the Greek word and the Hebrew word (the transliterations) for "glory."
3. Explain the meaning of "glory" when we speak of God's physical glory. Explain what we mean when we speak of God's glory in ethics.
4. In what ways can we glorify God? Write down the points that were mentioned in the lesson.
5. For what motive does God want us to obey Him? What wrong motives do we sometimes have?
6. How can suffering be a means of enjoying God?
7. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

Psalm 29:1-2  
Romans 14:17  
Galatians 3:10  
Psalm 19:7-8

### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What would you say is your highest goal in life?
2. Think of a husband who gives his wife a hug. Why does he do it? Who enjoys it? How does this illustrate the fact that when we seek God's pleasure first, we also experience joy, and the fact that when we seek to glorify God, we also enjoy Him?



3. Do you sometimes think only of glorifying God, without enjoying Him? Why do you think that happens sometimes to people? What can you do to both glorify God and enjoy Him?

4. Do you sometimes obey God simply out of fear or out of mere duty, but not out of love? Why? How can you change that?

MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS  
STUDY GUIDE 6.3  
Lesson 6: The Situational Perspective: Pursuing Our Goal  
Section 3: Program of the Kingdom

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

III. Program of the Kingdom

A. Cultural Mandate

1. Definition
2. Creation Ordinances
3. Applications

B. Great Commission

1. Definition
2. Implications
3. Cultural Mandate

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Make sure you have memorized Dr. Frame's definition of the "cultural mandate."
2. Memorize Genesis 1:28.
3. What is a "creation ordinance"? Explain the examples given in the lesson.
4. How did the Fall affect our obligation to keep the creation ordinances?
5. Explain how the creation ordinances now have "redemptive qualities" after the Fall.
6. Memorize the definition of the "Great Commission" given in the lesson.
7. Memorize Matthew 28:19-20.
8. How does the lesson describe the relationship between the Cultural Mandate and the Great Commission?
9. Explain the teachings of the lesson regarding the mutual priorities of the Cultural Mandate and the Great Commission.

## QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. In what ways are you fulfilling the Cultural Mandate? What can you do to keep it better?

2. In what ways are you fulfilling the Great Commission? How can you keep it better?

### 3. ETHICS WITHOUT GOD; NIETZSCHE

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) suggested that Christianity encourages weakness, that Christian ethics come from the instinct to protect yourself, based on fear, not love. He taught that we should become like the Übermensch (superman), who has been freed from external ethical norms and can create his own values and impose his own will. He writes about the madman who runs around the marketplace with a lantern in bright daylight, looking for God.

"Where is God?" he cried. "I'll tell you. We have killed him—you and I. We are all his murderers. But how did we do this? How were we able to drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon? What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? Where is it moving to now? Where are we moving to? Away from all suns? Are we not continually falling? And backwards, sideways, forwards, in all directions? Is there still an up and a down? Aren't we straying as though through an infinite nothing? Isn't empty space breathing at us? Hasn't it got colder? Isn't night and more night coming again and again? Don't lanterns have to be lit in the morning?"

[Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 119–20.]

#### Questions:

a. What are the consequences of not believing in God, as portrayed in this scene?

b. What are the consequences of believing we should become like Nietzsche's idea of a "superman" who is freed from external ethical norms? What would society be like if most people lived that way? Can you think of examples of people who seem to live this way?

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 7.1

#### Lesson 7: The Situational Perspective: Understanding the Facts

##### Section 1: God

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### Introduction

#### I. God

##### A. Authority

1. Absolute
2. Exclusive
3. Exhaustive

##### B. Control

1. Sovereign
2. Moral

##### C. Presence

1. Covenant King
2. Incarnate Lord
3. Ministering Spirit

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Make sure you have memorized Dr. Frame's definition of Christian ethics and of an ethical judgment (see lesson one).
2. What are the three main facts about God that are studied in lesson seven, and which influence our moral decisions?
3. Explain the three attributes of God's authority and distinguish the terms used in the lesson.
4. What does the lesson teach about the moral nature of creation?
5. According to Dr. Frame, do most Christians believe in the sovereignty of God?
6. Explain the three different ways that God is present in the world.

7. What does Dr. Frame say about the unusual spiritual gifts like visions and speaking in tongues? Have they ceased? Are they just as common as they were at the time of the New Testament?

8. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

Romans 9:20-21

1 Corinthians 10:13

Hebrews 4:13

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What practical difference does it make in your life to know that God's authority is absolute, exclusive, and exhaustive?

2. How do you make ethical decisions in a world in which God has already predestined everything? What difference does it make in how you make decisions?

3. What difference would it make in your life if you always kept in mind the fact that God is present at all times? Give an example.

4. What spiritual gifts do you think that God has given you? How can you use them more effectively?

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 7.2

#### Lesson 7: The Situational Perspective: Understanding the Facts

##### Section 2: Creation

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### II. Creation

##### A. Preternatural

1. Inhabitants
2. Spiritual Warfare

##### B. Natural

1. Creation
2. Fall
3. Redemption

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain the difference between the three realms of existence, as taught in the lesson.
2. What are the angels and demons? How did they come to exist?
3. What are some of the aspects of the ministry of angels mentioned in the lesson?
4. Do angels need salvation?
5. Can demons be saved?
6. What is the most common way that demons interact with human beings, according to the lesson?
7. How much influence do evil spirits have now?
8. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:  
  
    Hebrews 1:14  
    Ephesians 6:12  
    Colossians 2:15
9. Memorize Genesis 1:28.
10. How does the Bible describe the condition of the creation after the Fall?

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. In the past, have you thought much about the angels and demons? What difference does it make in your life to take into account their influence in your life?
2. Do you think there is also a danger in over-emphasizing the influence of evil spirits? Mention an example.
3. What would you say to someone who said they had a demon of “laziness”, or a demon of “lust”?
4. How do you see the effects of the curse on creation? Give examples.
5. How does it affect you to know that the whole creation will be redeemed?
6. How have you seen creation work as an instrument of redemption in your life?

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 7.3

#### Lesson 7: The Situational Perspective: Understanding the Facts

#### Section 3: Humanity

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### III. Humanity

##### A. Society

1. Solidarity
2. Commonality
3. Community

##### B. Individuals

1. Character
2. Experiences
3. Body
4. Roles

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain each aspect of the unity of humanity, as taught in the lesson, and explain the differences between them.
2. What is the main emphasis of the lesson in its teaching about humanity as a society? What point is Dr. Frame making?
3. Explain the corporate nature of the Fall.
4. What does the lesson teach about the redemption of social structures?
5. What is the main emphasis of the lesson in its teaching about humanity as individuals? What point does Dr. Frame make?
6. Do our physical maturity and our intellectual ability influence our moral obligation? Explain.
7. What point does Dr. Frame make in his explanation of Romans 7:18-24?
8. What is Dr. Frame's view of how genetics influence human behavior and responsibility?
9. How do social roles affect moral behavior?



## QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. How do the concepts of human solidarity, commonality, and community affect the way you make ethical decisions? Do you sometimes make ethical decisions thinking only of yourself as an individual?

2. How does the concept of individual uniqueness affect the way you confront temptation? How does it affect the way you look at others who struggle with temptation?

### 3. THE HIDING PLACE

During World War II, some people like the Ten Boom family from Holland, hid Jews from the Nazis. When the German soldiers came looking for Jews, they acted like they knew nothing about them.

[Corrie Ten Boom, *The Hiding Place*. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1974]

Questions:

Do you agree that this was a good thing to do?

In this case, are there any ethical principles taught in this course that would help you decide whether you should lie to the Nazis? Which ones?

Explain your view of this ethical dilemma.

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 8.1

#### Lesson 8: The Existential Perspective: Being Good

##### Section 1: Creation

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### Introduction

#### I. Creation

##### A. God

1. Being
2. Goodness

##### B. Humanity

1. Image
2. Blessing
3. Cultural Mandate

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Make sure you have memorized Dr. Frame's definitions of ethics and of an ethical judgment (see lesson 1).
2. Review the meaning of each of the three perspectives on ethics, as explained in this course. Which of the three ethical perspectives does this lesson emphasize?
3. All moral goodness is rooted in \_\_\_\_.
4. What does it mean to say that all of God's attributes are "immutable"?
5. What do theologians mean when they speak of the "simplicity" of God?
6. Explain the illustration of a gem stone. How does it illustrate how God's attributes relate to each other?
7. How does Dr. Frame explain what it means that man is the "image" of God. Mention the two uses of the word in ancient times.
8. What was man's moral nature at the time of creation?

9. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

James 1:17

1 John 1:5-7

Genesis 1:27-28

Genesis 9:6

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Why is it important to you to know that God is "immutable"? Give an example of what difference it would make if He were NOT immutable.
2. How does the illustration of the gem stone help you understand and love God more? Do you sometimes tend to think of some of His attributes as being somehow in conflict? How can you avoid doing that?
3. What practical difference does it make to you to know that all people are made in the image of God? How does it change the way you think of people that seem hard to love, or people that you might normally consider your enemies?
4. What is your view of euthanasia? Is it justified in any situation? Defend your view.

MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS  
STUDY GUIDE 8.2  
Lesson 8: The Existential Perspective: Being Good  
Section 2: Fall

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

II. Fall

A. Nature

B. Will

C. Knowledge

1. Access to Revelation
2. Understanding of Revelation
3. Obedience to Revelation

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How does the lesson define man's "nature"?
2. How does the lesson describe the effects of the Fall on man's nature?
3. What is man's "will"?
4. What metaphor does Paul use in Romans 6-8 to describe man's fallen nature?
5. Explain the teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith regarding the works of the unregenerate.
6. According to the lesson, how did the Fall affect man's ability to have a proper knowledge of God's commands?
7. Explain the three areas of man's knowledge that were corrupted by the Fall.
8. Explain the teaching of the lesson regarding the relationship between knowledge and obedience.
9. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

Romans 8:5-8  
Matthew 7:9-11  
John 17:26  
Matthew 13:13-15  
Proverbs 15:33

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. How have you experienced the effects of the Fall on your own will? Do you sometimes struggle even to desire what is right? How can your desires be changed?
2. In the past have you tended to think only about how knowledge leads to obedience, but not the other way around? How has the lesson changed the way you perceive this relationship now?
3. What practical importance does the reciprocal relationship between knowledge and obedience have to you? How have you experienced the way your obedience or disobedience has affected your knowledge of God and His Word? Give examples.
4. What is your view of human cloning? Would it be correct in some circumstances? Defend your answer.

MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS  
STUDY GUIDE 8.3  
Lesson 8: The Existential Perspective: Being Good  
Section 3: Redemption

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

III. Redemption

A. Nature

B. Will

C. Knowledge

1. Access to Revelation
2. Understanding of Revelation
3. Obedience to Revelation

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. When did realization of the plan of redemption begin?
2. Explain the teaching of the lesson regarding the redeemed nature of a Christian.
3. Explain the changes in the power of sin over the will of man in each of the four stages of the history of redemption.
4. Explain how each aspect of man's knowledge has been changed through redemption.
5. What does obedience have to do with redemption?
6. How is obedience related to our knowledge of God?
7. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

Ezekiel 36:26  
Romans 6:6-11  
Philippians 2:12-13  
Romans 7:21-23  
Galatians 5:22-23

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. How have you experienced the changes in your ability to resist temptation after becoming a Christian?
2. How have you experienced the changes in your ability to understand God's Word after becoming a Christian?

3. What difference do you experience in your knowledge of God and His Word when you are obeying or disobeying Him? Give an example.
4. What Bible passages especially spoke to you as you studied this whole lesson?
5. What teaching from the whole lessons especially stands out to you? Why?

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 9.1

#### Lesson 9: The Existential Perspective: Intending Good

##### Section 1: Importance of Motives

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### Introduction

#### I. Importance of Motives

##### A. Concept

1. Complex
2. General and Specific
3. Known and Unknown

##### B. Necessity

1. Heart
2. Hypocrisy
3. Virtue

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Make sure you have memorized Dr. Frame's definition of Christian ethics and of an ethical judgment (see lesson one).
2. What are the two senses of the term "motive"? Which sense is Dr. Frame using in this lesson? What elements are included in a "motive" in this sense?
4. What does Dr. Frame mean when he says that motives are complex? That they can be general or specific? That they can be known or unknown?
5. How does the lesson define the biblical use of the term "heart"? How is the term "heart" related to the terms "mind," "thoughts," "spirit," and "soul"?
6. Explain the story of how Paul rebuked Peter in Antioch? What bothered Paul?
7. How does the lesson define "virtue"?
8. What two key motives for obedience are studied in this lesson?



9. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

Deuteronomy 6:5-6

Galatians 5:22-23

Matthew 12:35

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Hebrews 11:6

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Do you normally consider your inner motives when you evaluate your ethical judgments? Do you think it is important to take them into account?
2. Is it easy for you to analyze your motives? How can you feel free to be honest with yourself about your motives?
3. When you think of your "motives" in the sense of inner dispositions, what are some your weaker areas? How can those be changed? Does this consideration drive you to seek Christ's help? Write down your reflections.
4. Did any of the Bible passages speak to you in a special way? Explain why.
5. What do you think? Could there be a justifiable motive for fighting in a war? If so, what would that be? Defend your view.

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 9.2

#### Lesson 9: The Existential Perspective: Intending Good

##### Section 2: Motive of Faith

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### II. Motive of Faith

##### A. Saving Faith

1. Means of Initial Salvation
2. Ongoing Commitment

##### B. Repentance

##### C. Hope

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How does Dr. Frame define "saving faith"?
2. Explain the illustration of the paint brush to explain saving faith.
3. What is justification, as expressed in Romans 5:1-2?
4. Explain the meaning of repentance.
5. What role do repentance and good works have in our salvation?
6. What point does Dr. Frame make about faith from the story of Abram?
7. What role does the mind play in faith?
8. What is the main point of Hebrews 11?
9. In what sense are repentance and faith "two sides of the same coin"?
10. How does The Westminster Shorter Catechism answer the question, "Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?"
11. What was the first thesis of the 95 Theses that Martin Luther posted on the door of the Wittenberg church in 1517?
12. How does Dr. Frame define "hope"?

13. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

Genesis 15:6  
Galatians 2:20  
Hebrews 10:38-39  
James 2:17-18  
Hebrews 12:2-3

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Did this lesson change your understanding of saving faith? In what way? Do you have such saving faith? How did you come to have it?
2. How has your ongoing faith been an inner "motive" for your ethical judgments? Give an example.
3. Did any of the Bible passages speak to you in a special way? Explain why.
4. Explain the difference between "goal" and "motive," according to the way Dr. Frame uses the terms in this course. Give examples, and explain the importance of both in making decisions.

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 9.3

#### Lesson 9: The Existential Perspective: Intending Good

##### Section 3: Motive of Love

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### III. Motive of Love

##### A. Allegiance

1. Loyalty
2. Orientation
3. Responsibility

##### B. Action

1. Atoning Grace
2. Common Grace

##### C. Affection

1. Gratefulness
2. Fear

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How did Jesus summarize the teachings of the Old Testament?
2. What three elements are included in love, according to Dr. Frame?
3. Dr. Frame says, "In many ways, \_\_\_\_\_ is the cornerstone of the concept of love."
4. How does the lesson summarize the main point of Deuteronomy 6:5?
5. Explain the differences between the biblical terms "heart," "soul," and "strength." How are they related?
6. Make sure you know the Ten Commandments in the order given in Exodus 20.
7. What is our responsibility in regard to applying the biblical commandments to new situations?
8. What is "common grace"?
9. How are love and justice harmonized in God?
10. What place do feelings have in love?

11. What does the prelude to the Ten Commandments teach us about our motives for obedience?
12. How are the Ten Commandments usually divided?
13. How does Dr. Frame define the kind of "fear" of God that should motivate our obedience?
14. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the following Bible passages:

John 14:15  
1 John 4:9-11  
Proverbs 1:7

15. Review the meaning of each perspective of ethical decisions. What kind of question each one asks.

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Did your understanding of love change as you studied this lesson? In what way?
2. In what ways is love a motive for your ethical judgments? Give an example.
3. Did any of the Bible passages speak to you in a special way? Explain why.
4. What teachings were especially helpful for you in this whole lesson? Explain why.

#### 5. SITUATION ETHICS AND EXISTENTIALIST ETHICS

You might ask, what is the difference between the teaching of Dr. Frame, which includes three aspects of an ethical judgment (normative, situational, and existential), and what is known as "situation ethics" or what is known as "existentialist" ethics? They may use similar terms, but they are really quite different.

a. Let's look first at situation ethics:

The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines "situation ethics" as "a system of ethics by which acts are judged within their contexts instead of by categorical principles."

Joseph Fletcher, in *Situation Ethics*, says:

"The situationist follows a moral law or violates it according to love's need."

"Only the commandment to love is categorically good."

He says that the "hero" of his book is a cab driver who once said that he was not going to vote for the candidate from his political party, because "there are times when a man has to push his principles aside and do the right thing."

He says he wants to avoid the two extremes of legalism (rigidly applying the rules) and antinomianism (no rules at all), and believes that he has found the solution in applying only one absolute principle, the principle of love, which varies according to each unique situation.

*What do you think of this view of ethics? How do you see it different from what Dr. Frame teaches in the lesson?*

b. Existentialist ethics:

There is also a philosophical school of thought called "existentialism" that suggests that an individual defines his own meaning. Existentialist authors often question ethical systems and absolute norms, emphasizing individual personal freedom.

Jean-Paul Sartre said in "Existentialism is a Humanism":

"... a pupil of mine... at this moment, had the choice between going to England to join the Free French Forces or of staying near his mother and helping her to live... I had but one reply to make. You are free, therefore choose, that is to say, invent. No rule of general morality can show you what you ought to do: no signs are vouchsafed in this world."

What difference do you see between existentialist ethics and the biblical Christian view of ethics as taught in the lesson?

Now let's take an example: Suppose that you work as a sales person in a clothing store, and one of your co-workers is stealing cash from the cash register. Should you do something about this? If so, what?

Write down:

- 1) how situation ethics might answer this,
- 2) how existentialist ethics might answer this, and
- 3) how a Christian might answer this.

For further reading, see:

Jean-Paul Sartre, "[Existentialism is a Humanism](#)"

Joseph Fletcher, *Situation Ethics; the New Morality*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1966.

6. Consider the following actions and note some possible incorrect motives that you might sometimes have for doing these things. Then note more wholesome motives that you should have:

- a) Giving to a poor person in the street.
- b) Going to church.
- c) Getting exercise.
- d) Buying a gift for your spouse.

MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS  
STUDY GUIDE 10.1  
Lesson 10: The Existential Perspective: Choosing Good  
Section 1: Acquiring Knowledge

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

Introduction

I. Acquiring Knowledge

A. Experience

1. Physical
2. Mental

B. Imagination

1. Creativity
2. Time
3. Distance

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Make sure you have memorized Dr. Frame's definition of Christian ethics and of an ethical judgment (see lesson one).
2. Review by noting the three perspectives of ethics and the unique focus of each one.
3. What are the seven existential faculties mentioned in the lesson?
4. What are the three categories of existential faculties given in the lesson?
5. How does Dr. Frame define "experience"?
6. Explain the teaching of the lesson regarding the reliability of our senses and our perception.
7. Explain the process of turning sensory perception into knowledge. What must happen?
8. Explain the teaching of the lesson regarding how sin has affected our mental processes.
9. How does Dr. Frame define "imagination"?
10. Explain the role and the reliability of our imagination in acquiring knowledge.
11. How does our imagination help us acquire knowledge of things separated from us by time and distance? Give examples.

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What is your attitude toward sensory perception? Do you trust it? Has this lesson changed your thinking about it? Explain.
2. What is your attitude toward the imagination? Do you think of it as a valid faculty for acquiring knowledge? Has this lesson changed your thinking about it? Explain.
3. In what ways have you used your experience to acquire knowledge for making ethical decisions? Give an example.
4. In what ways have you used your imagination to acquire knowledge for making ethical decisions? Give an example.
5. How do you understand the concept of "social justice"? Give examples of what you would consider "social injustice"?
6. Do you think Christians should get involved in activities that seek to minimize social injustice? If so, give examples.



MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS  
STUDY GUIDE 10.2  
Lesson 10: The Existential Perspective: Choosing Good  
Section 2: Assessing Knowledge

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

II. Assessing Knowledge

A. Reason

B. Conscience

C. Emotions

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the three faculties which we use to assess knowledge?
2. What is the proper role of reason in assessing knowledge, according to the lesson?
3. Make sure you know Dr. Frame's definition of "reason."
4. Explain the example of how reason helps us draw logical conclusions for making ethical decisions.
5. How does Dr. Frame define the "conscience"?
6. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of 2 Corinthians 1:12.
7. Is the conscience always completely accurate?
8. How does the lesson define our "emotions"?
9. Explain the teaching of the lesson regarding the role of emotions in helping us make ethical decisions.
10. Explain the illustration of the man crossing the street and hearing a loud car horn.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What is your attitude toward the use of reason in making ethical decisions? Has the lesson changed your thinking about this? Do you think that you need to give it a more prominent role? Do you think you need to balance it more with the use of other faculties?
2. Has the lesson changed your view of the conscience? Do you tend to trust it blindly? Has it ever misled you? Give an example.
3. Has the lesson changed your view of the proper role of emotions in making decisions? In what way?
4. Give examples of how you have used reason, your conscience, and your emotions in making ethical decisions. Do you need to sharpen the focus on how you use these faculties? How do you plan to do that?

5. What suggestions do you have for reducing poverty in your country?
6. What do you think about efforts to protect the environment? What should the Christian attitude be?
7. Analyze the phrase, "the end justifies the means," according to the teachings of Dr. Frame in this course. Is there any truth in the phrase? Is there anything incorrect? Evaluate the concept, taking into account the three perspectives of an ethical judgment.

## MAKING BIBLICAL DECISIONS

### STUDY GUIDE 10.3

#### Lesson 10: The Existential Perspective: Choosing Good

#### Section 3: Applying Knowledge

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### III. Applying Knowledge

##### A. Heart

1. Commitments
2. Desires

##### B. Will

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Make a list of the three categories taught in the lesson and list the faculties in each one.
2. Make sure you are familiar with Luke 6:45 and 2 Timothy 2:20-22.
3. Explain the teaching of Paul in Romans 7 regarding the conflict of desires.
4. What should our greatest desire be?
5. What does the lesson teach about totally winning the battle against sinful desires in this life?
6. How does the lesson define the "will"?
7. Explain the story in Matthew 12:9-13 about healing the man with the shriveled hand. Explain how each stage illustrates the process of acquiring knowledge, assessing knowledge, and applying knowledge. Mention how all seven faculties for making ethical decisions are used by Jesus in this event.

### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Do you identify with the struggle that Paul expresses in Romans 7? Does it help you to know that Paul also struggled with sinful desires? What can you learn from the way Paul deals with this struggle? How can you gain the victory over sinful desires?
2. Think of an example of an ethical decision you have made. Try to identify how all seven faculties were used in the process.
3. What is the most important thing you have learned in this whole lesson? Explain how it has impacted you.
4. What is the most important thing you learned from the whole course?

## 5. ABORTION REVISITED

In a previous lesson, we asked your opinion about abortion. Now, after studying the course, we would like to revisit the issue, to see if the course has helped you make biblical decisions. Try to apply the teachings of this course to analyze the ethical question of abortion.

In what moment does a fetus become a living being, a person? Is there any situation in which it is acceptable? If so, what? Defend your view and support it with Scripture.

## 6. "I SAW WHAT I SAW", SARA GROVES

Optional: In order to help you sense in your heart the importance of the "existential" and "situational" aspects of ethics, we offer a video link you may want to watch. It is a song called "I Saw What I Saw" by Sara Groves.

[We cannot guarantee that this link will always be available, and we are not responsible for the legal rights of the video, nor for the ads that may appear. We simply link to the site where we have found it.]

"I Saw What I Saw": [http://youtu.be/Lt\\_WpluguwE](http://youtu.be/Lt_WpluguwE)

© 2018 by Third Millennium Ministries. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means for profit, except in brief quotations for the purposes of review, comment, or scholarship, without written permission from the publisher, Third Millennium Ministries, Inc., 316 Live Oaks Boulevard, Casselberry, FL 32707 USA.