



Power From on High

Series: Power From On High

Title: The Art of Godly Shrewdness

Lesson: 129

Text: Assorted Texts

Date: May 3, 2026

1. Encouragement and comfort often comes after difficulties.

There is a foundational rule for biblical interpretation.

A text has one primary meaning yet it carries many different applications.

Every passage of Scripture has a single fixed meaning that we call **authorial intent**.

Authorial intent is the specific truth the writer intended to communicate to a particular audience.

Every passage has one objective meaning anchored in the author's original intent. A meaning that remains steadfast regardless of who is reading it.

2. We should strive for holy _____.

Bible scholars and commentators have long debated whether Paul was ethical in his approach.

Paul's approach aligned with God's will for three reasons.

1. Paul's statement was factually _____.

2. Jesus _____ Paul's witness in Jerusalem.

3. Scripture _____ us to be shrewd.

Matthew 10:16 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves.

"Behold" - Interjection

"shrewd" as serpents

"serpents" (snakes)

"innocent as doves"

In the Hebrew Scriptures there is an entire genre of writing dedicated to Wisdom literature called Proverbs

Proverbs 1:4 To give prudence to the naive, To the youth knowledge and discretion,

Proverbs 8:5 “O naive ones, understand prudence; And, O fools, understand wisdom.

Proverbs 14:15 The naive believes everything, But the sensible man considers his steps.

Proverbs 22:3 The prudent sees the evil and hides himself, But the naive go on, and are punished for it.

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?”

“crafty “ - [‘ā·rûm]

“ _____ ”

“Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures”

The connection helps us in two ways:

**1. It _____ us from being naïve
and misled by blind optimism.**

2. It _____ the trait of shrewdness.

What does this shrewdness actually look like when it's lived out?

Luke 16:1–8 Now He was also saying to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and this manager was reported to him as squandering his possessions. 2 “And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an accounting of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’”

3 “The manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg. 4 ‘I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the management people will welcome me into their homes.’

5 “And he summoned each one of his master’s debtors, and he began saying to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ 6 “And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ 7 “Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’

8 “And his master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly;

8a for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light.

**We should be as I _____ and
_____ in spiritual matters as the
world is in its earthly pursuits.**

Obvious examples of shrewdness:

1. The prophet Nathan - 2 Samuel 12

2. Abigail the wife of Nabal - 1 Samuel 25

3. King David - 1 Samuel 21:10–15

1 Samuel 21:10–15 Then David arose and fled that day from Saul, and went to Achish king of Gath.

11 But the servants of Achish said to him, “Is this not David the king of the land? Did they not sing of this one as they danced, saying, ‘Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands’?”

12 David took these words to heart and greatly feared Achish king of Gath.
13 So he disguised his sanity before them, and acted insanely in their hands, and scribbled on the doors of the gate, and let his saliva run down into his beard.

14 Then Achish said to his servants, “Behold, you see the man behaving as a madman. Why do you bring him to me? 15 “Do I lack madmen, that you have brought this one to act the madman in my presence? Shall this one come into my house?”

4. Jesus Christ - Matthew 22:15–22

Matthew 22:15–22 Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said. 16 And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any. 17 “Tell us then, what do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?”

18 But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, “Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites?

19 “Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax.” And they brought Him a denarius.

20 And He said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” 21 They said to Him, “Caesar’s.” Then He said to them, “Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things that are God’s.” 22 And hearing this, they were amazed, and leaving Him, they went away.

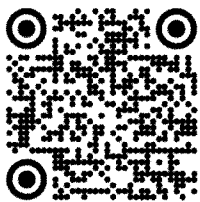
Implications

1. Shrewdness is right when it seeks _____ purposes and functions with Godly _____.

2. Shrewdness is wrong when it seeks _____ gain, operates by _____ and compromises _____.

Discussion Guide

1. Why does “shrewdness” feel uncomfortable or even unspiritual to many Christians today?
2. How does understanding “one meaning but many applications” shape the way we approach Matthew 10:16 and Genesis 3:1?
3. What does it practically look like to be “shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves” at the same time?
4. In what ways might we be acting lackadaisical toward eternal things while the world is strategic about temporary ones?
5. How can we tell the difference between holy shrewdness and sinful manipulation in our own decisions?



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ANSWERS: shrewdness, true, affirmed, commands, Septuagint, protects, redeems, intentional, fervent, God’s, integrity, selfish, deception, truth