

Introduction

1. If you had one wish, what would you wish for?
 - a. Solomon desired discernment ([1 Kgs. 3:5-15](#)).

I. Defining Discernment

1. The first use of the English word “discern” is found in [Genesis 27:23](#).
 - a. This passage is in context with Jacob pretending to be his brother Esau in order to receive his blessing ([Gen. 27:1-22](#)).
 - b. Isaac, because of Jacob’s trickery, believed him to be Esau even though his voice did not match ([Gen. 27:22-23](#)).
2. The second use of the English word “discern” is found in [Genesis 31:32](#).
 - a. This passage is in context with Laban’s idols which his daughter Rachel had taken ([Gen. 31:19-31](#)).
 - b. Jacob had no knowledge that Rachel had stolen Laban’s idols and demanded discernment between what belonged to Jacob and what belonged to him ([Gen. 31:32](#)).
 - c. Search was made by Laban in order to find his gods ([Gen. 31:33-35](#)).
 - d. Jacob connected discernment with judgment ([Gen. 31:36-37](#)).
3. The example of the two harlots show us what discernment is ([1 Kgs. 3:16-28](#)).
 - a. To discern is to be able to make the right judgment based upon knowledge, insight, senses, and wisdom.
 - b. To discern is also to be able “to recognize or identify as separate and distinct: discriminate” (Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary).

II. The Standard of Discernment

1. The standard of discernment is the Word of God ([Heb. 4:12](#)).
 - a. a discernor (*kritikos* G2924 adjective) “relating to judging, fit for judging, skilled in judging...tracing out and passing judgment on the thoughts of the mind” (Thayer 362).
 - b. We will all meet the Word of God on the last day in judgment ([Jn. 12:48](#)).
 - c. We must examine [test] ourselves daily by God’s Word so we will be approved ([2 Cor. 13:5](#)).

III. The Need for Discernment

1. Discernment is needed or we will be off in our judgment ([Isa. 5:20](#)).
 - a. This was not new in Isaiah’s day nor in Jesus’ day ([Lk. 12:54-59](#)).
2. Discernment is needed or we will be deceived ([Gen. 3:1-6](#)).
 - a. Satan inserted one word to what God had said ([Gen. 3:4](#)).
 - b. Satan and his ministers will disguise themselves to appear good ([2 Cor. 11:12-15](#)).

- c. We try what we see and hear with the Word of God to make sure we are being discerning ([1 Jn. 4:1](#); [Ac. 17:11](#)).
3. Discernment is needed so we can know the difference between holy and profane ([Ezek. 44:23](#)).
 - a. Why? If we wish to see God we must be holy ([Heb. 12:14](#)).
 - b. How can we know the difference between holy and profane? Through teaching!
 - c. We must be able to tell the difference between the righteous and the wicked ([Mal. 3:18](#)).
4. Discernment is needed so we can worship properly ([1 Cor. 11:23-32](#)).
 - a. The Corinthians' issue was treating the Lord's Supper as a common meal ([1 Cor. 11:20-22](#), [33-34](#)).
 - b. They were not making proper judgment concerning the Lord's Supper thus they were guilty of the body and blood of the Lord and so condemnation!
 - c. Consider also our prayers and singing ([1 Cor. 14:15](#)).
 - d. We must worship in spirit and in truth ([Jn. 4:24](#)).
5. Discernment is needed so we can understand the meatier matters ([Heb. 5:11-14](#)).
 - a. There are some things which are hard to be understood ([2 Pt. 3:15-16](#)).
 - b. of full age (*teleios* G5046 adjective) "full-grown, adult; of full age, mature" (Thayer 618).
 - c. senses (*ho* G3588 definite article *aistheterion* G145 noun) "faculty of the mind for perceiving, understanding, judging" (Thayer 17).
 - d. exercised (*gymnazo* G1128 verb) "'to exercise, to train the body or mind' (Eng., 'gymnastic')" (Vine 216).
 - e. discern (*diakrisis* G1253 noun) "a distinguishing, discerning, judging" (Thayer 139).
 - f. This connects back with guarding against false teaching ([Eph. 4:11-16](#)).

Conclusion

1. Discernment is the ability to make the right judgment based upon knowledge, insight, senses, and wisdom.
 - a. It is also to be able "to recognize or identify as separate and distinct: discriminate" (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary).
2. Discernment demands an objective standard which God has provided for us with His completed revelation, the Holy Bible.
 - a. We must apply ourselves with diligence to God's Word so we can mature and thus become keener in our ability to tell the difference between right and wrong.
3. Discernment is needed ultimately that we make the same righteous judgments that God makes ([Jn. 7:24](#)).