

Discretion

by Andrew Murray

Andrew Murray emphasizes the vital role of discretion in the Christian life to guard against sin and maintain holiness.

Scripture: Proverbs 2:10

Topics: "Christian Living", "Discretion"

Description

Andrew Murray emphasizes the vital role of discretion in the life of a Christian, illustrating how it serves as a guard against the snares of the world and the temptations that surround us. He highlights that indiscretion can lead to significant harm, even among believers, as seen in the examples of Moses and Uzzah. Discretion not only governs our speech and listening but also influences the company we keep and the desires of our hearts. Ultimately, true discretion is rooted in a deep reliance on God, providing peace and strength as we navigate life's challenges. Murray concludes with a prayer for divine guidance to maintain a heart of prudence and righteousness.

Transcript

"For wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul, discretion shall reserve thee, understanding shall keep thee" Proverbs 2:10,11.

"My son, keep sound wisdom and discretion: so shall they be life unto thy soul" Proverbs 3:21,22.

"Ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rash" Acts 19:36.

Indiscretion is not merely the sin of the unconverted. It often causes much evil and misery among the people of God. We read of Moses, "They angered him also at the waters of Meribah, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes: because they were rebellious against his spirit, and he spake unadvisedly with his lips." So of Uzzah's touching the ark, "And God smote him there for his error" (2 Samuel 6:7).1

Discretion, and why it is so necessary, may be easily explained. When an army marches into the province of an enemy, its safety depends on the guards which are always on watch. The guards are to know and to give warning when the enemy approaches. Advance guards are sent out so that the territory and power of the enemy may be known. This prudence, which looks out beforehand and looks around, is dispensable.

The Christian lives in the province of the enemy. All that surrounds him may become a snare or an occasion for sin. Therefore his whole walk is to be carried out in a holy reserve and watchfulness so that

he may do nothing indiscreet. He watches and prays that he may not enter into temptation.² Prudence keeps guard over him.³

Discretion keeps watch over the lips. What loss many a child of God endure by thinking that if he speaks nothing wrong, he may speak what he will. He does not know how--through much speaking--the soul becomes ensnared in the distractions of the world. In the multitude of words there is not a lack of sin (Proverbs 10:19). Discretion endeavours not to speak unless it be for the glory of God and a blessing to neighbors.⁴

Discretion also keeps guard over the ear. All the news of the world comes to me through the gate of the ear--all the indiscreet speech of others--to infect me. Eagerness for news is very hurtful for the soul. Because of it, one can no longer look into one's self. One lives wholly in the world. Corinth was much more godless than Athens. But in the latter, where they "spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing" (Acts 17:21), very few were converted. Take heed, says Jesus, what ye hear.⁵

On this account, discretion keeps watch over the society in which the Christian mingles. "Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh all wisdom" (Proverbs 18:1). The child of God does not have the freedom to yield himself to the society of the world. He must know the will of his Father.⁶

Discretion keeps watch over all lawful occupations and possessions. It knows how gradually and secretly the love of money, worldly mindedness, and the secret power of the flesh, obtains the upper hand. It knows that it can never consider itself free from this temptation.⁷

And, above all, discretion keeps watch over the heart, because it is our life's fountain. Remembering the word, "he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" (Proverbs 28:26), discretion walks in deep humility, and it works out salvation with fear and trembling.⁸

What source gives the soul the power to be endlessly on its guard against the thousand dangers surrounding it on all sides? Is it not fatiguing, exhausting, and harassing to have to thus watch always, and never to be at rest in the certainty that there is no danger? No, absolutely not. Discretion brings the highest restfulness. It has its security and strength in its heavenly Keeper, who does not slumber or sleep. In confidence in Him, under the inspiration of His Spirit, discretion does its work. The Christian walks wisely. The dignity of a holy prudence adorns him in all his actions. The rest of faith, the faith that Jesus watches and guards, binds us to Him in love. Holy discretion springs, as of its own accord, from a love that would not grieve or abandon Him, from a faith that has its strength for everything in Him.

Lord my God, guard me so that I may not be indiscreet in heart. Let the prudence of the righteous always characterise me, in order that in everything I may be kept from giving offence. Amen.

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