

DESIRE TO BE DISCERNING

I. The Situation

- A. God holds US responsible for distinguishing between GOOD and EVIL and between TRUTH and ERROR (1 Thess. 5:21-22)
- B. When we are too LAZY to do that, He is DISPLEASED (Heb. 5:11-14)
- C. He has GIVEN us all the RESOURCES we need to do that (2Tim. 3:16-17; Phil. 2:12b-13)
- D. He EXPECTS us to CORRECT the situation (2 Pet. 1:5-8)

II. ATTITUDES Influence RESULTS

- A. Some OBJECT to DEVELOPING discernment
 - 1. They deride it as “HERESY HUNTING”
 - 2. They DISCOURAGE inexperienced Christians
- B. God COMMENDS the Bereans for the practice (Acts 17:11-12a)
 - 1. They ACCEPTED the AUTHORITY of Scripture
 - 2. They EVALUATED the teaching of PAUL
 - 3. God called it “NOBLE-MINDED”
- C. Christ CHALLENGED the practice of the Pharisees (John 5:39-40, 46-47)

1. They went to the SAME SOURCE
2. They looked for SUPPORT for their TRADITIONS
3. They looked for ways to DISCREDIT Christ's CLAIMS

III. The Task

A. EVALUATE EVERYTHING (1 Thes. 5:21-22)

1. All TEACHING, to distinguish TRUTH from ERROR (Rev. 2:2)
2. All THINGS, to distinguish GOOD from EVIL
 - a. CLING to the GOOD
 - b. SEPARATE from the EVIL
3. Involves evaluating CONTENT in the light of SCRIPTURE
 - a. Requires KNOWLEDGE of Scripture
 - b. Requires careful, active LISTENING or READING
 - c. Requires deliberate, clear THINKING

B. DETERMINE the things that are WORTHWHILE

1. Necessary for determining GOD'S WILL (Rom. 2:18)
2. Important enough that Paul PRAYED for believers to DEVELOP the ability (Phil. 1:9-11)
 - a. For their own GOOD
 - b. For God's GLORY