

LoveWell Ministries Bible Study



LOVEWELL MINISTRIES
LOVE. DISCIPLE. REPEAT.

Discernment Part 1 (practical application in our everyday lives)

Note: It is recommended to have ample time to complete this study without being rushed.

I. In this Bible study you'll be looking at discernment, what it is, how it differs from judgment, why it's important as a believer to use it, and how to practically apply it in your everyday life. To be able to discern what is false, you need to know what is true. Take some time right now to pause and invite the Holy Spirit in to guide your thoughts and feelings as you go through this study. Ask the Lord to reveal His truth to you and ask Him to help you understand what discernment is and why it's important for you as a disciple of Christ. Just sit in this space for a few minutes as God reveals Himself to you.

II. What is discernment?

- According to [Spiritual Gifts Test \(kodachrome.org\)](http://kodachrome.org), discernment is “the special ability God gives to some to know with assurance whether certain behavior or teaching is from God, Satan, human error, or human power. The divine enablement to distinguish between truth and error, to discern the spirits; differentiating between good and evil, right and wrong.”
- **Read Hebrews 5:11-14**, and use the space provided to write out what God is saying to you about discernment...

III. How does discernment differ from judgement?

- **Read 1 Corinthians 5:11-13** and answer the following:
As a believer and disciple of Christ, who are you to judge and why?
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- You are not the judge of others, but you are called to judge the actions of others who claim to be believers. No one other than God Himself is to judge whether someone is a true believer and has received salvation. You are not to judge people's character, as only God is able to see the heart. You are only called to judge actions according to God's word (also known as sin).
 - **Read Matthew 7:1-5** and answer the following:
According to Jesus, when are we able to judge the actions of other believers?
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IV. Why is discernment important?

- The New Testament is full of warnings about false teachings – “Do not be led astray...”, “...false prophets will arise...”, “...don’t follow strange teachings...”, “For many deceivers have gone out into the world...”, “For certain people have crept in unnoticed...”.
- Passages for further reading after this Bible study on discernment:
Matthew 7:15, Ezekiel 13, Matthew 24:23-25, 2 Peter 3:3, Jude 1:17-18
- Books in the Bible about discernment written specifically to combat false teachers:
Galatians, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, Jude
- Matthew 24:24 (ESV) says, “For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.” Jesus is revealing that it’s not just non-believers who will be led astray, but Christians, too. This is why you need to be vigilant!
- Discernment is important so you don’t let the enemy claim a foothold in your life, and so that you are following God’s way and not being deceived. To be discerning is to pull out the truth when it’s mixed with lies. Therefore, to be able to recognize what is false, we need to know what is truth.

V. What is truth? What is good?

- **Read John 8:31-47** and consider the following:
V31 – Abide in God’s word (Bible) and know the truth; Jesus’ word/Bible is truth.
V37 – Jesus is telling the Jews they are not *truly* His disciples because they seek to kill him because his word finds no place in them. Therefore, even though they think they are under God, they are actually obeying their father the devil. (V41)
V40 – Jesus speaks the truth from God.
V44 - Jesus goes on to describe Satan, and how he does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Jesus says that when the devil lies, he speaks from his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. So we learn, Jesus, God, and the Word are the truth, and Satan is the antagonist to those. Satan is not truth. Satan is a liar.
V47 – We are of God if we hear the words of God, otherwise, we are not of God.
*Key takeaway: Those who think they believe and are truly following Jesus may actually be deceived and following the enemy. Could this be you?
- **Pause and pray.** Ask God to reveal any areas in your life or belief where you are being deceived by the scheming of the enemy. Let God know why this is important to you and why you need His help. Lean not on your own understanding, but on the truth of God (Proverbs 3:5-6).

VI. **Read John 14:6,13,16** and answer the following:

- How will you know what is true?

- Do you think there's a difference between having the Holy Spirit in you and being led by the Holy Spirit? Why or why not?

VII. Read Matthew 7:15-20

- In this passage, Jesus reveals the steps for discernment. Step one is to weigh it against God's Word (Jesus and the Bible) to decide if it's true, and step two is to look at what kind of fruit it bears. Keep in mind that Godly fruit and worldly fruit are very different, and the enemy is always trying to deceive you.

VIII. Read Galatians 5:16-26 & Ephesians 5:1-14 and answer the following:

- What descriptive words and/or things do these passages use to identify "good" fruit?

- What descriptive words and/or things do these passages use to identify "bad" fruit?

- Read the following passages and see the practical application of identifying "bad" fruit:

Ephesians 5:10-13 things done in secret, keeping things in the dark, "let's just keep this between us"
2 Peter 2:3 greed, focused on money, the love of money, chasing money and numbers and selfish gain
Jude 1:16 grumblers and malcontents = dissatisfied or rebellious, follow own sinful desires, loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage or advance agendas and control outcomes, favoritism to those who can do something for you
Jude 1:19 cause divisions, worldly people, led by self rather than Holy Spirit
Others to consider guilt, shame, oppression, chaos, control, controlling narratives

IX. Read 2 Corinthians 11:14 and answer the following:

- How can bad fruit look like good fruit?



X. Answer the following:

- How can you identify deception and lies in your walk with Christ?

- How can you practically apply using discernment in your everyday life?

- Write out areas in your life where you need to use discernment (i.e., music, Halloween, social media)

XI. Spend some time in prayer asking God to reveal more areas where you need to use discernment.