

STUDY 8

Exodus 18:21

Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

Read the context: Exodus 18:1-27

What particular responsibilities is Moses' father-in-law suggesting Moses delegate to others?

What qualifications did Jethro say to use as the criteria for determining if they were "able"?

Why do you think he listed "fear God" first? In what ways would that affect their judgment? What would it help to protect against?

It is possible that these 3 qualifications are not all on equal footing, but rather that the last two help to define the first one. Why might that be the case?

What does it mean to be a person of truth?

Read Proverbs 2:6-8. Another translation of "those who walk uprightly" in verse 7 is "those who walk in integrity." Compare this with Proverbs 10:9 and Proverbs 11:3. Where there is no integrity, there is perversity or a twisting of sound judgment and truth. The definition of integrity is: *"the quality or state of being of sound moral principle; uprightness, honesty, and sincerity."* A good synonym for integrity is honesty, and in the Bible the idea of integrity is often translated "uprightly."

Why would it be important for a judge to hate covetousness?

Look up the following references re: covetousness. What words are used to illustrate or convey the concept of covetousness?

1. Amos 5:13-14: If a judge is willing to take bribes, what happens to justice?
2. Isaiah 33:15-16: What does a person who walks and speaks uprightly do or not do?
3. I Samuel 8:3: Why did the Israelites not want Samuel's sons to judge them?
4. I Samuel 12:3: What does Samuel say he did not do? Notice his willingness to stand before God in these matters, a clear sign that he was walking in the fear of the Lord.
5. I Timothy 6:3-5: Notice especially verse 5 that mentions both truth and the idea of covetousness. List the character qualities these people have. What is to be our attitude toward them (end of verse 5)?

In several places Paul describes the kind of leader he was toward those with whom he shared the Gospel.

From the following verses list the ways Paul related to people. How is the concept of the fear of the Lord woven into his thoughts and lifestyle?

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1. II Corinthians 4:2
2. II Corinthians 5:9-11
3. I Thessalonians 2:3-12

Finally, read Matthew 6:24. What 2 masters does Jesus say are opposing to one another? What verbs are used to reveal how we feel toward the 2 masters? How does this relate to the verse for today and to the fear of the Lord?

Summarize what you've learned about the fear of the Lord from this lesson.

Pray for the leaders who are over you – your husband or father, church leaders, community/national/world leaders that the 3 qualities mentioned in this verse would define who they are, how they lead, and the decisions they make.