

June 8, 2003

Week Thirty-one: "Spiritual Discernment"

Day One: Small Group Guide

Read: 1 Kings 3:5-15 (p. 369)

Read: Commentary (p. 370)

Reflect: What is the difference between spiritual discernment and natural intuition? Do you think you have either?

Dig: What did Solomon ask for (verses 7-9) and what were his motives for asking for this gift from God?

Study the "Freedom Point" on page 381 to see where Solomon began to lose his discernment and freedom.

What does this tell you about persevering in the way of discernment?

Apply: Do you want to be wise? What are your motives? Ask God for a pure heart and for a heart of wisdom.

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Day Two: "Discerning Good and Evil"

Read: Hebrews 5:12-6:3 (p. 1425)

Read: Commentary (p. 1426)

Reflect: Do you rely on your conscience to give you direction in good and evil?

Is this a reliable guide?

Dig: How is the "word of God" described in verses 12-13 of chapter 4? What does this description have to do with discernment?

What does verse 14 of chapter 5 teach you about growing in wisdom and

discernment?

According to 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 (p. 1307), what is the evidence of spiritual immaturity and therefore lack of discernment?

Apply: Since one of the church's greatest liabilities is Christians who have matured physically but not spiritually, ask God to bring you to greater levels of yearning to grow in your life in Christ. Where is God calling you to grow up?

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Day Three: "Listening to God"

Read: John 10:1-30 (p. 1214)

Read: Commentary (p. 1215)

Reflect: Do you hear "inner promptings" from God? Do you follow them with much confidence?

Dig: What does verse 6 of John 10 tell you about whether his listeners were his sheep?

What does verse 26 tell you about what comes first, becoming God's sheep (by His choosing) or belief?

What do verses 27-28 tell you about hearing Jesus' voice and eternal security?

Apply: Turn to Psalm 23 (p. 605) and use it as a personal prayer. That is, re-word it with your own name in it:

"The Lord is David's Shepherd, he shall not be in want.
He makes David to lie down in green pastures....."

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Day Four: "Spiritual Disclosure"

Read: John 16:5-15 (p. 1222)

Read: Commentary: (p. 1223)

Reflect: Does God regularly reveal insights to you? Should this be a usual experience of believers?

Dig: What does John 14:21 have to contribute to the guidance that we need to follow Jesus so that we hear his voice?

In Jesus' teaching, what is the difference between a servant and a friend? (see John 15:15 to answer that question).

Why is the word "Counselor" capitalized in verse 7?
What does this name tell you about the Holy Spirit's work?

What are the main tasks of the Holy Spirit in our life, according to verses 8-15? I came up with three. How many do you come up with? What are they?

Apply: Make a prayer to the Holy Spirit to lead you. Conclude by singing the song

"Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on me (repeat)

Break me, mold me, fill me, use me.

Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on me."

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Day Five: "Spiritual Wisdom"

Read: 1 Corinthians 2:6-16 (p. 1306)

Read: Commentary: (p. 1306)

Reflect: Who do you know that is wise about God and his ways? What makes them wise?

Dig: What do we learn about the Trinity from verses 10-11? What point is Paul making with the analogy to a human spirit knowing the mind of that person?

What two truths about an unbeliever does Paul make in verse 14?

How might that explain the behavior of some people about the gospel and

the Christian way of life?

Why is the last line of this chapter such a comfort?

What does it mean? (see Philippians 2:1-8 p. 1366) for a biblical answer.)

Apply: Turn to page 1507 in your Freedom in Christ Bible and read the bottom section of the page under the title "The Battle For Your Mind."
Conclude with a prayer asking for God's wisdom.