

DISCERNMENT

A special ability to distinguish between truth and error. A person with this gift can discriminate between that which is raised up by God and that which pretends to be. They have the ability to unmask Satan's trickery, detect false teachings, and ferret out false teachers. The gift of discernment can be used, for example, in counseling and intercessory prayer, when serving on governing boards, when selecting workers or volunteers and to warn others.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. An extra sensitivity to good versus evil.
2. An ability and willingness to pray effectively for Satan to be bound.
3. An ability to identify a phony. An ability to detect counterfeits. This includes insight into motivations.
4. An insight into whether emotional problems stem from a physical or spiritual source.
5. An ability to sense that something is wrong but not always to specifically identify the problem. This serves as an instant warning to pray and do more research before moving ahead.

CAUTIONS

1. Going overboard in ferreting out evil spirits, believing there is demonic presence in nearly every situation.
2. Being susceptible to fearing and overestimating Satan's power instead of remembering that God is infinitely more powerful and will prevail.
3. On the other extreme from overestimating Satan's power, there is danger of underestimating it and thinking that he can be handled with human strength. This allows Satan to manipulate a ministry. *Acts 19:13-16*
4. Revealing knowledge to those who are not receptive, and therefore, becoming offensive. This can discredit Christ and prevent a ministry from being effective.
5. When those with this gift believe that *something* is wrong, but do not know exactly what it is, they may take their best guess and end up missing it altogether, which gives others reason to disregard their counsel.
6. Developing a self-righteous attitude, succumbing to the temptation to be proud of the ability to see into the spiritual realm.