**Discernment, How to get it, Pt. 3**

*Various passages*

**Context**

Paul would remind us that we are to be craftsmen who rightly handles the Word of Truth (AKA the Scriptures).

**2 Timothy 2:15-16**—*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.*

It is important because the truth is what is from God and what saves. It is only through His truth and His work that we are justified, sanctified, and have the hope of glory. It contains all we need for godliness.

**2 Peter 1:3**—*seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.*

**2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13-14**—*But realize this, that in the last days difficult [dangerous deadly, threatening] times [Kairos, not chronos] will come.****2****For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,* ***3****unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,****4****treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,****5****holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these. …****13****But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.****14****You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them,*

There is a need for every generation and every believer to handle the word accurately because we are living in dangerous times. We know that the greatest spiritual danger that exists is the danger of deception. The lack of discernment on spiritual matters is deadly. And, the only spiritual truth we have is scripture.

The last days were initiated by the coming of the Messiah. Increased deceptions comes because the full truth was given and found in Jesus Christ. The revelation unfolding did not go from error to truth; it went from incomplete to complete.

**Hebrews 1:1-3**—*God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,****2****in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.****3****And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*

**Hebrews 11:39-40**—*And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive [*[z](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=heb+11&version=NASB1995#fen-NASB1995-30212z)*]what was promised,****40****because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.*

As we move closer to the end of the end times, things will go from bad to worse. We live in a time where it is worse than it has been throughout human history. Recognizing that it will get worse—greater, more sophisticated and in multiple ways.

**2 Timothy 4:1-4**—*I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:****2****preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.****3****For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,****4****and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.*

The primary text:

**1 Thessalonians 5:19-22***—Do not quench the Spirit;****20****do not despise prophetic utterances.****21****But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good;****22****abstain from every form of evil.*

**Discernment**

1. **Definition:**
2. It is the ability and skill in distinguishing truth from error—including but not limited to half truths

**2 Timothy 1:14**—*Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.*

**1 Timothy 6:20-21**—*O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge”—****21****which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith.*

1. *Diakrinō (Greek)* and *bin (Hebrew*)—(used some 250 times) understand, discern, distinguish; “space between something”; literally an interval.
2. Christians ought to be able to distinguish between what is Godly and what is worldly; separation between the two

**Matthew 16:1-3**—*The Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Jesus, they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven.****2****But He replied to them, “When it is evening, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.’****3****And in the morning, ‘There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.’ Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times?*

1. God is honored when we believe Him
   1. He has communicated in His Word
   2. Belief is always demonstrated in our thinking and actions

**Colossians 1:9-10**—*For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,****10****so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;*

1. **How do I get it?**
2. Desire/passion

***Proverbs 2:1-7****—My son, if you will receive my words  
And treasure my commandments within you,****2****Make your ear attentive to wisdom,  
Incline your heart to understanding;****3****For if you cry for discernment,  
Lift your voice for understanding;****4****If you seek her as silver  
And search for her as for hidden treasures;****5****Then you will discern the fear of the Lord  
And discover the knowledge of God.****6****For the Lord gives wisdom;  
From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.****7****He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;  
He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,*

***Job 28:1-28****—“Surely there is a mine for silver  
And a place where they refine gold.****2****“Iron is taken from the dust,  
And copper is smelted from rock.****3****“Man puts an end to darkness,  
And to the farthest limit he searches out  
The rock in gloom and deep shadow.****4****“He sinks a shaft far from habitation,  
Forgotten by the foot;  
They hang and swing to and fro far from men.****5****“The earth, from it comes food,  
And underneath it is turned up as fire.****6****“Its rocks are the source of sapphires,  
And its dust contains gold.****7****“The path no bird of prey knows,  
Nor has the falcon’s eye caught sight of it.****8****“The proud beasts have not trodden it,  
Nor has the fierce lion passed over it.****9****“He puts his hand on the flint;  
He overturns the mountains at the base.****10****“He hews out channels through the rocks,  
And his eye sees anything precious.****11****“He dams up the streams from flowing,  
And what is hidden he brings out to the light.*

### *The Search for Wisdom Is Harder*

***12****“But where can wisdom be found?  
And where is the place of understanding?****13****“Man does not know its value,  
Nor is it found in the land of the living.****14****“The deep says, ‘It is not in me’;  
And the sea says, ‘It is not with me.’****15****“Pure gold cannot be given in exchange for it,  
Nor can silver be weighed as its price.****16****“It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir,  
In precious onyx, or sapphire.****17****“Gold or glass cannot equal it,  
Nor can it be exchanged for articles of fine gold.****18****“Coral and crystal are not to be mentioned;  
And the acquisition of wisdom is above that of pearls.****19****“The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it,  
Nor can it be valued in pure gold.****20****“Where then does wisdom come from?  
And where is the place of understanding?****21****“Thus it is hidden from the eyes of all living  
And concealed from the birds of the sky.****22****“Abaddon and Death say,  
‘With our ears we have heard a report of it.’*

***23****“God understands its way,  
And He knows its place.****24****“For He looks to the ends of the earth  
And sees everything under the heavens.****25****“When He imparted weight to the wind  
And meted out the waters by measure,****26****When He set a limit for the rain  
And a course for the thunderbolt,****27****Then He saw it and declared it;  
He established it and also searched it out.****28****“And to man He said, ‘Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;  
And to depart from evil is understanding.’”*

1. **Application**: we should want wisdom and discernment the way people want silver, gold, and precious jewels. Do you?
2. Greater discernment always leads to greater worship
   1. Greater understanding of the truth leads to greater response to God
   2. Shallow understanding of God is shallow worship; rich and full understanding of God leads to greater worship
3. It also leads to greater impact of your life and testimony
   1. When you believe God at His Word and act on it, His blessing comes

**Matthew 6:33-34**—*But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.* ***34****“So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

* 1. When we vacillate on the truth and question the veracity and authority of His Word, we cut ourselves off from the source of wisdom
  2. When we doubt His word, functionally we are arrogant and full of pride.
  3. In so doing, we are opposed to God

**James 4:1-10***—What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members?****2****You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.****3****You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.****4****You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.****5****Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: “He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us”?****6****But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, “God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”****7****Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.****8****Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.****9****Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom.****10****Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.*

(Cf. **1 Peter 5:5-6**)

1. Pray
   1. Ask God to show you the truth
   2. Ask God to reveal the wisdom to you as you study His Word
2. Make friends of discerning people
   1. God the Spirit gives gifts to His own

**1 Corinthians 12:4-11**—*Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.****5****And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord.****6****There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.****7****But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.****8****For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;****9****to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,****10****and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues.****11****But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.*

* 1. Discerning gifted people can be a great resource
  2. They can address heresies and theological errors
  3. Follow their lead; model their lives

**Hebrews 5:13-14**—*For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.****14****But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.*

1. Depend on the Holy Spirit to guide and instruct

**1 John 2:20-21, 27-29**—*But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.****21****I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth….**As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.* ***28****Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.****29****If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him*.

**Ephesians 4:1**—*Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called*

**Ephesians 5:1-2**—*Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;****2****and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.*

1. Thoroughly study the Scriptures

**Philippians 1:9-11***—And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,****10****so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;****11****having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*

**Conclusion**

Pray that the Lord in His kindness would grant us greater wisdom to love, serve, and be devoted to Him in all things.

**James 1:5-8**—*But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.****6****But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.****7****For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord,****8****being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*