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DISCERNING THE BATTLE

I CORINTHIANS 12:10

- **distinguishing between spirits - NIV**
- **distinguishing of spirits - NAS**
- **discerning of spirits - NKJV**

Hebrews 5:14



But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. (NAS)

Philippians 1:9

**And this I pray,
that your love
may abound
still more and
more in real
knowledge and
all
discernment,
(NAS)**



Malachi 3:18



**So you will again
distinguish
between the
righteous and
the wicked,
between one
who serves God
and one who
does not serve
Him.**

(NAS)

Hosea 4:6



**My people are
destroyed from
lack of
knowledge.
(NIV)**

Senses

Greek: Aistheterion

ORGAN OF SENSE

Hebrew Yada

- **This root, occurring a total of 944 times, is used in every stem and expresses a multitude of shades of knowledge gained by the senses.**
- **Genesis 3:5**

Solomon

1 Kings 3:9 Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours? (NKJV)

Greek -diakrisis

- **Translated - discernment**
- **Defined - “to make a judgment on the basis of careful and detailed information, to judge carefully, to evaluate carefully. The emphasis of the word is on the result of the discernment, not on the method.”**



DISCERN - WEBSTER DEFINITION

1. To detect with
the eyes.

2. To detect with
senses other
than vision.

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

This is He [Holy Spirit] who places prophets in the Church, instructs teachers, directs tongues, gives powers and healings, does wonderful works, offers discrimination of spirits, affords powers, suggests counsels, and orders, and arranges whatever other gifts that are of the charismata; thus making the Lord's Church everywhere, and in all, perfected and completed. The Trinity, Novatian (AD 210-280)

Anthony (AD 251-356) was said to have possessed the gift of discerning of Spirits and often knew things supernaturally. His prayers brought healing to the sick and deliverance to the demonized.

Eddie L. Hyatt. 2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity.

George Fox (1624-91), the founder of the Quakers, experienced the revelation gifts of the Holy Spirit such as discerning of Spirits, the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom. “The Lord gave me a spirit of discerning, by which at many times I saw the states and conditions of people and could try the spirits.” (2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity, p. 92)

John Fletcher (1729-1785)

Christ Manifested

“....a regenerate soul has its spiritual senses opened, and made capable of discerning what belongs to the spiritual world, in the same way that a newly born infant has his natural sense unlocked, and begins to see, hear, and taste what belongs to that material world into which he is entering ”

Agnes Ozman (1870-1937)

In a Watch night Service. (1900-1901) Humble in the name of Jesus, I laid my hand upon her head and prayed. I had scarcely repeated three dozen sentences when a glory fell upon her, a halo seemed to surround her head and face, and she began speaking in the Chinese language and was unable to speak in English for three days. (2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity, p. 139.)

**Charles Parham (1873-1929).
January 3, 1901. Sister Stanley told
Charles Parham at Bethel College in
Topeka, Kansas “Just before you
entered tongues of fire were sitting
above their heads.” (2000 Years of
Charismatic Christianity, p. 139)**

Comparison of the Gifts

The other revelatory gifts - words of knowledge, words of wisdom, prophetic words, visions and dreams - appear to be released primarily through the mind, rather than the senses.





HOW DO WE KNOW IF WHAT WE ARE DISCERNING IS ACCURATE?

**C. Peter Wagner - Seven Criteria
for verifying a message is really
from God**

- 1. It neither contradicts Scripture,
nor would it violate any general
biblical principles.**
- 2. It brings glory to the triune God-
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

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- 3. It conforms to the known will of God.**
 - 4. It blesses the people who have been touched by the event.**
 - 5. It measurably advances God's Kingdom here on earth.**
 - 6. It is affirmed by at least two or three credible witnesses.**
 - 7. The conclusion merits agreement by responsible and like-minded colleagues.**

Scriptural Evidence for Discernment Through the Physical Senses

- **Hearing**
- **Seeing**
- **Tasting**
- **Smelling**
- **Touching**
- **Proprioceptive**



Scriptural Evidence for Discernment Through the Physical Senses

Hearing

- **Adam and Eve heard God's Voice in the Garden (Gen 3:8)**
- **Abram received verbal instructions from the Lord to leave his country and kindred (Gen 12:1) and to offer his son as a burnt offering as a test of his faith (Gen. 22:2)**

Scriptural Evidence for Discernment Through the Physical Senses

- Hearing**
- **Disciples heard Jesus (Lk. 24:36-37)**
 - **Saul heard Jesus (Acts 9:3-5)**
 - **Peter heard an angel (Acts 12:6-8)**
 - **Paul heard things in heaven (2 Cor 12:2-4)**



Scriptural Evidence for Discernment Through the Physical Senses

Seeing

- **Abraham (Gen 18:1-2)**
- **Moses (Ex 3:2)**
- **Joshua (Josh 5:13)**
- **Elisha (II Kgs 6:17)**
- **Isaiah (Is 6:1-2)**
- **Mary spoke with an angel (Lk 1:26-28)**
- **Disciples saw Moses and Elijah (Lk 9:28)**

Scriptural Evidence for Discernment Through the Physical Senses

Seeing

- **Believers saw tongues of fire (Acts 2:3)**
- **Stephen saw Jesus in heaven (Acts 7:55)**
- **John saw many things (Rev. 4:1-5, 5:8, 13-14, 7:9-11, 8:3-4, 9:2, 7-10, 10:10, 13:1, 11, and 14:6-6)**

Scriptural Evidence for Discernment Through the Physical Senses

Tasting

- | Psalms 34:8 - Psalm 34:8 (NKJV) Oh, taste and see that the LORD *is* good;**
- | Ezekiel 3:1-3 Ezekiel 3:1–3² So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that scroll... So I ate, and it was in my mouth like honey in sweetness.**



Scriptural Evidence for Discernment Through the Physical Senses

- **Smelling**

2 Cor 2:15-16 For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task? (NIV)



Scriptural Evidence for Discernment Through the Physical Senses

- **Touching**

Acts 12:7–8 (NKJV) Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by *him*, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, “Arise quickly!” And his chains fell off *his* hands.

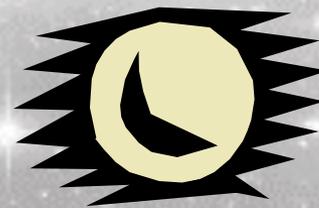


Why Do We Need to Discern?

John 5:19 - Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does." (NIV)



WHAT CAN BE SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED



**QUESTION: “I thought
the Holy Spirit talked to
me?”**

Zechariah 1:13

**So the Lord spoke
kind and
comforting words
to the angel who
talked with me**



CAUTIONS

- 1. Do Not Tell Everything You Know**
- 2. We All Discern Differently**
- 3. You Are Really Not Discerning – The Lord is Telling You.**
- 4. Do Not Fight Everything You Discern**

CAUTIONS

5. Practice Discretion

Prov 2:3-11 For if you cry for discernment, lift your voice for understanding; If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will discern the fear of the LORD, and discover the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.



CAUTIONS

He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity, Guarding the paths of justice, and He preserves the way of His godly ones. Then you will discern righteousness and justice and equity and every good course. For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; Discretion will guard you, understanding will watch over you (NAS)



CAUTIONS

6. Beware of Flattery

PATHAH (Hebrew)

The intent of flattery is to make a person simple, or just delude and deceive them. To make someone simple is an attempt to strip them of their astuteness and discernment.

