

Spirit Filled Community – The Gift of Discernment – “Is That You God?”



Overview:

Why is this gift important?

Because it helps us see and understand which other gifts / contributions that are brought in church are for us and from God. It also helps us to see and understand what God is doing "out there" in the world, too. 1 Corinthians 14:29 and 33 encourages the church to "carefully weigh" what is said in church. The Greek word for "weighing" is the same one used in 1 Corinthians 12, when Paul is listing spiritual gifts and describes "distinguishing" between spirits. Discernment is more than us just using our human ability to judge things, but is a SPIRITUAL gift and so can only be given by the Holy Spirit. A working definition of discernment: "A gift given by the Holy Spirit that helps us see what God is doing."

What does it look like?

Using three stories from the life of Jesus, David brought out some different points. Sometimes, discernment means we do the unexpected. Discernment can help open up gospel opportunities. Discernment can reveal what's lacking. Discernment includes distinguishing between different spirits and recognising when evil spirits might be present. Intimacy with the Father is key.

How can we grow in it?

God gives us help - 1) the Bible 2) one another 3) opportunities to practise and 4) the Holy Spirit.

Questions and activities

1. In what ways is the gift of discernment useful in the context of church meetings?
2. How can discernment be a useful gift outside of church?
3. Share any personal experiences of the gift of discernment.
4. Are there any practical ways in which we can grow in this gift?
5. Does anyone have a current situation where they would like to have the gift of discernment?
6. Pray for anyone who would like discernment for a specific situation. David shared that he felt God wanted to give discernment to people in tough work situations, so that they could see what God was doing – see whether this is relevant to anyone in your group.

Possible answers

- 1. Can determine whether words that people share are from God/relevant. For ourselves, or for others.*
- 2. Can open up opportunities for the gospel/allow God to bless people through us.*
- 4. Know the Bible better, look out for opportunities, when people bring words in church, actively weigh them.*