

Kings & Kingdoms #3
The Pitfall of No Discernment

Word

Scripture Reference

2 Chronicles 17-20

Discussion Questions:

1. Someone said that, "Who you are today is decided by what you chose yesterday." Discernment is the ability to clearly differentiate between what is right and what is wrong. What do you think are some factors that can influence a person's discernment? Share one major life decision you have made. How did you come up with your decision?
2. Read 2 Chronicles 17-20. Jehoshaphat was a king of Judah who lived in righteously in obedience to God. In addition to knowing the importance of loving and learning the word of God, Jehoshaphat demonstrated godly leadership by living out righteously in obedience to God. As the king, he sent out people to teach the word of God (ch. 17:9). It is very important that the life Jehoshaphat lived was consistent with what was taught in the word of God to preserve his moral authority. How much importance do you give to God's word? How much time and effort do you spend in it each day? Do you intentionally and personally teach God's word to others (i.e. children)? Can you firmly attest that you are living a life consistent with what the word of God says?
3. We learn three things about discernment from our passage:
 - a. *Wise discernment must be based on truths from God's Word (ch. 18:1-13).* Instead of simply agreeing with King Ahab to go to war with him to Ramoth Gilead, King Jehoshaphat insisted to hear from a prophet of God. It is important to remember that a heart that fully trusts God will make it a priority to turn to Him first, seeking His opinion and not the majority's. God is an unchanging God and therefore His word is also unchanging. Truth does not fluctuate. What are some popular opinion today that contradicts God's word? Share an instance wherein you have based your decision on popular opinion and not from God's word. What was the outcome? How would you have changed your decision?
 - b. *Wise discernment is needed because there are lying spirits in the world (ch. 18:14-27).* Micaiah the prophet told King Ahab that lying spirits will influence false prophets in order to persuade him to make a decision that will bring disaster against him. The Bible teaches that evil or lying spirits are not the spirits of dead people, but of demons who persuade and influence people to make decisions that contradict or go against

God's desires. Lying spirits pervade this world and seeks to distract us in the decisions we make. Nevertheless, the responsibility, as well as the consequences that come with it, still lies upon the person who makes the decision. If all that we care about is getting what we want, God may allow it because we do not care about His will. Discernment is necessary, otherwise we fall upon the trap of the lies of this world. What are some of the lies this world offers? How are we often persuaded to believe those lies and make the wrong decision?

- c. *Wise discernment must lead to action on that decision (ch. 19:7, 9-10).* Even though the prophet Micaiah already revealed that going to Ramoth Gilead was not God's will, Jehoshaphat still decided to join King Ahab. King Ahab died in that battle. Despite his wrong decision in joining King Ahab, King Jehoshaphat was spared and given a second chance by God. When He got home he then urged the people to do and act upon what was right before God. Unless we act rightfully on something, head knowledge means nothing and does not do anything. Many Christians still choose to do the things that are clearly against God's ways even knowing what is right. What would you say are some reasons that some people do not let their knowledge lead to action? What happens when people do not live out what they know is right before God? How can we encourage one another to make sure that our spiritual knowledge lead to tangible actions?

Walk

King Jehoshaphat was a good and godly king because he obeyed God and walked according to His ways. He made sure that God's word was the standard to live by and even taught it to others. He sought to be wise and align his decisions based on the truth of God's word. As a result, God blessed him and established his kingdom because of his obedience. On the other hand, King Ahab depended on popular opinion and on what he wants. In turn, he was influenced by lying spirits which cost him his life. How about you? Where do you base your decisions? Are you continually growing in your knowledge of God's word? Do you examine various opinions and options based upon the truth of God's word, or are you easily persuaded by popularity or majority? Do you put your knowledge into action, or does your spiritual knowledge not really lead you to act righteously? In what area do you find it a challenge to obey God with a joyful heart? Think about these things and ask God to cultivate discernment in you as you seek to make decisions that please God.

Worship & Prayer

Dear Lord, thank You for giving us Your Word that can enable us to be wise. We are grateful that you are an unchanging God and that your truth does not change. For that, we can fully rely on what you have revealed and taught us. Help us to discern and make decisions that are consistent with Your will for our lives. May we never rely on what we want, or what the majority invites us into. Rather, make us become sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit and not give in to the lies of this world. May we experience your blessing upon us as we seek to be wise and live in obedience to Your will. In Jesus name, Amen.