

Now, let's come back to Proverbs 1:4 and look at the two terms that we find in vs. 4, which turn a "young man" into a "wise man."

Proverbs 1:4 To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man **knowledge** and discretion.

"Knowledge" = the education concerning your conversation, impact and influence of it on others people, your Father's business, on yourself and on your ability to go on and to become a "wise man."

But this knowledge is not limited to these things. It is also an education that convinces the son that the Father's cause is the greatest issue of all. The son will see that he is carrying the Father's name and reputation. He understands that it is through him that the operations of the Father's business will be accomplished.

Therefore, the son's education will be from this perspective. That is, the son will be taught from the standpoint that everything that he says, everything that he does, is meant to have an impact and influence. This is the issue of his "conversation."

So, it is no surprise that this is the very issue presented in Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians.

Now, let's move to the second word in Proverbs 1:4; discretion.

Proverbs 1:4 To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and **discretion**.

When you understand what discretion involves, you will also see the son's desperate need for it. It is discretion that will save the son from being victimized by the POE. Not only that, but it is discretion that provides for the grace, that operates in his functional life, to "abound more and more." And not only that, but discretion is the thing that qualifies a son for ruling and functioning in the very highest operations of his Father's business.

So let's review, the "knowledge" of Proverbs 1:4 concerns:

- Your conversation is now in heaven
- Your Father's "cause" and the "highness" of it is everything to you
- You carry the name and reputation of your Father & His business
- You now have an impact on the heavenly places
- There is a very real threat of failure

What do I mean by "threat of failure?" What constitutes "failure?"

Before we answer these questions, let me make one point clear; the entirety of the Father's business is not wrecked if a son fails here at Level 2. In other words, your failure at this point is not going to destroy the Father's business.

So, how is it that discretion is needed by the son, to keep him from failure? In order to answer this, think of this:

- The focus is not just on injuring the Father's business
- It is also upon the son, himself (i.e. his reputation, influence and impact)

At this point in his education, the son clearly:

- Sees the grandeur of his Father's business like never before

- Understands the operations and objectives of the business
- Perceives the wisdom & genius behind what his Father has done
- Takes his Father's cause to be the "high calling" of his life
- Notices the subtle opposition of the Adversary to the Father's business

Now, in Phase 2 of Level 2, the son is made aware that:

- His part is to have his conversation in heaven
- He can have an impact & influence either positively or negatively
- Everything in his life is to work toward the success of the Father's cause
- In this, the Father and the son are truly laboring together
- "Success" for the son will be the maintaining his good conversation—his good influence—his good impact and not bringing reproach or shame or disgrace upon the cause of his Father's business

Therefore, to answer those earlier questions:

- "Failure" is the issue of having his own reputation, influence, and impact ruined
- Failure is a son having his conversation ruined in the very place where the Father has designed for it to be made

And based on what we just said, the son is aware that if his conversation gets ruined, what is at stake for him, personally, is the LOSS OF REWARD in his Father's business!

You don't have to get all the way over to Level 2 doctrine to get introduced to this concept. We see the issue of reward coming up in Romans 8:16-17.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that **we may be also glorified together.**

That "glory" is a reward! We can see a furtherance of the doctrine in Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. ² I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able. ³ For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? ⁴ For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I *am* of Apollos; are ye not carnal? ⁵ Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? ⁶ I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. ⁷ So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. ⁸ Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and **every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.**

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

People have a misconception about the Judgment Seat of Christ. It comes from a lack of knowledge of sonship. In other words, they have not yet come to the very first issue in the table of contents, they have not come “to know wisdom and instruction.”

Because they do not know sonship education exists, then they do not properly apply the judgment seat of Christ, but rather they make it out to be a judgment of sins, or a judgment of earthly good deeds and bad deeds. We have been taught that at the Bema Seat, we are going to be evaluated on human good of some kind. And that is just plain wrong.

You are going to be evaluated upon: you being a son, utilizing the wisdom of your Father vs. the wisdom of this world. At that judgment, the whole issue of sonship is going to be opened up. It is going to make known who we are as sons, how we are trained, what our training accomplished on the earth, and what positions we will hold in the creature.

Just to give you a “sound-bite” understanding, you will be judged, at that judgment, for how much you operated under your Father’s wisdom which was given to you in the sonship education (i.e. the “good” of 2 Cor. 5:10). Those things you did under the wisdom of men (i.e. the “bad” of 2 Cor. 5) will not result in reward, no matter what the nature of your deed was.

The issue of reward comes up again in the book of Colossians.

Colossians 2:18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. 20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, 21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not; 22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? 23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

Colossians 3:24 Knowing that of the Lord **ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance:** for ye serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

The “wrong” mentioned here does not come up in the midst of some kind of list of sinful actions, so don’t get to thinking that it is referring to the nature of some kind of act. In other words, the “wrong” is not referring to telling an lie, or stealing or such things. It is talking about operating in your marriage (vv. 18-19) in your family (vv. 20-21) in your job (vs. 22) according to the wisdom of your Father.

Now, to tie this back in to our discussion on discretion, failure to get discretion will result in the loss of reward at the Judgment Seat.

Now that I have your attention concerning the importance of the son getting discretion, which, if it is gotten will prevent that loss of reward, let us now talk about what that discretion is.

“Discretion” = the action of separating or distinguishing; the ability to critically discern or judge or distinguish what is correct and proper, always directed by caution. Having caution guide your actions and decisions, particularly as they apply to the cause of your Father’s business is a very big issue because, an indiscretion will have devastating personal consequences.

But there is a shade of meaning with discretion that is important to know, and here it is: discretion is the English term that is used TO REGULATE THE CONDUCT OF MEN in ordinary life.

To say it another way, “discretion” is the combination of wisdom and prudence used to make judgments (judgmental decisions) with caution and circumspection (cautious attention to all the facts & circumstances in the case, and to the natural or probable consequences of a decision with a view to a correct course of conduct, or to avoid danger) in order to regulate the conduct of men.

A son in Phase 2 of Level II sonship edification desperately needs discretion because that’s the very thing that will serve to properly regulate his conduct & behavior according to all his Father has made him to be in His business. The son needs to know how to make decisions that, while they may seem to be right according to his sonship liberty, they may be entirely wrong (and/or dangerous) in light of some other facts and circumstances that now come into play.

The son needs to be able to make judgments that will avoid bringing shame and disgrace upon his Father’s name and upon his Father’s cause, especially in the arena in which there is the greatest impact of all; his conversation in the heavenly places.

Therefore, discretion describes the type of decisions you make when your REPUTATION is in view. And that’s a big thing, because we don’t talk about murder, for instance, as being an indiscretion. We reserve the term indiscretion for someone who has done something to damage their reputation.

This whole discussion is meant to make you aware of the fact that it’s in this very area (the area of making an indiscretionary decision), that the bulk of attacks and opposition from the Adversary’s PoE is going to come.

It’s going to come in the form of attacks upon your own personal, Christian, sonship integrity! (Especially as it pertains to the business of the Heavenly Father in which you and He are in partnership to get accomplished.)

Now, just to make sure that you are thinking about this all the way through, let me ask you a question. Before I ask you the question, let me set it up so you will understand what I’m after by asking this question.

As a Level 2 son, when it comes to decision-making, you really are on your own. And it is supposed to be that way. No properly functioning adult wants mommy and daddy continuing to make all their decisions for them. You learned early on that a big part of being a son is that you are being treated as an adult and you have liberty to make decisions on your own.

In fact, God treats every believer this way, whether they understand sonship or not. They don’t think about it that way, but He does. They think that He is going to guide them somehow to “give them the answer to what they are seeking for” or that God is going to use some kind of

indirect means to channel them down a certain path or that God is going to bring certain circumstances to pass in order to get them to do what He wants them to do in some area of their life. But there are a couple of problems with that.

First of all, you are never told, in your Bible, to expect those things to take place. In fact, you are told the opposite. You are told that you now have liberty as a son. That liberty sets you apart from being a child, to now being an adult. And that liberty includes the ability to make decisions on your own. That doesn't mean that God doesn't care what kind of decisions you make, but it does mean that He is going to let you make them – on your own.

You know that He doesn't mean for you to just flounder through your life, making a hodge-podge of good and bad choices and hoping everything turns out okay. He has a curriculum in His word that is designed to teach you think (and hence, make decisions), just like Him.

Since God has made every believer (in this DoG) an adopted son, then He deals with every son as an adult. So when I say that in Level 2, when you are going to be assaulted by the Adversary, mainly in the area of your decision-making (to get you to commit an indiscretion), that you are on your own to make your own decisions, that shouldn't strike you as something new or unheard of.

And just so you know, when you get ready to enter Level 3 of your education as a son, the last thing in the world that you want to have happen is for your Father to have to tell you anything. I'm not talking about some immature reaction like so many have today when they don't want anybody telling them anything. But I'm talking about the fact that you know your Father is going to tell you what to do, and you don't want Him to – because as a Level 3 son, there shouldn't be anything you would need to be told. You shouldn't need to be corrected or guided because as a Level 3 son, you can decide things in perfect accordance with your Father and His will.

And you know what the attacks of the Adversary are designed to do in Level 2; they are designed to get you to ruin your own reputation in the heavenly places. Therefore, a son, who does not acquire the “discretion” offered in Phase 2 of Level 2, runs a genuine risk of failure; of making an indiscreet decision.

Now, having said all of that, here is my question. What is that failure about? Or, I could say it this way, what would be the result of that failure?

If you fail at this point in your sonship life, your reputation will be ruined. But is that the end of it? What if someone says, “So what? My reputation is ruined, big deal.” But is that all that is affected?

If failure is a major threat to the son and discretion provides a “salvation” from that failure, what all would that failure entail? What would happen if you did ruin your reputation?

Let me anticipate an answer: perhaps you are thinking that if your reputation is ruined, then it adversely affects the Father's business.

While it is true that what you do has an influence in the operations of your Father's business, the ruining of your reputation cannot destroy the Father's business. It is not the "whole" of the Father's business that is at stake in the son's reputation.

In other words, the Father Himself is the One upon whom His business rests. If a son falls victim to the POE, then the Father's business is not brought to ruin nor does it just fall down and fail.

Let me anticipate another: if your reputation is ruined, then you no longer have an impact in the heavenly places.

It is true that your sonship integrity must have "discretion" in order to maintain your impact/influence in the heavenly places. It is also true that you are carrying your Father's name and His cause. Therefore, if you ruin your reputation, yes, it will nullify your impact in the heavenly places, but what I'm really after is this: you are not destroying the Father's business, but you are destroying your part in it.

It is in Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians that you are taught about your impact in the heavenly places and that your impact is your part of the Father's business right now while you are on this earth. And once you get to that place, success is defined as your continuing to have that impact and failure is defined as your ruining your reputation and losing that impact.

The thing that will determine that is discretion. Discretion allows the son to maintain that good reputation and good influence and good impact in the operation of his Father's business. It is at this stage that the son's thoughts change from "getting a reputation and making an impact" to "keeping that reputation intact and continuing to make an impact."

In Phase 2 of Level 2 the son is given the one thing that will allow him to be successful (to keep his reputation and impact); discretion.

Therefore, as a summary statement or working definition:

Discretion is a further development of sonship decision-making that now focuses upon the maintenance of the son's good reputation and pure conversation.

Discretion is the key to the son successfully realizing the reward of his inheritance and qualifying to manage the operations of his Father's business. Indiscretion would result in ruining his conversation and losing his reward and high position in his Father's business.

Discretion involves keen decision-making of a cautionary nature which acutely realizes that one's conversation and reputation is not only important, but it is influential.

Discretion involves one cautiously evaluating one's conduct, behavior and walk so as to avoid any disrepute/reproach coming to pass.

Discretion sees the Father's cause as being greater than himself, not in theory, but in real life, to the extent that he is willing to sacrifice himself for that cause and he is extremely desirous of maintaining his good conversation and influence in the heavenly places.

These are the kinds of things that will take place in your thinking when you get into Phase 2 of Level 2 of your education.

And just to show you how this dovetails perfectly with what happens in Israel's program, let me just show you where the doctrine begins for them as they get to Phase 2 of Level 2 of their education. Before we turn there, just think for a moment and ask yourself, based on what you already know about Phase 2's instructions, what kind of thing do you expect to find in Israel's program?

You know it won't concern the heavenly places, but the core of the matter is the same. What is your instruction in Phase 2 of Level 2 – you learned that you have a reputation in the heavenly places, and that by that reputation you can impact that realm, and that through an indiscretion you lose your reputation and, as a result, negate your impact. In a nutshell, that is what "knowledge and discretion" mean to you.

So, in Proverbs, there is a part of their education that corresponds to "knowledge and discretion."

Proverbs 22:1 **A good name** is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.

The "good name" is his reputation. And this isn't talking about just having a good name at the bank because you make all your payments on time. The impact is not about in the realm of credit and loans. In both programs, the impact is always in connection with the Father's business. And for the remnant, this impact is in connection with the Father's business on this earth, whereas ours is in the heavenly places.

Now, let's take this over to the doctrine sitting in our program. You can do this in Colossians 2. As we read this, think of what it is you are being warned about in Level 2 sonship education.

Colossians 2:4 And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. 5 For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. 6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. 8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

Paul warns them in vs. 4 not to be "beguiled" by some man's enticing words. As we have discussed before, these guys are "slick" and they know how to turn a phrase. Which is why I warned you not to get to thinking that you are invincible, because if your life turns in just the right way, if you are undergoing just the right circumstances, then you are susceptible to a cleverly turned phrase that will beguile you and deceive you.

Vs. 8 gives you another "beware" and the list of things that Paul warns about are all present in church!

- Philosophy is the wisdom of men – and churches are full of that.
- Vain deceit is the failure to rightly divide the word.
- The tradition of men is the religious traditions and trappings that appeal to our flesh and make us "feel good" about ourselves.
- The rudiments of the world is the Law.

Now look down further into the chapter.

Colossians 2:18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. 20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, 21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not; 22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? 23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

In this one, I want to point out the “worshipping of angels.” Today, angels is one of those “hot button” topics. Everybody wants to know about angels. Everybody is looking for an angel to appear and tell them something or at least they would love for that to happen. If an angel did appear, it wouldn’t matter what the angel said, they would believe it and obey it.

These are people who want to go back to being children in Israel’s program; being told things by creatures that are superior to them in knowledge, being subject to creatures who direct their actions like they are children.

Little do these people know that in this dispensation, we are supposed to be educating angels, not the other way around. Through this sonship education, you are going to judge angels. That is, they will take their direction from you, not you from them. And you should know more than any angel while you are still on this earth. You are the one with the capacity for godliness, not angels. You are the one who was adopted, not angels. You are the son who has this intimate Father/son relationship with God, not angels. You are the one being groomed for management in God’s government, not angels.

It is with the knowledge you get here – not when you get to heaven – but here, that you will run the creature and give direction to angels. If angels begin to look at you the way they did Israel under the law, then you have no reputation with them. They don’t want you to be the one over them, because you don’t even know what is going on now, let alone later in eternity when you are supposed to bring life to the creature.

Which is why God is not dispatching angels to tell you things or give you direction or intercede in your life. I’m aware of the stories of angels appearing and doing this or that, and without going into a long, drawn out explanation that would get us off track, either those things were a fabrication or they were not of God. And since Paul tells you that Satan can and will present himself as “an angel of light,” I’m going to tell you that most people wouldn’t know the difference if they saw him. Because there is only one way to discern that angel of light as to whether he truly is or is he the deceiver – and again, most people don’t know that single criterion for discerning the difference. If it’s anything connected to a miracle, then it must be of God. If it’s supernatural, then it must be of God. Forget what the word of God say, just go with the experience, for that is exactly what your adversary wants. He loves those gullible, ignorant (and I mean that in the true sense of the word, not as a slander), easily deceived people who have no idea what God is doing in this dispensation of grace.

Well, that's a long diatribe to say that Paul is talking about his very thing in Colossians but he is saying that if you get swept up in this, you will lose your reward! No, you will never lose your reward/inheritance that you have **in God**; you are always, and automatically upon faith in Jesus, an "heir of God." But you can lose your reward that you have **in Christ** which is your "joint-heir" inheritance.

Just as an aside, the things at the end of the Colossians passage are perfectly logical and natural in religion. I'm talking about "being subject to ordinances, touch not, taste not, handle not..." To the normal saint, all these things make perfect sense, but to a properly educated and edified son, these are un-natural and illogical.

But just to get back on track in our examination of discretion, let me read you the work that George Crabbe did in his book on English synonyms.

He lists judgment, discretion and prudence and then he writes this:

"These terms are all employed to express the various modes of practical wisdom which serve to regulate the conduct of men in ordinary life. Judgment is the faculty which enables a person to distinguish right and wrong in general. Discretion looks to the present; prudence to the future. Discretion looks to the moral fitness of the thing as well as the consequences which may follow from it."

And in the sense we are looking at it, discretion is what allows us to think about a certain action, statement or decision and be apprised of whether that is the wise thing to do. In line with this is the subject matter of Ephesians.

Ephesians 5:15 See then that ye **walk circumspectly**, not as fools, but as wise,
¹⁶ Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord *is*.

Walking circumspectly is an aspect of discretion. That use of circumspectly is such a great word. It speaks to the caution that you should have in your walk (conduct/conversation!). And if you recall, I told you in earlier lesson that this sonship curriculum would allow to purchase some things. Well, vs. 16 says "redeeming the time..."

Now, it did not say you can "buy time." It says that you can buy (redeem) "the time." And that "the" makes a difference. I'll let you play around with that for a while before I tell you about it.

But, to get back on track, what you are seeing is that Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians contain information that enables the son to regulate his behavior, properly exercise self-control, and act with caution as to how his actions impact his reputation.