

LEARNING TO DISCERN
(1 Thess. 5:21-22)

I. God Has ALREADY GIVEN You Discernment

A. Enabling you to RESPOND to the GOSPEL (Acts 16:14)

1. Having RECOGNIZED its TRUTH
2. Having DISTINGUISHED it from FALSE ideas of salvation
3. Having TRUSTED its MESSAGE

B. Providing ability to see the NEED for CHANGE (James 1:23-25)

1. Recognizing potential for GULLIBILITY
2. Desiring to be more VIGILANT

C. Encouraging HOPE for spiritual GROWTH (Heb. 6:1; cf. 5:11-14)

1. The WARNING is HARSH
2. The INTENT is PROGRESS

Pet.

a. You have “the WORD of RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Heb. 5:13; cf. 2
1:21)

b. You have “the SPIRIT of TRUTH” (John 14:17; cf. 1 John 2:27)

II. You Must PRACTICE Your Discernment (Heb. 5:14)

- A. Need REGULARITY (1 Thess. 5:21*a*)
 - 1. Any new skill begins AWKWARDLY and POORLY
 - 2. Skill IMPROVES with PRACTICE

- B. Need COMMITMENT (Phil. 2:12)
 - 1. Requires KNOWLEDGE of what it involves and what is required to become SKILLFUL
 - 2. Requires DESIRE to overcome OBSTACLES and please CHRIST
 - 3. Requires AWARENESS of the COMMAND and ENABLING of God
 - 4. Requires TIME and EFFORT to acquire and maintain skill

- C. Need RESOURCES
 - 1. Requires PRAYER (Eph. 6:18; Col. 4:2)
 - a. Relying on GOD leads to SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT
 - b. Relying on SELF leads to “PHARISAISM”
 - 2. Requires BIBLE STUDY (1 Tim. 4:5-6; 2 Tim. 2:15)
 - a. Looking for FACTS you should KNOW
 - b. Looking for HOW you should LIVE
 - c. Looking for WAYS you should MINISTER
 - 3. Requires CHURCH PARTICIPATION (Heb. 10:24-25)
 - a. You need regular INSTRUCTION in the WORD (Heb. 10:25; cf. Eph. 4:11-14)
 - b. You need regular INVOLVEMENT in the MINISTRY (Heb. 10:24; cf. Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19)