

- 2) (Proverbs 13:15) "*Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard.*"
  - a) This is one example of the word translated understanding.
  - b) Good discretion, insight, wisdom or understanding gives favour. In other words, a person with this quality is blessed.

#### 4. The last two verses imply discretion

##### a. Look carefully at the wording

- 1) (Pr 15:23) "*A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!*"
  - a) When a person uses discretion and says the right thing in due season or at the right time, it can be a very good thing.
  - b) It is just as important we speak a good word in due season as it is that we keep quiet when we should not speak.
- 2) (Proverbs 16:23) "*The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.*"
  - a) This discerning person teaches his mouth and adds learning or insight to his lips.
  - b) In other words, he wisely thinks first and teaches his mouth the right things to say.

##### b. Note what we must learn

- 1) We must learn to say good things at the right time. It may be a compliment or a word of encouragement. It may be a word of thanks or an assurance of forgiveness.
- 2) Our mouth and lips need a wise teacher. We need discretion in our hearts in order to be the teacher they need.

**Conclusion:** Review the **definition of discretion**. As I said in the introduction, we desperately need discretion in our lives. We need it in every area of our lives, but it is very needed in our communication. We learn discretion from God and by reading His Word. It is not enough to know about discretion. With God's help, we must make it a part of our daily lives.

**Song:** Teach Me Thy Way, O Lord - 337

# Discretion

13 August 2017 PM - Proverbs 1:4 - Comm17 - Scott Childs

**Introduction:** The 1828 Webster's Dictionary defines discretion as "that discernment which enables a person to judge critically of what is correct and proper, united with caution."

We desperately need discretion in our lives. Discretion will keep us from foolish choices. It will protect our eyes from looking at things we should not see. It will enable us to make the right choice of friends. It will help us identify false doctrine. It will govern our spending habits. It will keep us from going where we shouldn't. It will give us wisdom to say the right things instead of saying harmful words. Discretion is very important if we are going to have communication that pleases the Lord.

Bill Crowder tells of a time that he and his wife visited another church for a special program. They got there early and found a seat. Two people behind them began complaining about their church. They criticized the pastoral staff, leadership, music, ministry priorities, and several other things that made them unhappy. He commented that had he and his wife had been there looking for a new church, the comments of those people would have turned him away. <sup>(Our Daily Bread, June 2012)</sup> Not only were they murmuring but they had not used good discretion.

**Transition:** This evening we will be studying three Hebrew words are translated discretion in the KJV as well as two related verses.

## 1. The 1<sup>st</sup> word is translated discretion four times

### a. Note how it is used.

- 1) (Proverbs 1:4) "*To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.*"
  - a) In the context, we learn that discretion is one of the qualities gained by reading and studying the book of Proverbs (Pr 1:1-4).
  - b) It is linked with knowledge.
  - c) Discretion enables us to correctly and properly make plans that are right in God's sight.
- 2) (Proverbs 2:11) "*Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:*"
  - a) Solomon tells us that this discretion will preserve us

or guard us against evils.

- b) Without discretion, we will make plans that lead down harmful trails.
- 3) (Proverbs 3:21) "*My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion:*"
  - a) Here we are reminded that keeping or guarding discretion is very important. To fail to have discretion is not good.
  - b) This time we find discretion linked with wisdom because they are closely related.
- 4) (Proverbs 5:2) "*That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge.*"
  - a) Here Solomon charged his son to attend to his wisdom and to listen to understanding. If he obeyed, it would enable him to regard or retain discretion.
  - b) Here again, the source of discretion is found in wisdom and understanding.

#### **b. Note what it teaches us.**

- 1) God wants us to have discretion. That is one of the reasons He has given us the Bible.
  - a) If you do not daily read the Bible and spend time meditating on what you read, you are going to lack discretion in life.
  - b) In the Bible, we find examples of men like Uzza who made a fatal mistake because he lacked discretion.
  - c) The Bible also records biographies of men like Daniel who excelled in all that he did because of his biblical discretion.
- 2) Choices we make without regard to what the Bible says will often lead to trouble and heartache.
- 3) If you are not making time every day to study the Bible carefully and asking God to help you live it, you are hurting yourself and those around you.

## **2. The 2<sup>nd</sup> word is used twice**

### **a. This word has a slant towards good judgment**

- 1) (Proverbs 11:22) "*As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.*"

- a) It is a total waste to put a jewel of gold in a pig's snout. The pig will dig in the muck and spoil or lose the jewel. It is also a total waste for a woman to be fair or beautiful if she has no discretion. Beauty and poor judgment are a dangerous combination. She will waste her God-given beauty on vanity, pride, selfishness, or careless living. The world promotes beauty for all the wrong reasons.
- b) God promotes the inner beauty of a virtuous woman. (Proverbs 31:30) "*Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.*"
- 2) (Proverbs 26:16) "*The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.*"
  - a) The same word that was translated "discretion" in Proverbs 11:22 is here translated "reason."
  - b) The sluggard or lazy person thinks he is wiser than seven truly wise men that can render or give a reason or discerning answer as to why work is good.

### **b. Note what this word teaches**

- 1) Discretion or good judgment is important in practical ways in life.
- 2) Those who lack discretion act like foolish pigs and lazy sluggards.

## **3. The 3<sup>rd</sup> word is only translated discretion once**

### **a. Other translations of the word**

- 1) It is translated wisdom twice.
- 2) It is translated understanding three times.

### **b. The meaning of this word leans toward insight**

- 1) (Proverbs 19:11) "*The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.*"
  - a) Here it describes a man who is slow to anger because he has insight, wisdom, understanding or discretion.
  - b) Like a prudent man, he can see that anger will lead only to harm so he wisely curbs his anger. (Proverbs 22:3) "*A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.*"