

A Vision for Disciplemaking
Key Men's Conference

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Spiritual Discernment
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Spiritual Discernment: *Walking with Clarity in a Fuzzy World* *David Hinds*

The Christian today is bombarded within and without with conflicting claims and appeals, ranging from paganism to cultism to Pharisaic legalism to liberal ecumenism to emotionalism to prosperity gospel. How can the believer hug the center stripe of orthodoxy when Satan is trying to push him into the left ditch or the right? The Bible offers very specific guidance to help us live in victory regardless of our environment. *"Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life - in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing."* Philippians 2:14-16

Principles for our search:

1. Who is the final authority in every issue? Romans 3: 3-4
2. What is the final authority on God's revealed truth? John 17:17
3. What is an unreliable source of determining God's truth? (Unless, of course, it lines up with God's revealed truth) Mark 7:7-9
4. Another poor source of determining God's truth is relying on some emotional, subjective experience.
 - a. Martin Luther wrote a little poem that illustrates this point:

Feelings come and feelings go, and feelings are deceiving;
My warrant is the Word of God; naught else is worth believing.
 - b. The absolute conformation of a Mormon's salvation is a subjective experience they call, "a burning in the bosom." Do we want to trust our salvation to what could have been an extra bowl of chili?
5. What if what God says contradicts my religious authorities or even my family?

Matthew 10: 31-39

For a large number of Christians, what they hold fast to as their absolute beliefs are not those they have dug out and studied for themselves, but what respected authority figures have taught them. In a world teeming with false Christ's and Angels of Light, this is a potentially fatal practice. We have to search the truths of Scripture for ourselves.

What do we learn from the following example? Acts 17:11.

The Keys to Discernment

(Begins with understanding that we are at war - Mark 13:5-23)

A. Know your enemy

1. What has Satan come to do? John 10:10
2. What is Satan looking for? I Peter 5:8

Principle: If you look like food, you

3. What do our sinful desires do? I Peter 2:11
4. What does Satan look like?

And his followers? II Corinthians 11:13-15

5. Can powerful, conspicuous credentials be false?

List three things that false apostles can do.

What did Jesus think of their accomplishments? Matthew 7:21-23

6. What was the will of the Father in the question above? John 6:39-40

B. What are our defenses?

1. I Peter 5:9-10 (James 4:7)
2. II Corinthians 10:3-5
3. Ephesians 6:10-18
4. Psalm 119:9,11
5. John 15: 5-8

C. What is our biggest obstacle in the battle?

1. C.S. Lewis
2. Proverbs 11:2

3. Proverbs 13:10
4. Proverbs 16:18
5. Proverbs 29:23
6. Solomon: (Deuteronomy 17:14-17, 1 Kings 4:29-31, 26, 1 Kings 11:1, 4-6)
7. Godly righteousness will always morph into _____ and _____ if not under the control of

Luke 18:9-14, Matthew 15 :8

D. Specific Defenses against pride

1. 1 Peter 5:5-7
2. Matthew 18:1-4
3. Psalm 75:6-7