

THE
WAY OF
WISDOM

The Discipline of Discernment

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What is Discernment?

- “To have the capacity to perceive clearly and to understand the real nature of something.”
- To judge wisely and to distinguish between what is true and false.
- It involves the wisdom to consider why issues have arisen and the foresight to consider the results of a particular course of behavior.

Hindrances to Discernment?

- Spiritual laziness: “dull of hearing” (Heb. 5:11).
- Wasting time: “...by this time you ought to be teachers...” (Heb. 5:12).
- Degenerating rather than growing (5:12)
- Forsaking the foundational teachings about and of Christ (5:12-14; 6:1).
- Remaining in spiritual instability (5:12; Eph. 4:13-14).

Keys To Developing Discernment

Devoted to Spiritual Growth

(Heb. 5:12)

- Desire to grow to know Jesus better (Eph. 4:15; 2 Pet. 3:18)
- Desire to grow in order to serve others like Jesus Christ (Phil. 2:1-5)
- Fervently pray and worship (Heb. 10:25)
- Feed on God's word (1 Pet. 2:2)

Keys To Developing Discernment

Familiarity with God's Word

(Heb. 5:13)

- Those who have no experience or interaction with God's word will not grow in the Lord (Psa. 1:1-3; 119)
- We must feed on God's word in order to be spiritually nourished up in the words of faith and healthy teaching (1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- The reason mature Christians have grown is because the "word of Christ richly dwells in them" (Col. 3:16).

Keys To Developing Discernment

Recognize Signs of Spiritual Maturity

(Heb. 5:14)

- Partaking of both “milk” and “solid food.”
- To receive such teaching requires diligence, time, and devotion.
- The mature in Christ “practice,” “exercise,” or “constantly use” their spiritual senses through spiritual training (5:14).
- They are “trained” or “disciplined” to “discern good and evil” (5:14; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; 1 Tim. 4:7)

Why Must We Train Ourselves To Discern Good and Evil?

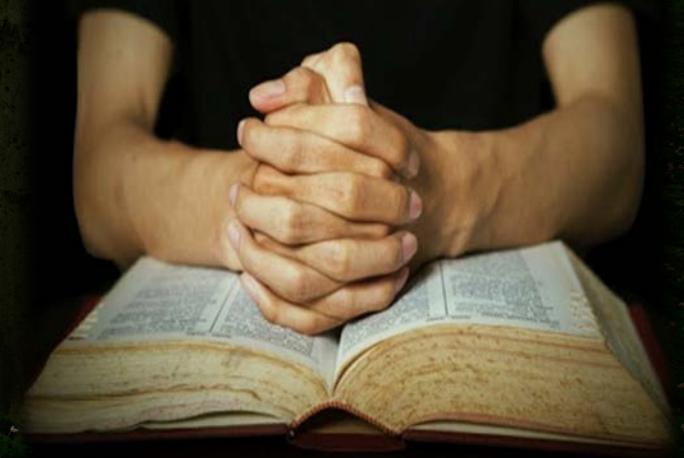
- God alone determines what is good in contrast to what is evil (Pro. 1:7; Isa. 5:20; Jer. 10:23).
- Evil frequently masquerades as good (2 Cor. 2:11; 11:13-15).
- Good is often vilified by those who are deceived or ungodly (2 Pet. 2:1-3, 19; Jude 3, 4, 14-19).
- Undisciplined and undiscerning thoughts and emotions can become a deluding and powerful influence for error (2 Thess. 2:10-12; cf. Matt. 16:21-23).

Why Must We Train Ourselves To Discern Good and Evil?

- Spiritual maturity and discernment come through the spiritual senses, not the physical senses (5:14).
- Challenging, in-depth, but life changing principles of the gospel require devotion and discernment (5:11).
- Moral and doctrinal choices demand our spiritual discernment (2 Tim. 1: 7-8, 13-14).
- Growth areas in our spiritual life and relationships require good judgment (Eph. 5:22-6:4).
- Discernment leads us to glorify God (Phil. 1:9-11).

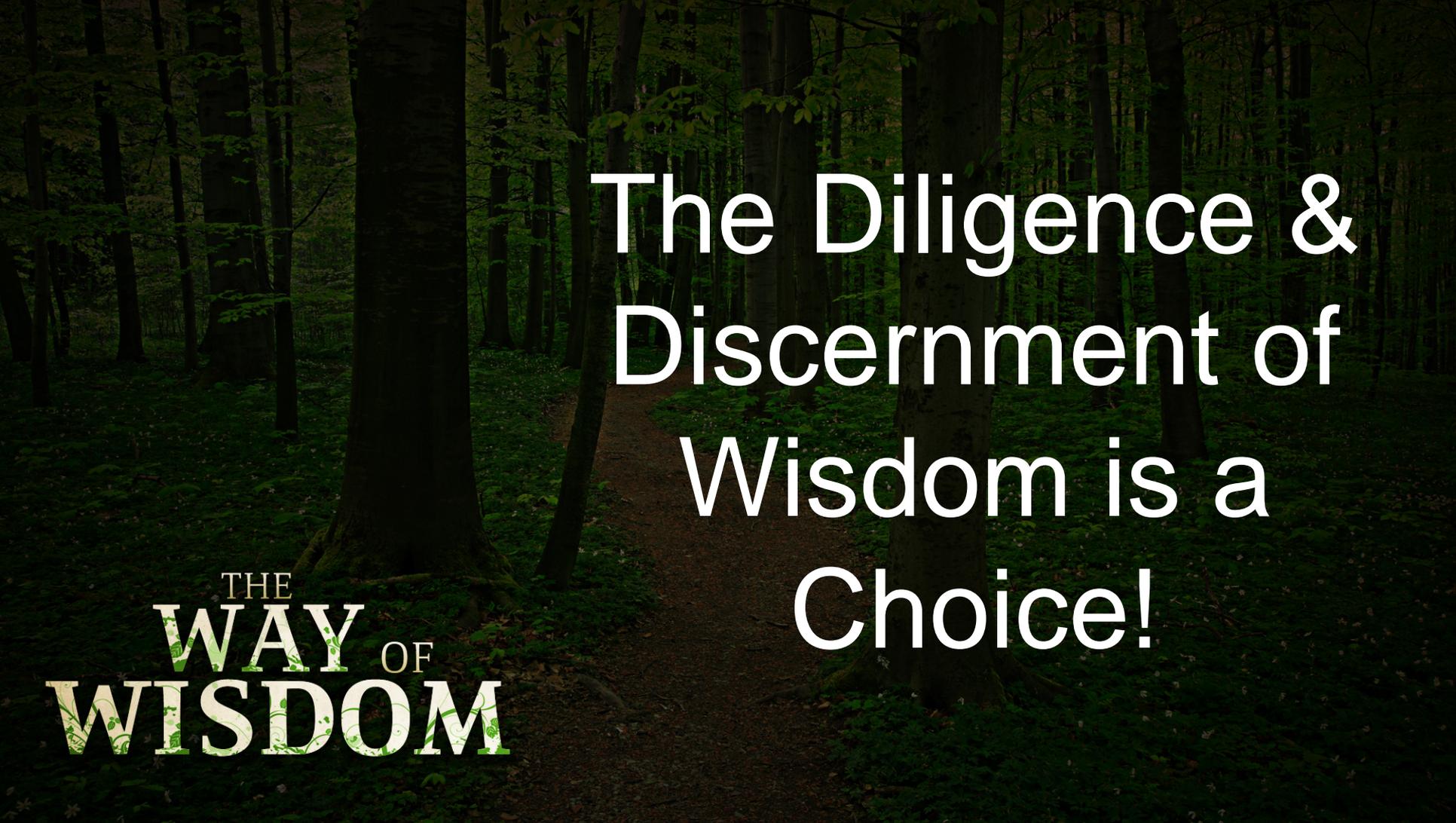
Questions Discerning Christians Ask Every Time!

- What does God's word teach me?
- Do I have all the information about a given situation
- Do I know both sides of the story?
- Am I willing to consider both sides of the story?
- Am I refusing to talk to those with whom I differ?



Questions Discerning Christians Ask Every Time!

- Is this going to be fruitful in my relationship with Christ and my brethren?
- Is this going to enable me to share the gospel with the lost?
- Is this going to help or hinder my influence in the family of God?
- Is this behavior going to hurt those who are encouraging me to serve the Lord?

A dark, atmospheric photograph of a forest path. The path is a narrow, dirt trail that winds through a dense forest of tall, thin trees. The ground is covered in green moss and fallen leaves. The lighting is dim, with some light filtering through the canopy, creating a sense of mystery and depth. The overall color palette is dominated by dark greens and browns.

The Diligence &
Discernment of
Wisdom is a
Choice!

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