

8 Diabolical Filters That Can Keep You From Discerning the Truth

There are many predictions and prognostications being shared concerning Putin and Ukraine, the fallout of COVID, the outcome of the 2020 election, what's happening economically and where this is all headed. We'd like to think that our prophetic gifts would give us an edge on what's happening, but it's evident by the wide variety of perspectives being promoted that even prophets only see in part. But perhaps that's by design.

God is not simply looking for a *people* with *prophets*, but a *prophetic people* who can rightly discern the times and seasons. He's looking for a unified *ecclesia* with a collective witness that can rightly perceive His movements on the earth. If we're going to come into agreement concerning the battles before us and heaven's strategies for success, we've got to grow in our powers of discernment. We've got to sift through our own ideologies and mindsets before we can accurately assess what's happening—and know what to do about it.

8 Filters That Color Our Perceptions and Beliefs

Determine to increase your awareness of these filters as you grow in your own powers of discernment.

1. Lack of the Word. Before we can claim to know what God is thinking or feeling about something, we'd better be sure we've got a good biblical worldview in place. The devil has convinced many people that Scripture is no longer relevant to the times we live in, and many have ditched sound doctrine for their own ideas. Before making a judgment call on anything, be sure it's backed by God's Word.

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16).

2. Presupposition. We all have presumptions we bring to the table—ideas we've never taken the time to examine. "God would never use someone like that." "So-and-so said this and he can't be wrong." "Those people can't be trusted." Our personal experiences, either good or bad, are powerful influencers. Before assuming anything, acknowledge that you have personal biases and preferences that will color your perspective. Your motive may be noble, but your perception could be skewed.

"He said this openly. And Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him. But when He had turned around and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, 'Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men'" (Mark 8:32-33).

3. Familiar beliefs. Some of our familiar belief systems are in need of an update. New seasons and new battles often require new weapons of warfare. "Politics has no place in the church." "We must always submit to those in authority." "You're not loving if you don't follow the rules." Traditional mindsets from the past can become sacred cows if we are unwilling to adjust to the battles in front of us. Though the dogmas of our faith will never change, God's methods of engagement can. If we want to walk in wisdom and revelation, we must be willing to see things from a higher dimension.

"As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked Him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned. But it happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him'" (John 9:1-3).

4. Lack of confirmation. There is a biblical principle of confirmation that safeguards us from false accusations and

counterfeit ideas. Especially when something is highly controversial, we should expect any new revelation to be confirmed by at least two or three viable witnesses as an affirmation of heaven's approval.

"In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established" (2 Cor. 13:1b).

5. The spirit of fear. Anxiety and worry will blind us to the truth. Fear is not simply a negative emotion—it is a demonic spirit that immobilizes us and robs us of faith in God. If any judgment call is based in fear, we will be subject to deception and unable to move forward in confidence of God's purposes.

"For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and self-control" (2 Tim. 1:7).

6. Mercy untethered to truth. Compassion for others should always be a hallmark of any true believer. But mercy that denies the truth or refuses to acknowledge evil is falling short of God's intention. We must care for those impacted by a virus or those suffering because of war, but we must also consider the truths behind those battles to make sure our cause is not based on a lie. Just as we can never walk in the fullness of truth without mercy, so we can never extend true mercy apart from the truth.

"Hate evil and love good, and establish justice at the gate" (Amos 5:15a).

7. Lack of common sense. In some cases, one only needs to step back and ask some simple questions to rightly discern what is true. One can get lost in suspicion and hearsay and lose touch with reality. When all else fails, look at the evidence and consider the tangible fruit right in front of you.

"Good understanding gives favor, but the way of transgressors is hard" (Prov. 13:15).

8. Lack of counsel. If we each only see in part, then we should desire the perspectives of others to help us see a bigger picture. This doesn't mean asking someone we know is going to agree with us. We must be willing to change our opinion by listening to those who have a proven track record and have borne the fruit of right discernment. We must learn to distinguish godly counsel from popular opinion.

"A wise man will hear and will increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel" (Prov. 1:5).

Though the "discerning of spirits" is a powerful gift of Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:10), let's not forget the powers of discernment that should be foundational for every believer. Let's be more aware of these filters and avoid their limitations. Let's pursue the truth together to become a prophetic people who will cause the whole world to listen and take heed of His voice. {eo}

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