

Wisdom and Discernment

***Key Verse: “Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another.”
—Proverbs 25:9***

***Selected Scripture:
Proverbs 25:1-28***

FOR US TO UNDERSTAND

the meaning of these words, we must first realize that tradition had long taught that neighbors should be loved and enemies hated. This all changed during the First Advent of our Lord. The Great Teacher said that enemies should be loved and

blessed, even though they may cause us persecution and even injury. Our Lord Jesus instructed those who would be his followers to “love thy neighbour.” (Matt. 5:43; 22:39) This does not merely refer to the people who dwell around us in our community, although we are to live our lives in harmony with others.

Remember that we are told to “live peaceably with all men.” (Rom. 12:18) A neighbor, as used here, is one who is near to us, and who shares our sympathies, sentiments, and our faith. We have been admonished to live according to the lines marked out by the Holy Spirit through the words of Jesus and the apostles. “Let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” (Gal. 6:10) We should then desire with our whole heart to do this without limitation in word and in deed. We are to be kind and considerate of others in all of the affairs of life. If we are doing this

daily we have the Master's spirit in us. It is not enough to start out with making a full consecration, but we should continue faithful, and "be not weary in well doing."—II Thess. 3:13

If anyone can dispel the darkness of ignorance and let in light, he will surely do great good. No other work could be so important as to make known to others God's character, plan, and will concerning us. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:14,16) For this cause, or purpose, we were appointed by our Father to "preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom. 10:15) All who we come in contact with should recognize that we are children of God, desiring to show love, kindness, and a sincere consideration for the welfare of others. In so doing, we will then be copying our Heavenly Father's character. This disposition will compel us to do good to everybody. It also implies that we are not to be negligent of those in our own households. We will then give a kind word to those who need it, and display a good character in both the small and great matters of life.

However, while we are "to do good to all men," we are to think especially of those who God has called out of darkness into his wonderful family. This involves all those who have been invited to become members of the household of faith, and have the opportunity of serving the body of Christ at this time, for "the body is not one member, but many." (I Cor. 12:14) They should always be first in our thoughts and prayers. Every service gladly and lovingly rendered to the saints is rendered unto God's glory. We should then be ready to lay down our very lives for the brethren. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."—John 15:13 ■