

# Discernment

December 28, 2025

**1 Corinthians 12:10 ESV. The gift of discernment.**

**To another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.**

“Peter and his fellow Jews, the first believers of the early Christian Church, recognized Jesus Christ as the Messiah promised in the Old Testament. Their world was one of discouragement and despair, but the promised Messiah shone as a beacon in the darkness, and His light has never dimmed. “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men” (John 1:4). No matter how dark the world gets and no matter how dark our paths may seem, Jesus is still our life and light.” Billy Graham Daily Devotionals.

When we read writings such as this, we need to ponder them more deeply to see the truth in its fullest. In this writing, we must not simply envision our Lord as words on a page and rapidly move on, but instead, daily, or as John Wesley wrote, “moment by moment,”. reflect on it in our hearts. What was it that made Peter or any of the apostles see the life and light in our Christ as the early church did? What gave them the strength to share the gospel message with a spiteful, angry world, knowing how the world would respond to them?

Today, in our confused and lost world, we can look around and see our world through the heart of the Spirit who resides in all believers. We have a relationship with God that, through His eyes, we will see ourselves through the battles and be guided through the confusion designed to lead us astray. Evil is ever-present, but few recognize it; some even cherish it. Discernment is a gift,

It can often feel as if something is pulling at us, trying to drag us down, blind us to the truths we know and the trust and faith we place in our Christ and God. We read of the fall of man and how simple we find Adam’s sin, fooled by so little an attack. Today, the foolery is much more intense; the wiles of evil have had over two millennia to fine-tune its lies, so thoroughly adjusted to the times that discernment has become increasingly more important to understand and recognize. Far too many people who do not believe in our Christ Jesus dismiss it as a conspiracy theory or old folklore; they do so to their own demise.

What is it we need to protect ourselves from? With the gift of discernment, we will better recognize the lie. **1 John 4:1, “Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”** We find here the calling to discern, and the best reason it is placed in our text as

it is, is because evil resides within the church itself. Look at some of the acts of our nation's pulpits today; many are failing to teach salvation. They believe it is better to preach worldly gain than to preach eternal life in heaven. It's like a store sale: get all you desire from the world you can, while it's still available. Salvation, if even real, as many challenge, takes a back seat to the here and now.

In his book "Live Your Best Life Now, Seven Steps to living to your full potential", Joel Osteen uses the idea that a stronger faith and better prayers will achieve both success and rewards of more earthly gain; you need to ask. "In YOUR BEST LIFE NOW, Osteen says, "I am what I am today because of what I believed about myself yesterday. And I will be tomorrow what I'm believing about myself right now." If you were using discernment over these words right now, what concern would be your focus on what he has written? God is at the tail end, merely mentioned and not the focus. His focus is on the things of this world, and God is only placed amongst paragraphs as a side note or catchy phrase—the glory in what we just read lies in man and his wants.

Romans 1:25, God abandons man, but let us look to discern the reason, who and where did the abandonment begin? Man aspired to become his own god, not realizing that the idols he makes made him lower than they were. He believed the lie and abandoned or discarded the only true God for an idol that could not move or talk; it was worthless. God will not abandon a believer; He will do all He can to aid, support, and regenerate a person, sanctifying him from the world to one day bring him to Himself (God) to live eternally in His presence. God will never turn His back on someone who believes in Him.

Turn to Job Chapter 34. In this chapter, we find a discussion among Job, his friends, and God that raises concern: who was acting strangely or differently? It was not God who was being tested; it was Job. Job's friends saw everything through their own understanding; they placed the blame for all the calamities on Job.

In chapter 4:7-8, Eliphaz places all of Job's trouble on **Job, 7 "Consider now: Who, being innocent, has ever perished? Where were the upright ever destroyed? 8 As I have observed, those who plow evil and those who sow trouble reap it.** For people who see themselves as righteous, placing blame on others for their demise, as in the case here, they can dust off their hands, tell others what to do, and then move on, having identified the problem, or so they think. There is a smugness in such a person; it is simple to place blame and then move on, but a sincere friend would not do so. Next, Bildad chimes in and says much the same; it is Job's sin that has brought all this on. **Job 8:20, Bildad says much the same. "See, God will not reject a blameless person nor take the hand of evildoers."** Soon, in **chapter 11, Zophar accuses Job, 11:14-15, "If iniquity is in your hand, put it far away, do not let wickedness reside in your tents. Surely then you will lift up your face without blemish; you will be secure, and will not fear....Your life will be brighter than the noonday"**

I raise these accusations because what these men are doing is basically condemning Job as a sinful man who is merely getting his deserved justice. Are they evil for doing so? I would say that at a certain point, they have crossed a line, a line of supporting a brother in Christ, and condemning him as a sinful man. Job's friends do not know what we know about the arrangement between God and Satan. Still, I would hope that nobody here today would act in such a callous manner. We can see evil's hand in this, separate from knowing what is actually taking place. If these men were close friends of Job, I would think they would have known his character. Do we do good when we act in such a way as this?

Got Questions, what Job's friends first that did was correct, Job 2:11–13. First, they came to him when he was suffering. Second, they empathized with him: “they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads” (verse 12). Third, they spent time with him. Verse 13 states they were with him for seven days before they offered their advice. They commiserated with their friend in silence.  
<https://www.gotquestions.org/Jobs-friends.html>

Much can be learned from the example of Job and his friends. When we are aware of a friend who is hurting, we can follow the positive example of these men by going to the person, mourning with him, and spending time together. Our physical presence with a hurting friend can be a great comfort in and of itself, even if we have no words to say.

In addition, we can gain wisdom from what Job's friends did wrong. We should not assume that troubles are the sure sign of God's judgment (cf. John 9:1–3). Instead of telling a hurting person to admit his wrong and repent (when we do not know the reason for the suffering), we can join together and encourage a friend to endure faithfully, knowing God sees our pain and has a purpose for it.

When we turn our focus to God, we can offer great encouragement and hope to those in need, helping those who suffer to see God at work. This is a great application of Romans 12:15: “Mourn with those who mourn.” When we are willing to enter into the pain of a suffering friend, we follow the example of Jesus, who came to bear our pain and suffer in our place. Our help to those in need is ultimately a way we serve Christ (Matthew 25:40).

Satan tests Jesus by tempting Him.

Three times Satan tried to trick Jesus when He was alone in the wilderness; three times he failed. When we read these verses, we should right away detect the shortfall in Satan's tactics; evil will never glorify God. Satan wants man to worship him. In all my

studies, I have not found a single verse in which evil is said to give glory to God. Satan used Scripture to trick Jesus, and Jesus silenced and refuted him with Scripture.

Many people are willing to discuss God, but many of those same people are unwilling to discuss Jesus. I believe most of these people picture God, or gods, in a generic way that can fit numerous teachings to bring glory to themselves. However, Jesus became a man and taught men about living righteously, but men rebelled, not wanting to be held accountable for their sins. The pride that brought Satan's fall is the same pride man needs to work on most, seeking God's hand to be with them and guide them in a new direction.

As we think of discernment, we are often quick to say it is about right and wrong, good or evil, and we are correct to a point; however, Scripture uses it to test the spirit. **1 Corinthians 12:10, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits.** Although the word discernment is not frequently used in our Bibles, it is a necessity and a gift we need to rely on.

Used only 6 times in the NIV, you find it helpful to discern much of the Scripture.

Deu 32:29, If only they were wise and would understand this and discern what their end will be!

Job 6:30, Is there any wickedness on my lips? Can my mouth not discern malice?

Job 34:4, Let us discern for ourselves what is right; let us learn together what is good.

Psalms 19:12, But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

Psalms 139:3, You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

Philippians 1:10. so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,

From these verses, we can see the importance and ongoing necessity of learning to discern.

Discernment is also used 6 times.

### [Deu 32:28](#)

They are a nation without sense, there is no **discernment** in them.

[1Kings 3:11](#), So God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for **discernment** in administering justice,

[2 Chronicles 2:12](#), And Hiram added: "Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who made heaven and earth! He has given King David a wise son, endowed with

intelligence and **discernment**, who will build a temple for the LORD and a palace for himself.

[Job 12:20](#), He silences the lips of trusted advisers and takes away the **discernment** of elders.

[Psalms 119:125](#), I am your servant; give me **discernment** that I may understand your statutes.

[Proverbs 28:2](#), When a country is rebellious, it has many rulers, but a ruler with **discernment** and knowledge maintains order.