



SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT

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Christians are like a ping pong ball. They go back and forth between the flesh and Spirit (Galatians 5:16-26). Every second in our spiritual journey we are challenged to feed, exercise and discipline the spiritual man. This requires a continual discernment of where we are on our walk to heaven. Sadly, some have lost the ability to discern the spiritual or they have not yet acquired it. The Hebrews writer addressed this with these words: *“But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil”* (Hebrews 5:14).

What is discernment? The Greek word used in Hebrews 5:14 is *diakrisis* and means, “to distinguish, make a clear discrimination, discerning, judging.” In 1 Corinthians 12:10 it is translated “the distinguishing of spirits.” In Romans 14:1 it is translated “passing judgment on his opinion.” Another Greek word—*anakrino*—is used to describe the act of “making a distinction, to distinguish, or separate so as to investigate by looking throughout; to look with intensity, to scrutinize, question, to hold a preliminary judicial examination preceding a trial.” (Read Luke 23:14; Acts 17:11; 1 Cor. 4:3).

Have you every wondered why some Christian just don’t get it? They don’t seem to understand what God is wanting from their lives. Paul targets this problem in 1 Corinthians 2:14, *“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”* Could this be the answer to the question, why is it that some Christians don’t attend services, give as they should or participate in the Triple-E mission of the church? They are not spiritually minded and see such actions as foolish, not applicable to them. They are yet carnal in their actions and attitudes (1 Corinthians 2:14-3:1). Think about this for a minute!

It is obvious that making spiritual decisions is not an easy task if one neglects the discipline of the spiritual man. Even partaking of the Lord’s Supper is impacted by one’s ability to discern the spirituality related to Christ and one another in the assembly (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:29).



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Spiritual discernment is expected by God in all His children within a reasonable time of their new birth of water and Spirit: *“For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food”* (Hebrews 5:12).

Spiritual discernment is developed though (1) Bible study, (2) prayer, (3) a spiritual mindset (Col. 3:1, 2), (4) spiritual exercises (1 Tim. 4:7, 8), and (5) practicing the attitude of Christ (Phil. 2:4-8). How is your discernment relative to spiritual matters? How about Matthew 6:33?