

5 Steps to Develop Strong Spiritual Discernment

“Discernment is not a matter of simply telling the difference between right and wrong; rather, it is telling the difference between right and almost right.” –Spurgeon

With the significant events unfolding in Washington, D.C., and the serious spiritual warfare taking place, every Christian needs to be engaged in strategic prayer for our governmental leaders as God directs in 1 Timothy 2:1-4. “First of all” in the Greek means “first of all.” How we need sharp spiritual discernment in these days!

This “Here’s the Deal” commentary and the accompanying four podcasts on the Charisma Podcast Network are vital at this time. This is not a lighthearted article so Uncle Jack can discern where to invest money or mom discover which youth group is a good fit for little Brittney. The principles will apply, but we need to go deeper in this defining moment of history.

Before he died, David Wilkerson gave us a warning: “The majority of churchgoers today soundly reject all prophetic warnings of the coming storm. Indeed, the American church today is the most blatant feel-good church in all of history. But like Israel, we’re only experiencing the calm before the storm!”

“Take heed that no one deceives you ... will deceive many ... deceive, if possible, even the elect” (Matt. 24:4, 5, 24). In Revelation 12 Jesus further warns us of “the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world” (v. 9).

Scripture clearly teaches that prior to the Lord’s return

there will be “the working of Satan with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all deception ...” (2 Thess. 2:9-10). Certainly we must be discerning so as not to be caught off-guard.

5 Steps to Spiritual Discernment

While there is a spiritual gift we can request called “discerning of spirits” (1 Cor. 12:10) to differentiate between the Holy Spirit, angelic, demonic and human spirits, spiritual discernment is a tool, not a toy, that develops as we mature. It’s not imparted by a supernatural act and there are no shortcuts. It’s a skill perfected through practice.

“But solid food belongs to those who are mature, for those who through practice have powers of discernment that are trained to distinguish good from evil” (Heb. 5:14).

1. Commune consistently with God. When we delight ourselves in God, we derive desires from God (Ps. 37:4). “He does not exist to answer our prayers but by our prayers we come to discern the mind of God.” –Oswald Chambers

2. Know God’s ways from God’s Word. God calls us to yield totally to Him and renew (not remove!) our mind on His Word to discern the perfect will of God for every area of our lives (Rom. 12:1-2). God’s Word is God’s will!

“You have been good to Your servant, O Lord, according to Your word. Teach me good discernment and knowledge” (Ps. 119:65-66).

3. Live a holy life in the fear of God. Jesus said we’ll either have light or darkness in our life based on our focus. He calls us to live lives of happy holiness in a healthy fear of God (Matt. 6:22-23). “He shall delight in the fear of the Lord, and he shall not judge by what his eyes see ...” (Isa. 11:3).

“To discern spirits we must dwell with Him Who is holy and He will give revelation and unveil the mask of satanic powers on all lines.” –Smith Wigglesworth

“A tender conscience is an inestimable blessing that is not only quick to discern what is evil, but instantly to shun it as the eyelid closes itself against the speck.” –Author unknown

4. Live in love. We can never have clear spiritual discernment if our heart is clouded by unforgiveness, resentment, jealousy or hatred. “And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all discernment, that you may approve things that are excellent ...” (Phil.1:9-10).

5. Invest in others. To grow strong in discernment we must heed the call of God to invest in and intercede for those distracted and deceived—the unsuspecting. “I sought for a man...” (Ezek. 22:30). Our powers of discernment will be strengthened and multiplied as we take up our mantles and assignments. Jesus promised, “For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance” (Matt. 25:29).

Call for Discernment and Decisive Action

Jesus strongly rebuked those in His day who were not using discernment to recognize what was happening on their watch. “But why do you not know how to discern this time?” (Luke 12:56).

Amidst an unprecedented avalanche of destructive political activism and deception barreling down on us and our families in America, tragically many pastors seem oblivious to the gravity of what’s taking place. They seem content to go on with business as usual with non-offensive, nice Sunday song services and sermons. May this not be said of us!

It has been said that there are three groups of people in the world: the few who make things happen, the many who watch

things happen and the majority who don't know what's happening! Again, not you and I; there's too much at stake.

With what we're witnessing on our watch, it's unmistakable that a seismic shift is taking place in our nation: One of our two historic political parties (of which my parents and I were a part) has become unhinged as well as the pawn of extremists, leftists, socialists and secularists; our news media has become corrupt, no longer pursuing truth but rather pushing propaganda to support the agenda of a particular viewing audience; and a duly elected president faces an impeachment trial without real substance, demonically designed to disparage him and deceive the masses.

Deception Discerned in This Defining Moment

Consider a nation providentially discovered by Christopher ("Christ-bearer") Columbus; established on a sacred covenant with God; dedicated to the "glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith" and honoring Judeo-Christian principles enshrined in her Constitution. This nation prospered like no nation in world history.

Then almost overnight this exceptional nation, whose track record traces innumerable blessings for its inhabitants and people all over the world, finds itself at a tipping point where the very soul of the nation is at stake. It's not hyperbole to say this is a defining moment!

"Powers and principalities" are working aggressively through unsuspecting individuals in politics, academia, the media and Hollywood in brazenly promoting a leftist, anti-American, anti-Constitution, anti-family agenda. They want to remove our rights to freedom of speech and religion. They're engaged in a "progressive," all-out assault on our nation's heritage to totally dismantle it and rebuild it as a secularist, socialistic system; controlling the flow of information by a

leftist-leaning, manipulative media; promoting sexually anarchist LGBTQ propaganda in K-12 schools, and radical policies of pro-abortion and infanticide; and openly expressing hostility to pro-family, pro-traditional values.

On top of all this, politicians promoting the above and promising “free” Medicare for all, “free” college education and a grandiose Green New Deal all “financed by the rich” are deliberately deceiving to get elected! One candidate said religious institutions should lose their tax-exempt status if they oppose same-sex marriage! Socialist Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and her “squad” of radical Muslims let us know we will do what they demand. Avowed socialists Sanders and Warren plus the homosexual mayor with the Marxist dad flank Biden as top contenders. And yes, Speaker Pelosi looks out of touch, backing lowering the voting age to 16.

No More Neutrality

The past few years have been orchestrated by God to bring to the surface the recklessness and rebellion in the Democratic Party and expose the corruption in the media to destroy our heritage and a duly elected president who has accumulated incredible achievements amidst the demonically inspired opposition.

The time for indifference, complacency and passivity is over with abortion in 2019, the leading cause of death worldwide killing 42 million babies, while porn publisher *Hustler* sends Congress cards showing President Trump shot dead on the street flanked by gleeful onlookers. Pastors must courageously rise up and lead the flock in their civic responsibility in this cultural conflict.

Here’s the deal: It’s time for pastors to exercise discernment as shepherds of flocks and patriotic Americans to pray and be “salt” to preserve our godly heritage and protect faith,

freedom, family and our future. Together let's restore our foundations and recenter America not in ever-increasing government, but in God whom we trust and give all the glory to. {eo}