

Lifting Up The STANDARD

“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him” (Isaiah 59:19).



Challenging And Encouraging God's Remnant To Remain Faithful

Sunday, March 8, 2015

Article # 1

“That I May Discern”

“Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad” (First Kings 3:9).

The Gift of Discernment

Jewish tradition says Solomon was in his early teens when he inherited the throne from his father. Other commentaries consider him to be about twenty years of age. Although we cannot be certain of his age we know he was a young man and this young man asked God for the gift of discernment and he received it.

The Right Choice

First Kings 3:10-12,

“And the speech pleased the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart.”

The Right Purpose

Solomon was given the opportunity to ask for anything; however, his desire was to help God's people and for that reason God gave him the gift of discernment.

“Whatsoever We Ask”

Luke 11:9-10,

“And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.”

There are three conditions in this verse. First, we must “ask.” Second, we must “keep his commandments,” and third, we must “do those things that are pleasing in his sight.”

Luke 11:9-10,

“And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”

**Paul Wanted Those He Was Responsible For To Have Discernment
Philippians 1:9,10,**

“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve (Translated “discern” twice) things that are excellent.”

Discernment And Decisions Are Two Different Things

Discernment is the God-given ability to determine what is *right* and what is *wrong*, what is *truth* and *error*, and what is *sound doctrine* and *unsound doctrine*. Discernment is one thing; however, decisions are something completely different from discernment. Discernment allows us to determine what is right; however, decisions determine if we do right.

Solomon had discernment; however, he made many wrong decisions.

At the end of his life Solomon said, *“As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise?”* (Ecclesiastes 2:15). He said, *“And how dieth the wise man? as the fool”* (Ecclesiastes 2:16).



Discernment And Decisions In The last Days

One of the main warning we have from the Lord concerning the last days is that we need to *“take heed that no man deceive you”* (Matthew 24:4). In verse five He said, *“For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.”* He repeated the warning again in verse eleven where we read, *“And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.”*

Without discernment we have no possible way of determining who is preaching the truth and who is not. If we cannot discern the truth we will be deceived. In Hosea’s day we read *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge”* (Hosea 4:6). The verse continues, telling us that the reason they had a lack of knowledge was because they had *“rejected knowledge.”* To reject the gift of discernment is to reject God-given knowledge, which is to leave ourselves opened to be deceived.

The word “knowledge” occurs 172 times in the Word of God. The phrase to come to or receive the **“knowledge of the truth”** occurs only three times. They are listed below.



“Be Saved And Come To The Knowledge of The Truth” (First Timothy 2:4).

First Timothy 2:4,

*“Who will have all men to be saved, and to **come unto the knowledge of the truth.**”*

Second Timothy 3:7,

*“Ever learning, and never able to **come unto the knowledge of the truth.**”*

Hebrews 10:26,27,

*“For if we sin wilfully after that we have received **the knowledge of the truth**, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”*

Understanding The Apostasy of The Last Days

These three verses are very important regarding discerning what is occurring in these last days of the local church dispensation. We will examine each verse separately.

First Timothy 2:4,

*“Who will (Translated “desire” or “desirous” sixteen times) have all men to be saved, and **to come unto the knowledge of the truth.**”*

Three Lessons From This Verse

1. It is necessary to be saved before being able “to come to the knowledge of the truth.”
2. All Christians (“all men”) are able “to come to the knowledge of the truth.”
3. The heresy of Calvinism is refuted with this verse, as well as many other verses in the Word of God.

Second Timothy 3:7,

*“Ever learning, and never able to **come unto the knowledge of the truth.**”*

This verse refers to people who are in local churches who are “never able to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” Since First Timothy 2:4 makes it plain that all Christians are able “to come to the knowledge of the truth,” this verse is referring to unsaved people who are members of local churches at the end of the local church age. The six verses preceding this verse list a catalog of characteristics that are characteristics of unsaved people.

It is important to understand the word “knowledge” in this verse is translated from the Greek word “epignosis.” It has been translated “acknowledging” three times. Unsaved people may have a head knowledge of salvation; however, they can not “acknowledge,” or recognize the fact, importance, or quality of the truth.

“Repentance” Precedes The Ability To “Acknowledging” The Truth

Second Timothy 2:25,

“God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.”

“Godliness” Precedes The Ability To The “Acknowledging” of The Truth

Titus 1:1,

“The acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness.”

Being “In Christ” Precedes The Ability To The “Acknowledging” of The Truth

Philemon 1:1,

“That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.”

Rejection of The “Knowledge of The Truth”

Hebrews 10:26,27,

“For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge (accumulation of information) of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”

Conclusions From These Verses


1. It is necessary to be save before one is able *“to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*
2. All Christians (*“all men”*) are able *“to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*
3. *“Repentance,” “godliness,”* and being *“in Christ”* precedes being able to acknowledge the truth.
4. The context of Second Timothy 3:1-7 is the local church; therefore, many church members who have prayed a little forgiveness prayer minus repentance, are not saved and cannot come to the *“acknowledging of the truth.”*
5. Those who have a knowledge of the truth and reject can expect *“a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”*

Different Types of Knowledge

In our next article we will discuss the different types of knowledge that are referred to in the Word of God. They are listed below.

1. Knowledge given by God.
2. Knowledge taught by God.
3. Knowledge taught by man. (Spiritual)
4. Knowledge from God for obedient Christians only.
5. Our responsibility concerning knowledge.
6. Knowledge about God.
7. Knowledge of good and evil.
8. Worldly knowledge.

“Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge.”
(Second Peter 1:5)



“Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad”
(First Kings 3:9).



C.H. Spurgeon

“Discernment is not knowing the difference between right and wrong. It is knowing the difference between right and almost right.”