

The REMINDER

The weekly newsletter of the church of Christ in Bellaire, TX

Volume XXXII

March 10, 2013

Number 10

THE VALUE OF DISCRETION

To understand the meaning of "discreet" requires a little study, but it is time well spent when we see the importance of acquiring this attribute. Webster defines it as "careful about what one says or does." We get a better "feel" for the word when the etymology points us to the word "discern" which means "to separate." The Greek word "sophron" (discreet in the KJV, sober-minded in the ASV) means literally "to save the mind." One who is discreet has the ability to see both the good and evil in the world. He is able to separate in his mind right and wrong, wise and foolish. He is sober enough to know his weaknesses and, seeking a heavenly home, is careful of his life and its influence. Sometimes we abuse this word when we use it to refer to someone who is careful to hide his sins and excesses. One who is truly discreet will avoid the things of this world that lead to destruction.

In Mark 12:34 the Lord commends one of the scribes because "he answered discreetly." Few of the scribes were open minded or intellectually honest enough to examine another's point of view or look closely at their own. This scribe had the ability to put "received ideas" or prejudice aside and honestly consider the Lord's statement on the greatest commandment. It wasn't simply that he agreed with Jesus that made his answer discreet, but his ability to weigh an answer and "see" its ruth.

In Gen. 41:33 Pharaoh was to look for a man discreet and wise to appoint as overseer of the harvesting and storing of grain during the seven good years. This person needed to be able to consider various plans for storage of grain, how to disperse it during the seven years of famine, how to arrange payment and other details. Discreet enough to be able to separate a wise plan from a foolish one, sober enough to see the future consequences of today's decisions and strong enough to take the inevitable criticism. What a valuable quality discretion is. "Discretion shall watch over thee" (Prov. 2:11).

Attaining discretion is as easy or difficult as we make it. God's wisdom is revealed "to give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion" (Prov. 1:4). Not only is discretion revealed by God's word, it is also taught by God's People. "Aged women" should be "reverent in demeanor...that they may train the young women...to be discreet" (Titus 2:3-5). Solomon as a wise father taught discretion to his son when he spoke of moral purity in Proverbs 5. Older Christians should have learned by experience, Bible study and instruction from other Christians the meaning and value of discretion. We in turn must teach others.

The practical value of discretion is revealed in verses like Prov. 11:22: "As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman without discretion." The qualities of earthly life that we value, especially in our youth, such as beauty, popularity, intelligence or ability can lead us into more trouble than we can imagine. The only protection is discretion - a sound mind that can distinguish the best course for both present and future.

Discretion also has to do with a proper estimation of oneself. In Romans 12:3 the kindred word is "sober." "For I say...to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God has dealt to each man a measure of faith." To say, "I am everything" in a conceited manner is not a proper estimation. To say, "I am nothing" in a disparaging fashion is not a proper estimation. Each of us has a value, an ability, and in the Lord's cause we must spend ourselves diligently. Discretion helps us know our abilities, limitations, and proper place for service. May we use ourselves wisely.

JLS

Bulletin Board

Sermon Notes:

AM Lesson - Steve - "The Wonder of Worship"

PM Lesson - Jack - "Father of Mercy and God of Comfort"

NEWS AND NOTES: Hope everyone remembered to change their clocks last night (actually at 2 am). Looks like we're back to "savings" time. Seems to me it costs more than we save, but that's the government.

Most of us are in good health. There is a "nasty" cold virus going around. Scott was out Wed. night. So were the Knapps. Maybe with a couple of aspirin we can all be together today. Jay's grandmother came thru her surgical procedure just fine. Logan Kelsey is having trouble with ear infections. It's possible he will need tubes in his ears to reduce pressure. Keep the family in your prayers. There are several on our "long term" list. Continue to ask for God's help.

Worship service reminders: **Wed. night, the 13th we will have a song service. We expect quite a number of guests in the worship service. Come and enjoy worshipping with us.**

Our gospel meeting begins next Sunday, March 17. Looks like a great meeting. Since that is the 3rd Sunday, and it will be a full day, there will be no youth devotion or ladies class. They will resume in April.

We'll have several out of town this weekend. The Pharris' are on vacation. Others also plan to be gone. Have a safe trip.

The Way Sin Traps

How often have you gone window-shopping not really intending to buy anything, but found yourself getting something anyway? Like a window display, sin traps us in the same manner.

You're window-shopping, *walking* from store to store when something catches your eye. You find yourself *standing, gazing* in front of some item. When you enter the store and handle, try on, long for whatever merchandise it is, both you and the people in the store know you're sold!

Now, look at Psalm 1:1 and notice how sin traps us: *"Blessed is the man what walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers..."*

Sin may be slow, but it is sure and certain. The allure is always within us, the circumstances without. When the two meet, we are in danger. Long ago the psalmist warned us about this ensnaring nature of sin. Listen to him with care.

"Two things are hard for some people to do: one is to give, the other is to forgive."

"Some folks ae like blotters, they soak up all they hear and then get it all backwards."

Assignments for today

Sunday, March 10, 2013

Morning Service

Announcements.....Jesse Knapp
Hymn Director.....Robert McDonald
Scripture Reading.....I Tim. 2:5-7
Scripture Reader.....Zach Kelsey
Opening Prayer.....David Gorski
Closing Prayer.....Jesse Knapp

Evening Service

Hymn Director.....Greg Williams
Opening Prayer.....Kris Hester
Closing Prayer.....Jesse Knapp

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Schedule of Services

Sunday:

9:30 AM Worship
11:00 AM Bible study
5:00 PM Worship

Wednesday:

7:30 PM Study and Devotional
Minister and editor
Jack Smith and Steve Garrett

The Reminder is published weekly by the church of Christ in Bellaire