

**Fear judges but love discerns.** People hear what they want. What do you want? Are you willing to hear and see what God gives you? Sometimes we only see and hear what we want to see and hear. If we run what we receive through our "self" filter, then we will miss God's truth. Turn with me to Matt 13:13-15 NLT: *"That is why I use these parables, For they look, but they don't really see. They hear, but they don't really listen or understand. This fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah that says, 'When you hear what I say, you will not understand. When you see what I do, you will not comprehend. For the hearts of these people are hardened, and their ears cannot hear, and they have closed their eyes--so their eyes cannot see, and their ears cannot hear, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me and let me heal them.'"* People hear what they want to hear. Have you ever heard something that sounds weird or outlandish and you reply, "What? No way!" Then you have to work through your denial and decide whether or not you're going to own this truth? This process happens so fast that unless you've purposed in your heart to want the truth, then you're already giving yourself a way out. Story of kids and alcohol. If we run what we receive through our "self" filter, then we will miss God's truth. You have to want discernment.

**Fear judges but love discerns.** Listen and see with your heart what Jesus is saying to discern the truth. Understanding with your heart is discerning the truth. Like a little plant with its face inclined toward the sun, you need to incline your spirit toward the Son. Don't listen to confusion. Confusion is from the devil. When you feel confused keep pressing through the clouds of confusion until you see the sun! This is what we needed to do. We had to press through and press through. I learned not to take myself or circumstances or others too seriously. Only God seriously at His Word. God will bring you to the truth. Discernment gets you to the root of the problem. Turn with me to Acts 17:16 Jubilee Bible 2000: *"Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him when he saw the city completely given over to idolatry."* Other translations read, his spirit was provoked, he was greatly upset, deeply disturbed, greatly distressed, deeply troubled. Turn to John 1:5 AMPC: *"And the Light shines on in the darkness, for the darkness has never overpowered it [put it out or absorbed it or appropriated it, and is unreceptive to it]."* Such a wonderful truth to know that **God's Light in you will never be absorbed by the darkness around you.**

This is what Paul was sensing. The Light in John 1:5 was the discernment Paul had. He wasn't filled with righteous indignation, judgment or wrath. **Fear judges but love discerns.** He discerned the people's need to worship the true God. Because of his discernment he shared Jesus' love in such a way that many were saved. When your spirit is stirred or provoked, or you're confused or perplexed, pray and ask the Holy Spirit for revelation. He will give you discernment whether it's a vision, direction or understanding. **His discernment is always to protect, guide and help you, your loved ones and others.**

I've learned to listen to God to discern, pressing in until I have peace in my heart. The word discern and its derivatives are translations of the Greek word anakrino in the New Testament. It means "to distinguish, to separate out by diligent search, to examine." It literally means completing a process which intensifies – ana – to select by separating/judging –krino – properly, to distinguish by vigorously detecting "down to up" as in closely examining, investigating or questioning through the process of careful study, and evaluation. Turn with me to Heb 5:14 NASB: ***"But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil."*** Just the idea of going from down to up paints a word picture of discerning by looking around you and then looking up to God. The point is that it takes thoughtful processing and time to separate out with clarity an issue. It is a process and not a snap judgment. Krino is to judge: or try, condemn, punish. Anakrino is discern: or ask, process, search.

**Fear judges but love discerns.** Turn with me to Matt 7:1-5 Message: ***"Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults— unless, of course, you want the same treatment. That critical spirit has a way of boomeranging. It's easy to see a smudge on your neighbor's face and be oblivious to the ugly sneer on your own. Do you have the nerve to say, 'Let me wash your face for you,' when your own face is distorted by contempt? It's this whole traveling road-show mentality all over again, playing a holier-than-thou part instead of just living your part. Wipe that ugly sneer off your own face, and you might be fit to offer a washcloth to your neighbor."*** In verse 1, Jesus is saying, Don't judge, don't "krino." condemn, punish. I try to ask questions and use kind words. We usually judge out of fear, immaturity and pre conceived notions. Don't believe the lie from the devil that judgment will bring you clarity. Judgment only brings more judgment. Discernment takes time and

thoughtful process. Discernment brings clarity. I need to recognize and distinguish with my Holy Spirit intuition. I need to take responsibility for the issues in my life first.

**Follow God's headlights.** Be willing to be patient and walk through the process of understanding what God wants to show you. Turn with me to 2 Cor 2:13-16 NIV: *"This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. <sup>14</sup>The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned – anakrino - only through the Spirit. <sup>15</sup>The person with the Spirit makes judgments – anakrino - about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments – anakrino, <sup>16</sup>for, "Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ."* Discernment is the ability to properly discriminate or make determinations. It is related to wisdom. Don't listen to spirits of confusion or judgment. Don't listen to your own agenda, hurt or ideas. **Follow God's headlights.** God's Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. That's as far as I need to go. When driving at night, I only need to go as far as the headlights to get to my destination. Don't try to figure out the whole problem. God will give you what you need to get to where you need to go.

Charles Spurgeon said, "Discernment is not simply a matter of telling the difference between what is right and wrong; rather it is the difference between right and almost right." Sometimes you need to keep pressing into God to distinguish the "almost" from the "what's right." Listen to God to discern. Turn with me to Heb 4:12 NLT: *"For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires."* Discern here is "diakrasis" or a thorough judgment which distinguishes "look alikes." Jesus is the big Divide. People use the name God all the time. But when you say the name of Jesus, watch out. I like to say the Bloodline is the line in the sand. Jesus is the Light and makes all the difference.

Don't believe the lie from the devil that judging brings clarity. Only God vindicates and settles conclusively. I believed that judgment is a necessary filter

system for my protection. **Fear judges but love discerns.** The truth is that discernment brings clarity. I need to recognize and distinguish with my Holy Spirit intuition. Read with me in Rev 16:15 Jesus said, ***“Behold, I come like a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his clothes, so that he doesn’t walk naked, and they see his shame.”*** Now jump with me to Rev 22:1-3: ***“Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations. No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him.”*** Jesus reversed the curse of Adam and restored the blessing through His Life sacrifice. Jesus cursed the curse, shamed the shame on a tree. The fig tree died in the Garden of Eden because of sin, the fig tree died because Jesus the Omniscient One knew the soil was cursed by Adam’s sin. That fig tree represented the curse of sin and the end of the Law. Jesus was about to set in place the New Covenant. Jesus replaced Adam’s dead fig leaf clothes with beautiful righteous clothes. The fig tree leaves hid sin. The tree of life leaves bring healing! In Gal 3:13 ESV: ***“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”—”*** You are blessed to be a blessing to yourself and others! You have Holy Spirit inspired intuition to discern. Stop judging from fear and discern to understand. How will your discernment help others?