

THE BASIC PROBLEM
(Hebrews 5:11-14)

Introduction—SOLOMON’S Discernment (1 Kings 3:7-13)

- A. He requested an “UNDERSTANDING heart”
- B. He required the ability to “DISCERN between GOOD and EVIL”
- C. It resulted in the ability to “JUDGE this great people of YOURS”

I. Background of Hebrews 5:11-14

- A. PERSECUTION was intensifying
 - 1. Second-generation Christians were WAVERING
 - 2. Some were calling for a return to JUDAISM
- B. Hebrews was written for a dual purpose
 - 1. To remind believers of the SUPERIORITY of CHRIST (1:1-4)
 - 2. To call believers to a STEADFAST FAITH (2:1)
- C. The writer expresses desire to pursue a CHALLENGING argument
 - 1. Doubted their ability to DIGEST the “SOLID FOOD”
 - 2. Identified the problem as being with the HEARER, not the MATERIAL

II. Described Them as Having Become “DULL of HEARING” (5:11-12)

- A. Describes a person who is SLOTHFUL (cf. 6:12)

- B. Means “one who is SLUGGISH, indolent, LAZY, or slow”
 - C. Characterized by “a HABITUAL state of lazy nonchalance about the FAITH”
(Jay Adams, *A Call to Discernment*, p. 60)
 - D. Indicates a lack of ABILITY for which the hearer is CULPABLE (5:12)
- III. Stated the Need for TRAINING to become HABITUAL (5:14)
- A. Ability to distinguish must be LEARNED
 - B. Ability to distinguish MUST be learned
 - 1. Takes TIME
 - 2. Takes purposeful EFFORT
- IV. Called Them to MATURITY in Handling the “WORD of RIGHTEOUSNESS” (5:13)
- A. The phrase means both that which CODIFIES righteousness and that which PRODUCES righteousness
 - 1. Learning from LIFE EXPERIENCES produces DULLNESS—there is NO AUTHORITY
 - 2. Learning from FOLLOWING GOD’S WORD produces DISCERNMENT—there is ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY
 - B. Applying the principle to SPIRITUAL discernment
 - 1. TRUE teachers(ings) must be distinguished from FALSE teachers(ings)
 - 2. The ONLY STANDARD is SCRIPTURE (Deut. 13:1-4)