

Is It From God? 3 Ways to Discern if It's the Holy Spirit

It seems as though no matter where you go or turn to, someone always has an opinion or unsolicited advice to give. We see them on social media, news and blogs, and it can be easy to get caught up into what others have to say about our lives.

But what about God?

How can we know if the Holy Spirit is speaking to us? God's voice tends to be much quieter and softer than the noise of the world. And unfortunately, there are some very real spiritual forces vying for our attention. Scripture says that we do not fight against flesh and blood, but rather we war against principalities and powers. While God can and does speak to us in many different ways, there are a few keys that we can use to discern if something is from God or if it's from another spirit.

The Holy Spirit will never lead you away from godly wisdom.

The first thing to know about the Holy Spirit is He will never direct you away from a path of godly wisdom. In Proverbs we learn that God has a specific plan and direction for our lives. Steering us away from this path isn't something God would do—it's something from the enemy.

Proverbs 3:5-6 reads: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths."

There are two things that the Lord is never going to lead you away from: He is never going to tell you something contradictory to what's in His Word, and He's never going to

tell you a lie about what mercy looks like.

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So, what kind of spirit might want to take you away from the proper direction God has for His children? In 1 Kings 22 we learn about a lying spirit that was to go and persuade Ahab to go to Ramoth Gilead.

Verses 21-22 read: "Then a spirit came forth and stood before the LORD and said, 'I will persuade him.' "The LORD said to him, 'How?' And he said, 'I will go and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.'" It wasn't the Holy Spirit who would be speaking to Ahab, but it was a lying spirit. A lying spirit will lead someone away from the godly path that Proverbs refers to, and instead of leading them toward spiritual refreshment and renewal in Christ, it will lead them to destruction.

The Holy Spirit will only testify to the glory of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

The Holy Spirit is Jesus' Spirit and He simply cannot testify to Jesus being anything other than Lord and Savior. The Father, Son and Spirit are one in the Trinity, so it's impossible for something to be from the Holy Spirit and contradictory to the words of the Father or the Son. One thing you can ask yourself is, "Does this glorify Jesus?"

Not all spirits we encounter are going to give Jesus the glory he deserves as Lord. First John 4:1-3 is one of the best places to read about how to test spirits. Verses 2-3 specifically read: "This is how you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming

and is already in the world.”

To deny who Jesus is comes from an antichrist spirit. However, the Holy Spirit will never lead you astray from the truth of who God is.

The Holy Spirit will refine you while other spirits will tell you what you want to hear.

Something else to know about false spirits is that they not only deceive people away from Jesus as Lord, but they focus on telling people exactly what they want to hear. The problem with that, is God is the God of loving correction. Proverbs 3:12 tells us that the Lord corrects those who He loves. Sometimes we need conviction. Sometimes we need to be steered away from sin. Love without correction isn't love at all. It's the acceptance of sin.

Psalm 66:10 tells us, “For You, O God, have proved us; You have refined us, as silver is refined.”

If we look back at Ahab, he didn't desire to hear the truth from a true prophet of God, instead, he only wanted to hear prophecies that sounded pleasing to the ear. How often do we do this in our own day and age?

We seek out prophecies hoping to hear that we will be healthy, wealthy and rich. However, God doesn't work the way a fortune teller does. He places us into the fiery furnace like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego because transformation doesn't happen without trials. Character and faith are produced in the middle of the storms, and it is from these experiences that we can share a genuine testimony with others. The only way to become more like Jesus is to carry our cross and follow Him.
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