



STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Chapter 1 Shrewd and Innocent – The Introduction

What did Jesus mean when he told his disciples to be shrewd?
Read Matthew 10:16.

What did Jesus mean when he told his disciples to be innocent?

Jesus says we should be both Shrewd and Innocent — both at the same time — not shrewd and corrupt in some situation, or naive and blameless in others. What is the difficulty in being both shrewd and innocent?

Describe your understanding of the differences between the spiritual and physical worlds. Are they connected? If so, how are they connected and how do they interact?

When we do something in the physical world, does it affect the spiritual world?
Read Matthew 26: 31-40 and 1 Corinthians 9:10

Would you say there is a disconnect in your mind between your world of faith and your world of work? Describe it.

If it is human nature that causes us to do wrong things, such as acting worldly, selfish or greedy, then what do we do about our human nature?

What does it mean to be free? Have you ever experienced freedom from guilt - real moral guilt? How about guilt others have imposed on you from their own perspective – false guilt? Can you achieve true freedom from both. If so, how?

Write down 2 things you are going to do before the next meeting because of this discussion today. Are you willing to talk about these personal things in the group? If so, under what conditions?

Part One
Simple Philosophy — Looking at the Forest from 30,000 feet

Chapter 2
The Naturals

What are you - a Who, What, When, Where, Why, How or a How much person? Which of these is your favorite “existential” question? (An existential question is simply a question about your existence. There is no right answer here.)

Have you ever seriously pondered the big question: “Why am I here?”

What does answering the question “Why” give you?

Have you ever had to do something – not knowing the reason why it needed to be done? Did you do it? How did it make you feel?

Do you believe all humans have a common sense of right and wrong? Where do you think this sense comes from?

Can science alone tell us what is right or wrong — can it give us a moral code to live by?

Can you relate to the Naturals view of the world – a closed universe?

Have you ever had a personal “existential” crisis as Collier did?

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Chapter 3

The Spirituals

Can you make a reasonable argument for God's existence? Give it.

Can you make a reasonable argument for God not existing? Give it.

Which case would you stake your life on?

Can you make a case for God revealing himself to the world?

Can you make a case for God revealing himself through scripture / The Holy Bible?

What is the difference between scientific evidence and legal evidence?

Can we know why God made everything – the universe, the earth, us?

Why do you think we are on this earth – why do we exist?

What are the reasons theologians give for why we exist?

Why do you think God loves us?

Have you ever had someone love you unconditionally? How did this make you feel? How did it make you want to respond to them?

What hard and brutally honest questions do you have for God? Where will you get the answers?

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Chapter 4

Why do we work? Meaning or Mere Happiness

Do you agree that happiness is the result of low expectations?

What is the motto of an Epicurean?

What is the motto of a Utilitarian?

Do you work to “Live it Up” or “Live to Work?”

What is the problem with these two views of the world and work?

What are the unintended consequences of the Epicurean and Utilitarian world views?

Do you believe life is short or eternal? What are the ramifications of and “life is eternal” world view?

How do you know what God wants you to do? Is there a key, a spiritual on/off switch, that should be switched before you can know? What is this switch? Read Romans 12:1-2.

Have you ever known exactly what God wanted you to do? Did you do it? How did that make you feel?

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Chapter 5

Why do we work? The Other Great Commission

Why do the “Work of Evangelize” people go to work? What motivates them? Do you agree?

Why do the “Work as a Commission” people go to work? What motivates them? Do you agree?

Are these two views of work in conflict with each other?

Do you think one view more important than the other? Can you make a biblical defense for your position?

Which type of person are you: “Work of Evangelize” or “Work as a Commission” or both?

Do you agree about the church “over-spiritualizing” things?

Think of 2 ways to be “salt and light” at your work tomorrow.

Chapter 6

Business vs Godliness

Does someone who loves God have a competitive disadvantage to someone who doesn't?

What kind of business are you in? What is the bottom line, the nature of your business? Manufacturing? Service?

What would happen if your client didn't desire your product or service, or he didn't have anything that you desired to trade for it?

What makes profit immoral, moral and amoral?

What does it mean to be Godly?

What is God like? What does he delight in?

What's the difference between Grace and Mercy? Why is it important?

Do you do what God wants because you have to or because you want to? Which is best?

How do we serve God and not serve money?

Is Godliness profitable?

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Part Two — Practicality — Among the Trees and Watching for Wolves

Chapter 7 Shrewd and Innocent – The Important Details

What does it mean to be a person of integrity?

Why is it easy to just “be who you are” and act that way, and why is it hard to be and act like someone you are not?

Can God treat different people differently (punishment and blessings) and still be consistent in his character?

What does it mean to be wise?

What does it mean to be shrewd?

How are Paul, David and Jesus examples of shrewdness?

Can you think of other examples of biblical and non-biblical shrewd behavior?

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Chapter 8

Wealth, Ownership and Choice

Is it ok to be wealthy?

Do we have anything to do with earning or gaining wealth?

What does God think of wealth?

How can wealth give you a false sense of identity? Can you think of someone like this?

How can wealth give you a false sense of security? Can you think of someone like this?

When are you wealthy? How much does it take?

What do you actually own? How do you know you own it?

What is the relationship between ownership and authority?

How do you treat possessions differently when you are a steward and not the owner?

Do you spend or invest? Do you agree that there is no such thing as spending — only investing?

When Paul talks about the “life that is true life,” what does he mean?

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Chapter 9

Greed, Self Interest and Desire

Are you greedy?

How do you define Greed?

What is wrong with self-interest? When you act with self-interest, does it automatically make you selfish?

Do you always and only do what you want?

How can self-interest be a Godly trait?

How is greed idolatry?

How can you tell if you have an idol?

Name the three lusts / strong desires? Can you put every possible "sin" into these categories?

What is the fourth lust / strong desire and how does it transform the other three? Can you think of an example in your own life?

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Chapter 10

Money, Leverage and Tools

Do you use cash anymore? To purchase what?

Did you learn anything new by reviewing the history of money?

What is the value of our money based upon?

Why do you think money is mentioned more in scripture than faith and prayer combined?

What does Jesus mean when he says, "...for where you treasure is, there your heart is also?"

Is it ok to give nothing to the church if you don't want to?

What problem did Jesus have with the money changers and tradesmen in the Temple?

How is money a tool to increase productivity?

Why is money a root of all sorts of evil?

Is there anything morally wrong with money?

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Chapter 11

Sales, Marketing and Trust

Do you think it's ok to lie if you were put in a life threatening situation and your motives were altruistic?

Would Jesus ever have been put in the same situation? Would he lie?

Do you know someone you trust completely? Why? What is special about them?

Why is deception worse than lying?

What erodes trust? Has anyone ever treated you in a way that caused you to distrust them?

Can you deceive without saying anything at all?

Would you tell the new customer about the 50% discount across the street?

How do you resolve conflicts between what's right and wrong? What about conflicts between two rights?

Do you trust scripture? What would happen if you lost that trust?

What are sales and marketing – at their nature?

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Chapter 12

Negotiations, Price and Values

What does what we buy say about who we are? Individually and as a society?

Have you ever haggled over a price? Give your example.

How do we decide how much something is worth?

How do “you” decide how much you are worth?

How does your employer decide how much “you” are worth?

Is there anything morally wrong with negotiating?

What moves something into the world of morality? Is it our actions or our motives? Explain.

Have you ever negotiated with God - over your eternal destiny or other things? How did it go? How did grace have a part in it?

Do you negotiate differently with people you know than those you don't know (wicked or pure)? Is this Godly?

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Chapter 13

Competition, Winning and Contentment

What are the three elements required before competition can occur?

How would you compete against your enemy?

How would you compete against your loved one?

Is competition right for all situations?

Can you say you are content in all things like Paul? What things are in your way of contentment? What creates contentment?

Do you compete mainly to win, grow or for show? In Sport? In Business?

How many items can you juggle and have peace? What can be let go? What are your priorities? What are God's priorities?

Do you compete for Godliness? Who with? What is the goal?

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Chapter 14

Risk, Insurance and Faith

When does risk taking turn into gambling?

What risks are you taking when you take a job?

Does it take more faith or less faith to do something very risky?

What is the difference between the world's view of faith and the biblical view of faith?

What does it mean to "tempt God?"

What should we do to cover our risks? How does playing the "what if" game help?

Even though we should be wise in our behavior and sometimes insure against risk, what should we never forget about God?

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Chapter 15

Debt, Lending and Patience

What is the difference in ancient lending practices and the modern debt system?

What are the problems with debt? Biblical and practical?

Is the Bible against lending?

What does the Bible say about charging interest?

What is usury? When does interest become usury?

What is real debt and when is lending as a partnership?

What is the moral problem with debt?

When is debt “tempting God?”

Why do we go into debt?

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Chapter 16

Employers, Employees and Servanthood

Have you read the Parable of the Shrewd Manager before? Does it bother you? If so, what bothers you about it? What do you like about it?

Are slaves the best biblical equivalent to today's employees?

How was slavery different in biblical times?

Why do employees exist? What does this say about the relationship between employees and employers?

What do slaves and masters have in common?

How was Jesus a good example of a servant leader?

Does your boss brag on you for being a Godly worker?

Do your employees brag on you for being a Godly boss?

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Chapter 17

While the Master is away

Do you agree with Pascal that everyone has a “God-shaped vacuum” that longs to be filled?

What is a parable and why did Jesus use them?

In the Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids, who are the players and who do they represent?

What is the main point of the Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids?

In the Parable of the Talents, who are the players and who do they represent?

What is the main point of the Parable of the Talents?

Is this parable about abilities / talents or about how we use God’s investments in them?

In the story about the sheep and goats, who are the players and who do they represent?

Do you understand the connection between the spiritual and physical world in this story?

Do you think Jesus put these three parables together on purpose? If so, to teach us what?

After reading and discussing all these chapters, how should we live now?

Write down 2 things you are going to do because of this discussion today.

OTHER QUESTIONS:

Should you think of additional study questions, please email them to MarshHillPublishing@gmail.com and they will be considered in future edits.