

The Importance of Good Judgment

I made a mistake. It was just a foolish error, one common to young people. "You just used foolish judgment," my Dad said, "you need to stop and think about what you're doing."

By Dee Bowman

Life is full of opportunities for judgments of various sorts—some are little, seemingly insignificant, some are very important and may have long lasting results. Every decision is important, none ever easy.

Judgments follow us wherever we go. The wise man urges us that we pay careful attention to judgments and he says the book of Proverbs is given in order that justice, judgment, equity, knowledge and discretion might prevail in all areas of life, no matter your age. This revelation can make the young man wise, even though he may not yet have much experience with living life.

Your decisions are important. The word of God makes it possible for you to make good decisions, not foolish ones. But in order to do so, you will have

to develop a familiarity with it. Make the word of God part of who you are and what you decide and you will not render foolish judgments.

As you go about your activities today, look for ways to implement God's word; it will help you judge which way to go.

(Proverbs 1:1-7) "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel: To know wisdom and instruction, To discern the sayings of understanding, To receive instruction in wise behavior, Righteousness, justice and equity; To give prudence to the naive, To the youth knowledge and discretion, A wise man will hear and increase in learning, And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel, To understand a proverb and a figure, The words of the wise and their riddles. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction."



(Isa 40:30-31) - Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, ³¹ But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

Sick

Fran Snyder (Mother of Carla Humphrey)	Lori Holloway	Chick Wade
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Rubye Johnson (Erica Seymore's Grandmother)	Jared Nixon
Ross Folmar	Dave and Betty Bradford	Johnny Adrian (Friend of Sullivan's)
Ed Mort (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	"Grandmama" Odessa Wyatt (Dyle's grandmother)	Erlene Davis (Walker Davis' mother)
Gerald White (Christopher's and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)	Bill Rhodes (Toni Herd's Uncle)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Carrie Chavers (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	Joe Perry (Anna Miller's Relative)

News and Notes

☒ Let's remember our expectant mothers: Laura Weldon, Anna Miller, Nicole Pender, Joy Liu and Amanda Stephens.

☒ We are thankful to have The Jerkins and Johnson families and John Burns indentifying with the church!

Jeff and April Jerkins, Laurel and Jacob 2263 Potomac Ct., Auburn 36830 (334) 740-9928

Jeremiah and Julie Johnson, Mary and Charlie, 225 Lee Rd 110, Opelika 36804

☒ Bob Simpson had successful hip replacement surgery on Wednesday.

☒ John Coleman's mother fell and broke her arm in 3 places. She continues in much pain.

☒ We are blessed every Sunday with visitors. Let us be sure to met them and if possible be sure they receive a visitor's card.

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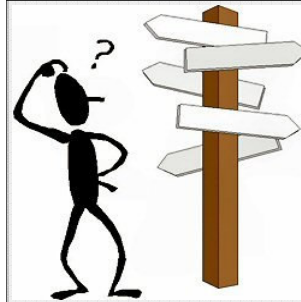
The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. **(Matthew 5:16)**

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Thought to Ponder

No man can for any considerable time wear one face to himself and another to the multitude without finally getting bewildered as to which is the true one.

Do You Have a Bible Question?
Call (334) 734-2133 or E-mail: LarryRouse@aubeacon.com

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

The Preachers of Doubt

By Steven Harper

Even as the Israelites were being delivered from Egyptian bondage, they found reason to doubt. Having just seen the power of God demonstrated so thoroughly by the plagues which decimated Egypt, they should have known that God had the power and will to deliver, yet when they stood at the edge of the Red Sea and looked back to see Pharaoh's approaching army, some complained to Moses, "Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? Is not this what we said to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness" **(Exod. 14:11, 12)**. Despite the recent evidence to the contrary, some of the Israelites doubted the power of God would deliver them and complained that they were going to die in the wilderness.

Just three days after God delivered them from that seemingly hopeless situation, they complained about water at Marah **(Exod. 15:22-24)**; about six weeks later, they were complaining again while in the Wilderness of Sin **(16:1-3)**; and they complained again at Rephidim **(17:1-3)**. This was all before they even reached Sinai! When they traveled up to Kadesh-Barnea, they

Remember you are responsible for what you tell. No matter where you got it, it's still your responsibility. Just don't re-tell and you won't have to worry about it. Make sure it needs to be told before you tell it.

sent spies into the land of promise and 10 of the 12 came back with a bad report, saying, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are" **(Num. 13:31)**, and the people complained again, ready to appoint new leaders and head back to Egypt **(14:1-4)**. It seems that for all God had done and for all they had seen, they still found reason to doubt and, by doing so, impugned the character of God by implying that He was not able to do these things.

But the doubt was unfounded. It wasn't as if the people had reason to doubt, for God had amply supplied enough evidence to cause them to believe in Him and trust that He would provide. In effect, they have made God a liar because

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they did not believe His 'testimony' or His evidence.

The apostle John wrote by inspiration that those who deny the testimony of God regarding His Son make Him to be a liar (**1 John 5:10**); but what about those today who are preaching doubt regarding other portions of God's testimony _ on subjects such as salvation, our worship, marriage and divorce, and even our fellowship with others who profess faith in Christ, but who are not of Christ? Do we think that there will not be consequences for this? Do we not realize that when we say that 'one cannot know God's will' on a particular subject or when one says 'we cannot know the truth' on any particular subject that God has addressed, then we are once again impugning the character of God and calling Him a liar?

It is very troubling to me - more often as of late - that when I am discussing certain subjects that are clearly taught within God's written word, someone feels compelled to say, 'We cannot be so dogmatic on this!' Or, when someone points out the erroneous teaching of a brother on a subject such as marriage and divorce, someone will say, 'There are many differences among brethren and we don't need to divide over this one.' Pardon me? Are we saying that we cannot know God's teaching [the truth] on marriage, divorce, and remarriage? Are we saying, now, that we cannot know God's teaching [the truth] on salvation? If I didn't know better, I would think we were standing at the edge of the Promised Land, hearing some of my brethren saying, 'We are not able!' Where are the Joshuas and Calebs for today?

But why this doubt? Why are some of my brethren all of a sudden doubting our ability to know God's will on some topics - topics that have been clearly understood for centuries? Why are some brethren now impugning the character of God by preaching doubt, rather than instilling trust and faith by talking about the surety and clarity of God's word? Why are some brethren now arguing that since we cannot say we know the truth on everything God has revealed, then we should not preach absolute truth on anything? Is it possible that God has failed to sufficiently provide for us, as those Israelites believed so long ago? Is it really that God's word is not so clear on these subjects? Or is it something else?

I cannot answer why some brethren are preaching doubt today [though some brethren are making it clear why they do this], but I can answer the ques-

tion about the ability to understand God's word and the surety that God has provided all we need to know, and in such a way that it can be known. All we have to do is look into God's word [and that is where some are failing]. With that in mind let us consider the following three passages, which speak about understanding the will of God.

First, consider Paul's inspired revelation that God "desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (**1 Tim. 2:4**). NOTE: God desires that we know the truth; did He desire something of man which is beyond his ability? If we are going to be consistent, then if we argue that man cannot know the truth, it must follow that man cannot be saved, either; God provided salvation and the means to obtain it, just as surely as He provided the truth and the means to understand it. If man cannot know the truth, then it must logically follow that he cannot obtain salvation, either, since God desires and provides both. If not, why not?

Next, consider Paul's inspired admonition to the Ephesian brethren to "understand what the will of the Lord is" (**Eph. 5:17**). Not only is it God's desire that men know the truth, He has also commanded that we know it [God's will = truth]. Now, has God commanded something which is beyond our ability? If so, what kind of God must He be? Surely, we are not going to start preaching that God wants and commands something of mankind that he is unable to do, are we?

And, finally, consider Paul's inspired words to the Ephesian brethren when he wrote about the gospel plan of salvation [something particularly relevant to this discussion]. Here, Paul reminded them that, regarding that "mystery" of God's plan for salvation, he had "written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ" (**Eph. 3:3, 4**). Did you catch that? Paul said they could understand God's once-hidden plan for man's salvation; they could understand the truth! Now, we - who are supposedly much more educated and intellectually astute - are now arguing that we cannot understand this, or other controversial subjects? Really?

The reality is, God's word is not so unclear and difficult to understand or apply. The difficulty for so many - including many of our brethren now - is in simply accepting what it teaches. Within my lifetime, I have seen brethren, who once boldly preached the truth on some subjects, now tuck tail and become inexplicably timid when addressing the same topic today. Has God's word suddenly become more difficult for them to understand? Or is it something else?



Effects of No Church Discipline

By Irven Lee

Failure to carry out any command of God is a serious failure. The New Testament emphasizes the duties of the individual, but there are certain responsibilities assigned to groups of Christians (churches) because we are to work together as a family or body under Christ, our Chief Shepherd (**Rom 16:16; Titus 1:5; 1 Tim 5:17; 1 Pet 5:1-5**).

If a church looks the other way and refuses to notice when more and more members become ungodly, that church will become a gathering place for the worldly. It will also lose the respect of the community.

1) No Discipline Causes Men To Be Lost: -- God does not want any to perish because every soul is precious to Him (**Matt 16:26; 2 Pet 3:9**). If a brother sins, he endangers his own soul. Any Christian near him should seek to convert or restore him to God (**James 5:19,20; Gal 6:1**). If efforts of this type fail, the important task of rescuing this one from perishing falls upon the church (**1 Cor 5**). Let every member be aware of the fact that the effort is to save the sinner as well as to protect the reputation of the church (**1 Cor 5:4-8**). We must admonish the sinner as a brother because we are interested in his spiritual welfare. We want him to be ashamed of his sinful way, so we withdraw from him (**2 Thess. 3:6,14,15**).

2) No Discipline Allows Leaven's Wickedness To Enter The Lump: -- The church at Corinth was "*puffed up*" with its own wisdom rather than depending on the counsel of God concerning the member who was a fornicator. Allowing one couple to live in violation of the law was a way of letting the leaven of wicked-

ness to enter the "*lump*." It was true then as it is now that "*a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*" (**1 Cor 5:6-8**). If the church closes its eyes to one case, there will likely soon be another and then others.

3) No Discipline Will Keep Men From Enduring Sound Doctrine: -- Timothy was charged to "*preach, reprove, rebuke and exhort*" in an urgent way, if he would push

off the day when they would not endure sound doctrine (**2 Tim 4:1-5**). The mouths of those who speak unsound doctrine should be stopped but who will do this, if the people like the perverted pattern? (**Titus 1:10-14; 2 Pet 2:1-3**). Timothy was urged to be forceful and faithful in his preaching, and the churches were taught to mark, avoid and reject false teachers. They were to purge out the leaven of wickedness and disorder to avoid the evil day when they would not endure sound doctrine (**Rom 16:17,18; Acts 20:29-31; Gal 1:6-10**).

4) No Discipline Encourages The Worldly: -- If a church looks the other way and refuses to notice when more and more members become ungodly, that church will become a gathering place for the worldly. It will also lose the respect of the community. Its zeal for Christ will vanish, so it will fall into the same condition that had come to Israel when Isaiah and Jeremiah lived. God was displeased with a church that tolerated doctrine and practices that were contrary to His Will (**Rev 1:14,15**).

