

SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT

The secret things belong to God but those things that are revealed belong to God's people (Deut. 29:29). In Matthew 11:25 Jesus thanked the Father for hiding spiritual truth from "the wise and prudent" and revealing them "to babes" saying, "Even so, Father for so it seemed good in Your sight" (Mt. 11:26).

Paul, at great length in 1 Corinthians 1, shows that within himself, mankind does not know God's truth. In 1 Corinthians 1:18, he says, "the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing". In verse 21, he says, "in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God".

In 1 Corinthians 2:9, Paul quotes, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." But then goes on to say, "But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:10). By God's Spirit, the children of God know the things of God (1 Cor. 2:11-13).

In contrast, Paul says the natural man (the unsaved person without the Spirit) "does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14).

Knowing God and knowing His truth go together. And it all starts with the gospel of grace. True believers get this. Unbelievers may intellectually understand what is being said, but in their hearts, they don't really get it – they don't really accept or believe it.

And they OFTEN lie! The Apostle John defines a liar as one who claims to know God and yet lives a double life.

1 John 2:3–4 (NKJV)

3 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.

4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

Revelation 21:8 (NKJV)

8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

As my wife often says: "Saying it's so doesn't make it so!"

True believers have come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4). From the HEART, they get it (Rom. 10:9-10; 2 Cor. 4:6). And this is a life-changing reality! They now LOVE Jesus! They understand the truth of Jesus being Savior and Lord. They get GRACE! And they LOVE Jesus for it!

1 John 4:19 (NKJV)

19 We love Him because He first loved us.

The saved have spiritual discernment and consequently appreciate God's truth. The unsaved don't understand, and they don't appreciate it.

1 Corinthians 2:14–15 (NKJV)

14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.

Yes, indeed, "he who is spiritual judges all things." It's called DISCERNMENT and possessing the SPIRIT makes all the difference! This is the MARK of a true believer! Yes, as believers, we grow in discernment as we grow in truth, but all true believers have some level of discernment.