

The Person & Work of the Holy Spirit

This week in our continuing study of the spiritual gifts we'll contrast the gift of the discerning of spirits with discernment. While they sound like the same gifting they are in fact very different.

1) The gift of the discerning of spirits

"...to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues." ~ 1Corinthians 12:10

In the above verse the word "discerning" means to be able to "*distinguish between.*" In your opinion why would it be necessary (and important!) to be able to distinguish between spirits?

2) The need for the gift of discerning of spirits

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light." ~ 2Corinthians 11:13-14

How does your answer to question #1 align with Paul's warning in this verse?

3) Read Acts 16:16-18 and describe how the gift of the discerning of spirits was manifested in the apostle Paul's life.

4) Read 1Timothy 4:1-3

According to the apostle Paul why will the gift of the discerning of spirits be even more needed in the Last Days?

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5) Read 1John 4:1-3

Per the apostle's instructions in these verses how would you identify a false teacher, and false doctrine if you did **not** possess the gift of the discerning of spirits?

6) Read Matthew 7:15-20

What tools does Jesus provide us with to distinguish between a true and a false prophet?

7) According to the following verses *how* would you gain discernment to protect yourself and others from false teachers, false doctrine, and false prophets?

"And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment." ~ Philipians 1:9

"Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding... Then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." ~ Proverbs 2:3 & 5

8) In conclusion, how is the gift of the discerning of spirits different from discernment?