
The Gift of Discernment (The Power to Detect Unclean Spirits)

The Works & Sign Gifts of the Holy Spirit

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Sermon: The Works & Sign Gifts of the Holy Spirit: The Gift of Discernment (The Power to Detect Unclean Spirits)

New Series Messages: “The Works & Sign Gifts of the Holy Spirit”

- Theme Scriptures:
 - 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 28
- Sermon: The Gift of Faith (Wonder-Working Power)
 - The Purpose of the Gift of Faith (Wonder-Working Faith)
 - The Works of the Gift of Faith (Overcoming Doubt)
 - The Stirring of the Gift of Faith (Prayer & Fasting)

Lesson Text

1 John 4:1–3 (AV)¹ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. ² Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: ³ And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

Romans 16:17–18 (AV)¹⁷ Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. ¹⁸ For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

Matthew 24:11–13 (AV)¹¹ **And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. ¹² And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. ¹³ But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.**

Introduction

The Foundation Gifts Establish the Church, the Works & Sign Gifts do the Work of the Church

- Works Gifts (Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Discerning of Spirits, Helps, Administrations)
- Sign Gifts (Healings, Miracles, Tongues)

Today we will look at the Gift of Discernment, Specifically the Discerning of Spirits.

1 Corinthians 12: ⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal... ¹⁰ To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; ***to another discerning of spirits;*** ...

Those who possess foundation gifts (apostles, prophets, evangelist, pastors, teachers) are people who tell us what God has said to them on behalf of the rest of us.

Now this presents an inherent problem for the body of Christ. How can we determine if the person claiming to be speaking on behalf of God, is truly speaking His will?

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God's giftings comes with a Check and Balance. Whereas one is given the gift to prophesy to speak on behalf of God, another is given the gift to discern if it is really from God!

The Hebrew translation for discernment embodies the idea of examining, understanding, or judging closely. The gift of discerning of spirits is a supernatural ability to distinguish spirits.

Matthew 24:11–13 (AV)¹¹ **And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.** ¹² **And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.** ¹³ **But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.**

Because the enemy sends false prophets and deceiving spirits to intercept God's message and replace it with his own, we need the Gift of Discernment to Detect, Expose, and ultimately Save God's people.

Series and Sermon: The Works & Sign Gifts of the Holy Spirit: The Gift of Discernment (The Power to Detect Unclean Spirits)

“The Purpose, Work, and Stirring of Discernment”

I. The Purpose of the Gift of Discernment (Detect Spirits)

1 John 4:1–3 (AV)¹ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. ² Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: ³ And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

The bible says that we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against unclean spirits (Eph 6:10, ...Principalities, Power, Rules of Darkness, and Spiritual Wickedness in High Places)

These unclean spirits can deceive and transform apostles, prophets, and pastors into false apostles, false prophets, and hirelings (Paul called them seducing spirits in 1 Tim 4:1).

2 Corinthians 11:13–15 (AV)¹³ For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

We all have and can increase our ability to discern. But some of us have the spiritual gift of discernment, a spiritual detector that warns of truth vs. lies, good vs. evil, righteous vs. wicked.

The keys to increasing our discernment is 1) Walking in the Spirit, 2) Denying our Flesh through prayer and fasting, and 3) Studying the Voice of God through his Word.

1. Galatians 5:¹⁶ *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.
2. Matthew 17:21 (AV)²¹ **Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.**
3. Romans 10:17 (AV)¹⁷ So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

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The point here is that we need to know who's speaking to us on the other end of the spiritual hot line. Who's speaking to our conscience? Who's speaking to our emotions? Who's speaking to our Soul (Mind, Will, Emotions, Heart)? Who's speaking through our Prophets, our Pastors, Apostles, our Evangelists, our Teachers and Leaders?

So, our lesson text says believe not every spirit, don't be gullible, don't be deceived; Use the gift of discernment to try the spirit and see if it is of God.

God says try or test the Spirit with your prayers, try or test it with your fasting, try or test it with God's Word, try or test it with the Gift of Discernment that I've given to you!

II. The Works of the Gift of Discernment (Expose Deceivers)

Romans 16:17–18 (AV)¹⁷ Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. ¹⁸ For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

If the purpose of the Gift of Discernment is to Detect Unclean Spirits, the Works of the Gift of Discernment is to Expose them!

There are three sources of Spiritual Communications (God, Unclean Spirits, and Self). As a result, God have given us the Gift of Discernment to detect who's communicating to us.

Jeremiah 29:8–9 (AV)⁸ For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel (GOD); Let not your prophets and your diviners, that *be* in the midst of you (UNCLEAN SPIRIT), deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed (SELF). ⁹ For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD.

The False Prophets those who have been deceived, and it can be YOU: Jeremiah 17:9 (AV)⁹ The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

When Jeremiah told the people of God, "Don't let your prophets or your dreams deceive you", he was speaking with the gift of discernment. He wasn't just detecting it; He was exposing it!

Sometimes people know things aren't right, but they won't say anything. They operate from the misnomer that "Snitches get Stitches", "It's none of my business", "It's not my problem"!

When you operate on "Snitches get Stitches", other people get dead! When you feel that "It none of my business", their problems become our problems. So get a differ motto: "See Something, Say Something!"

These unclean spirits are causing divisions, they are causing others to lose faith, they are telling lies, they are hurting God's people and the Body of Christ: your church, your home, you family!

God says, Mark Them! This means watch out, keep an eye open and expose them. They don't care about us or about God's purpose; they only care about themselves. Expose them!

Romans 16: ¹⁸ For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

“See Something, Say Something!” Don’t let them kill me, “See Something, Say Something!”

They may have the title of Apostle, Prophet, Pastor, Evangelist, or Teacher; but if you try their spirit and it fails the test, Expose them! “See Something, Say Something!”

III. The Stirring of the Gift of Discernment (Save the Deceived)

Matthew 24:11–13 (AV) ¹¹ And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. ¹² And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. ¹³ But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

The Purpose of Discernment is to Detect, the Work of Discernment is to Expose, and finally the Stirring of Discernment is to save God’s people from the wolf!

John 10:10–13 (AV) ¹⁰ The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. ¹² But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. ¹³ The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

The thief is trying to steal our purpose, to kill our dreams and visions, and destroy our destiny.

The hireling doesn’t care for us, but only for himself. Jesus on the other hand gave his life to save us because He’s the Shepherd who loves us!

That same love and passion is passed to us through the Gift of Discernment so that we can detect and warn the sheep about the wolf!

It’s like Little Red Riding Hood, “My Grandmother, What big eyes you have, what big teeth you have, what big hands and feet you have” Don’t let the wolf keep God’s people.

Too many of our people are being deceived, too many of our people are being tricked, too many of our people are being robbed, too many of our people are being killed and destroyed.

But warning comes before destruction, and we must stir up the Gift of Discernment to warn them! Warn them of their sins, warn them of their iniquities, warn them of the lusts of flesh, warn them of the thief, warn them of the false prophets, warn them coming destruction.

We must Detect Them! We must Expose Them! And we must Save Them!

Midweek Study Lesson Plan (Sermon: The Gift of Faith (Wonder-Working Power))

Lesson Text

- 1 John 4:1–3, Romans 16:17–18, Matthew 24:11–13
- Book: [The Complete Guide To Understanding The Holy Spirit](#): Read “Works Gifts, Discernment of Spirits”

Sermon Outline (Notes)

I. The Purpose of the Gift of Discernment

II. The Work of the Gift of Discernment

III. The Stirring of the Gift of Discernment

Questions

I. Getting to Know “Me”

1. Honesty: When you first meet someone, do you observe them and get to know them cautiously or are you “all in” with them from the beginning?
2. If your life was a book, what would the title be?

II. Into the Bible

1. Read Romans 12:1-2. How does being conformed to the world’s ways limit the stirring of the gift of discernment?
2. Study Hebrews 5:11-14. What is the connection between maintaining our spiritual growth and our ability to discern good and evil?

III. Life Application

1. All of us know people who believe everything they read or hear, especially from their favorite television preachers. If we have discerned deception in what they have heard, how should we respond to them? Suppose they respond they have the gift of faith and we don’t have that faith?
2. Jeremiah is a great example of being obedient to God and warning his people. He was persecuted because of his obedience. How can we stand firm if we are pressured to turn our backs on Christ to live like the world?