

Discerning of Spirits!

KJV 1 Corinthians 12:8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

When we started our teaching on spiritual gifts we mentioned the gifts in **Rom 12** as (Charis) grace gifts from The Father.

The gifts mentioned in **Romans 12** uses the Greek word *charis* and means grace or grace gifts which are **expressions & manifestations of the character of God** in the lives of believers.

Here in **1 Corinthians 12** the words spiritual gifts is *pneumatikos* and means “spirit or breath” and are **expressions and manifestations of The Holy Spirit** in the life of the believer.

Based on **Rom 12** every believer can demonstrate the character of God to others!

Based on **1 Cor 12** every believer can demonstrate the power of The Holy Spirit!

The gifts The Holy Spirit gives can be categorized into three types:

- **The Vocal Gifts** of Prophecy, Tongues and Interpretation of tongues.
- **The Power Gifts** of Faith, Healings and The Working of miracles.
- **The Revelation Gifts** of The Word of wisdom, Word of Knowledge & Discerning of spirits.

We started with The Revelation Gifts and have already discussed The Spiritual Gifts of Word of Wisdom and The Word of Knowledge now we’re going to talk about The Discerning of spirits.

The word **discern** means to “**distinguish, see, identify, analyze, recognize and diagnose.**”

I like the last definition because it helps us understand the power of this gift from The Holy Spirit!

He gives us the ability to identify what is happening in the spirit realm!

One of the first things we need to understand is there are realms of existence!

A **realm** is a domain, a place where a kingdom exists with laws, government, citizens and a king or ruler who established the rules.

Just like there is a hierarchy in the **physical realm** of laws, government, citizens and authorities the same exists in the spiritual realm.

Every realm is governed by specific rules, to operate successfully in these realms, we must know the rules!

Anyone can go to the grocery store and buy ingredients for a meal, but only those who understand the laws that govern cooking can prepare a gourmet meal!

KJV 2 Corinthians 4:18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

It's a dangerous practice is to get **caught up in only what our physical senses** can detect and ignore our spiritual sense of discernment!

Without **discerning of spirits**, we are (as the apostle Paul says) ignorant of at least half of our existence if there are only **two realms** the natural and the spiritual!

Remember: “Behind the movement of everything is a spirit!”

*ESV Ezekiel 1:19 And when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures rose from the earth, the wheels rose.
20 Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, and the wheels rose along with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.*

The **Four Living Creatures** Ezekiel saw were controlled by four wheels which were the spirits of the Four Living Creatures.

ESV Zechariah 4:6 Then he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.

Without **discerning** (recognizing & identifying) **the spirit realm we cannot properly diagnose the root cause of a thing or recognize the assistance of The Holy Spirit!**

To **diagnose** a thing is the ability to see beyond the symptoms and determine the cause.

Discerning of spirits is supernatural investigation that opens the spirit realm up for examination!

The reality of life my brothers and sisters is—some type of spirit behind every activity on earth.

Discerning of spirits helps us see what's really going on!

Spirits come upon and into people **influencing** their attitudes and behaviors, they ebb and flow like the tide.

Influence is an astrological term it's the, "**streaming of ethereal (spiritual) power from the stars when in certain positions, acting upon character or destiny of men!**"

Influence is also "**a flow of water, a flowing in, stream in, pour in,**" from above into, in, on, upon!"

The discerning of spirits in the ability given by The Holy Spirit to see what spirit is influencing a person, place or thing!

KJV 1 Kings 22:20 And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? Some answered one way, while others said something else.

21 Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, saying, 'I will entice him.'

22 "The spirit answered, 'I will go out and be a spirit that tells lies through the mouths of all of Ahab's prophets.' "The LORD said, 'You will succeed in deceiving him. Go and do it.'

Ahab king of Israel was a man full of pride, rebellion and idolatry he wanted to fight against Syria and take back land (Ramath-Gilead) that belonged to Israel.

Land promised to be returned after Ahab made a covenant with king Ben-Hadad in **1 kings 20:34.**

Even though the land was given to Israel by God, because of **Ahab's pride and wickedness** God resisted (stood in opposition) to him and would not help him recover what rightfully belonged to Israel.

GWN James 4:5 Do you think this passage means nothing? It says, "The Spirit that lives in us wants us to be his own."

6 But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

Notice how God opposed Ahab with a **lying spirit** in the mouths of his prophets!

Yet even Ahab suspected his prophets might not be telling the truth, so he calls for a real man of God who tells him the same thing.

But when pressed by Ahab Micaiah tells him the truth but Ahab goes to battle anyway because his pride kept him from truly discerning The Word of The Lord!

Remember God resists, opposes and stands against the proud—keeping them from discerning what spirit is behind the decisions being made concerning their lives.

*ESV **1 John 4:1** Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.*