

JESUS, OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST; THE HOLY SPIRIT, OUR COMFORTER  
Week 21/JROC – Discernment from the Holy Spirit  
June 16, 2024

I Cor. 2:12-13 - *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.* <sup>13</sup> *These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.* Believers receive “the Spirit Who is from God” that we might know and speak the things freely given to us from God.

I Cor. 2:14-15 - *But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

We received the Spirit that we might “discern all things.”

Discern means “to sift.” Biblically speaking, discernment is the ability to choose between what is true and what is false.

True discernment requires diligent study of God's Word.

II Tim. 2:15 - *Be diligent (exert one's self) to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* No one can be truly discerning apart from the Word of God. It appears that by being filled with the Spirit, believers are given a discernment that filters truth from error.

The Apostle John wrote to believers of the “anointing” from God. I John 2:20 – (NASB) *But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.*

When we become born again, we have the Holy Spirit. And, we have the anointing. We know something that cannot be taught and cannot be learned. We have a discernment, a built-in awareness. Since the Spirit searches all things, could He give us insight and on-the-spot discernment that transcend human ability, academic learning? He's God. Why couldn't He?

What does this discernment look like? Absolute confidence in God? Strengthening assurance in God? We must never forget that this knowledge and discernment “filter” MUST ALWAYS exalt the Lord and give all glory to God!

Remember, we need to ALWAYS align ourselves with Scripture! AND, Scripture speaks of this anointing. Scripture speaks of the deep things of God – that He has revealed to us – in His word! Our belief is NOT based on our experiences!

We need God's inspired Word. There are no additional revelations of “truth.”

John 17:17 - In His prayer to God the Father before Jesus' arrest, Jesus, in speaking to His Father said, ... *Your word is truth.*

Might the Spirit giving us insight look like...

Acts 20:22-24 - *And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, <sup>23</sup> except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. <sup>24</sup> But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.*

Paul's words, *I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem*, might be telling us that Paul is bound by the Holy Spirit rather than being tied up in knots within his own spirit. He was fixated on the Holy Spirit's leading. The Holy Spirit testified re: imprisonment and tribulation awaiting Paul. Paul could have been seized by fear which could've sidetracked him. But it didn't. WHY?

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Because Paul was not all that important to Paul! Remember Paul's words in Phil. 1:21 - *For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

II Tim. 1:7 - *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*

The filling of the Spirit not only means that our lives are totally available to God, but it also includes keeping short accounts with God, being sensitive to whatever may have come between us and God, and walking in complete dependence upon Him...so that God works through us, speaks through us, uses us, empowers our gifts and our service for Him in ways we could never accomplish on our own.

The Holy Spirit will lead us, guide us, teach us...

Luke 12:12 - *the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.*

I Cor. 2:6-10 - *Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. <sup>10</sup> But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.*

How do we recognize the Spirit's guidance? How do we discern between our own thoughts and His leading?

We must know the Word of God! We are to search the Scriptures and meditate on them.

Psa. 1:1-2 - *Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; <sup>2</sup> But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.*

Eph. 6:17 - We are to put on the full armor of God which includes the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

Jesus told the disciples that He would send the Holy Spirit.

John 16:13-15 - *However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. <sup>15</sup> All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.*

The guidance of which Jesus is speaking from the Holy Spirit to us is not some mystical factor or some inner urge. The Holy Spirit brings to mind Jesus' teachings – the truth from Scripture!

If the teachings of God's word are cast out and we're relying on inner urges, there is no way to know the difference between truth and falsehood. The Holy Spirit will never prod us to

do anything contrary to God's Word. If we think we're receiving guidance from the Holy Spirit and that guidance conflicts with the Bible, then it is not from the Holy Spirit and should be ignored! Scripture never commands us to tune into any inner voice. We're commanded to study and meditate on Scripture.

We have a choice whether or not to accept the Holy Spirit's guidance. When we know the will of God but do not follow it, we are resisting the Spirit's work in our lives. I Thess. 5:19 - Do not quench the Spirit; Eph. 4:30 – do not grieve the Holy Spirit by Whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

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The Spirit will never lead us into sin. To be in continual prayer (I Thess. 5:17) keeps our hearts and minds open to the Holy Spirit's leading. And, continual prayer allows the Spirit to speak on our behalf! Rom. 8:26-27 - *Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* <sup>27</sup> *Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.* When we don't know what to pray, the Spirit Himself intercedes for us. The Holy Spirit searches the hearts of those whom He helps, and He is able to guide our prayers according to the will of God.

If we are wondering if we are following the Spirit's leading, look for signs of His fruit in our lives (Gal. 5:22-23). If we walk in the Spirit, we will continue to see these qualities grow and cause us to mature in the Lord. And our fruit will become evident to others.

Accepting God's will for us, confessing sin and turning from sin, continuing in prayer and in the diligent study of God's word will cause us to recognize and follow the Holy Spirit's leading – all for the glory of God!