

Learning Discernment

By Caleb Tvedt

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

(Proverbs 1:7 KJV)

We need wisdom and discernment every day in both our physical and spiritual lives. We all start small – a baby – then we grow and learn. As we get older, the problems get larger, and the temptations get bigger. We need understanding and discernment. *“For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil”* (Hebrews 5:13-14). This growth comes through God. *“For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him”* (Isaiah 28:26).

We make a lot of decisions in the physical realm of life every day, such as what to eat, what to wear, what to do, and how to talk. Should I get angry at that person for what they said to me or about me? God's Word and His Spirit gives us direction, and we gain discretion. *“The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression”* (Proverbs 19:11).

So, too, as Christians, we also have to exercise spiritual discernment. *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error”* (1 John 4:1-6). James tells us, *“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him”* (James 1:5). We only need to ask, and the LORD will give us wisdom we need.

But do we ask? Do we start each day with our Saviour in reading His Words of Wisdom to prepare us to discern what is right and what is wrong? I know I haven't been as faithful to do this, and I see the results: I get angry quickly, everything seems to go wrong, I make the wrong decisions, or I have a terrible day; but when I make the time to begin each day by reading His Word and going to Him in prayer, the day goes better. I see that I make better decisions, am not as frustrated, and am not so quick to get angry. It is easier to know and do the right things.

Like me, be challenged to get into God's Word so we can do His will and discern what is right and wrong, what is the spirit of truth and what is the spirit of evil.