Discernment Is Not An Option

Become a Student of The Word and Learn to Discern
Hi, I'm Patrick

Becoming a Student of the Word

Are you being led away from the Bible?

My Prayer For You Who Are Reading This

Judge Rightly?

Believers are commanded to Judge and to be Critical

Departing from Sound Doctrine Leads to Apostasy

Why We Must Discern

The Core Mission of Philippians 1:9 Ministries

Before You Go...
Hi, I'm Patrick

I help my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ who are waking up to the deception within the church, go from being confused, hurt and not knowing what to do next, to being able to comprehend deception and help them learn how to discern by rightly dividing the Word of God.

After having hundreds of discussions with believers from all around the world who are wanting more sound teachings and who have many more questions, I felt led by the Lord to begin “Philippians 1:9 Ministries.”

I created this ministry to help believers find truth in an age of apostasy and deception. I have been faithfully teaching God’s Word for over a half a decade. I hold a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree that focuses on Discipleship Ministries.

I seek to always teach the full counsel of God and do not shy away from the difficult and controversial questions. I help believers grow in their understanding of God’s Word, so that they will grow in faith by applying God’s Word in context to their lives.

Philippians 1:9 Ministries strives to help believers study and rightly divide the Word of God so that they are not “carried about by every wind of doctrine.” In addition to the apologetic and evangelistic ministry of “The Bible In Context.” Philippians 1:9 Ministries goes deeper into teaching believers how to study the Scripture and become Bereans who are capable of rightly dividing the Word of God for themselves!
Becoming a Student of the Word

HOW TO BE A BEREAN

LET GOD BE TRUE, BUT EVERY MAN A LIAR

Discernment is a command and a required spiritual practice for ones survival in the wilderness of today’s unbiblical teachings. Being clever or intelligent does not necessarily mean you are exercising discernment. It is listening to the revealed Word of the God in the Scriptures so that we can know a false shepherd/teacher/prophet in disguise. The Bereans were exercising discernment.

A Berean is someone who goes to the Word; he esteems God’s Word over any mans word, personality or the prestige of men. One does not become a Berean overnight; it takes training and time. When Paul came to the Bereans and they looked into the Word to see if what Paul was saying was in fact correct, this was not a new concept but an Old Testament one. When the Pharisees disputed Jesus over His claims, He pointed them to the Word. When Paul reasoned with the Bereans they received what he said with readiness. But they did not just take his word, they went to the Scripture as their source to see if what he was saying was true.

NOW THESE WERE MORE NOBLE-MINDED THAN THOSE IN THESSALONICA, FOR THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH GREAT EAGERNESS, EXAMINING THE SCRIPTURES DAILY TO SEE WHETHER THESE THINGS WERE SO. ACTS 17:11

Those who exercise discernment make themselves more of a target to be attacked, more so than any other ministry, because they are contending with the truth against the falsehood that is so prevalent in the church today.

Today, in most churches, If discerning believers obey the "negative" biblical commands of Christ they are unloving. If they carefully test things by the Bible it is called unloving. If they warn about false gospels it is "unloving". If they mark and avoid false teachers they are called mean-spirited and again, unloving.

What ever happened to “IF ANYONE LOVES ME, HE WILL KEEP MY WORD: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our home with him” (John 14:23)

OR

"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love." John 15:10

Keeping His commandments means to also watch, to discern, to test, and to judge. To walk in love means you watch out for others, not just yourself. “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.” 1 John 5:3
Are you being led away from the Bible?

We are living in a time where the Shepherds won’t protect the sheep from the wolves. To avoid offending anyone, these "shepherds" will not teach against deception. They are feeding the sheep to the wolves. They have largely been fed junk theology in seminary and most are simply hirelings that are there only to make a profit. We are living in a post-christian, neo-pagan world. We are living in a day when the true believers are trying to evangelize the so-called Christians. The first sign Jesus gave the disciples, in Matthew 24, as a sign of the end of the age was deception. The massive increase in deception is the first and major sign!

Today many professing Christians are being drawn to a mystical experience and not a spiritual experience that can be confirmed by the Bible. Christians will be led away from biblical truth when their admiration for an experience they hear from a particular preacher influences them more than the Word of God, and they begin to want the same thing.

No issue will affect you more than the issues that come into your church, the local fellowship you attend. When this happens, there are only two choices, confront it or leave. If you confront it and they react against the truth you must leave for your own safety.

My Prayer For You Who Are Reading This

I pray you will take a few minutes to read about the importance of discernment in a believers life. I want to provoke your curiosity to study the Scripture and examine not only yourself but also your local fellowship and what is being taught by your favorite Bible teachers. At the end of the day, YOU are responsible for what you allow your ears to hear and your heart to follow.

May God by His Holy Spirit guide you into ALL Truth!

In Christ,

Patrick O’Brien
Judge Rightly?

A COMMAND TO JUDGE

The Word of God is what we use to be critical of everything and what we use to examine and judge all things, because the human heart is desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9) and the Devil is a deceiver (Revelation 12:9).

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12)

ζῶν γὰρ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐνεργής καὶ ἑτερότροπος ὑπὸ πᾶσαν μάχαιραν διστασμὸν καὶ διέθυμαμνὸν ἄρχει μερισμοῦ ψυχῆς καὶ θευργοῦτα, ἀρμῶν τε καὶ μυελῶν, καί κριτικὸς ενθυμησεων καὶ ἐννοιῶν καρδίας. (Hebrews 4:12 SBL)

BE Critical & EXAMINE ALL:
The Greek word translated as “discerner” is κριτικός (kriticos) and it is pronounced (krit-ee-kos). It is where we get the word in the English language for CRITICAL. The word means: Critical and able to judge!

JUDGE RIGHTLY

IF YOU'RE NOT DISCERNING YOU'RE ALREADY IN TROUBLE. DISCERNMENT IS NOT “FEELINGS”

Jesus said: “For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged” (Mat. 7:2). If you judge something by the Word of God you should be willing to be judged by the same standard. Jesus repeatedly taught men to judge rightly, insisting they “judge with righteous judgment” (John 7:24) and He praised a man who “rightly judged” (Luke 7:43).

The Apostle Paul wrote, “He who is spiritual judges all things” for “we have the mind of Christ” (1Cor. 2:15-16). We are never to judge the eternal destiny of someone, but we are commanded to judge their teachings. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. Hebrews 5:14

But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil. 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22

See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. Colossians 2:8

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1 John 4:1

DISCERNMENT IS NOT AN OPTION

But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good

Discernment is a necessary spiritual practice for ones survival in the jungle of todays non- biblical teachings. Being clever or intelligent does not necessarily mean you are exercising discernment. It is listening to the revealed Word of the Shepherd in the Scriptures so that we can know a false shepherd/teacher/prophet in disguise.

Today to obey the negative biblical commands of Christ is unloving. To carefully test things by the Bible is unloving. To warn of false gospels is unloving. To mark and avoid false teachers is mean spirited and unloving.

Whatever happened to “IF ANYONE LOVES ME, HE WILL KEEP MY WORD: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our home with him” (John 14:23)

When a teaching or practice does not line up with God’s Word, we are commanded “by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict” (Titus 1:9).

“Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son” (2 John 9). Doctrine is a must to uphold. Not all things are to be considered serious, but some are.

THEM THEY'RE HERE AND IN THE CHURCH

LET NO ONE DECIEVE YOU WITH EMPTY WORDS; FOR BECAUSE OF THESE THINGS THE WRATH OF GOD COMES UPON THE SONS OF DISOBEDIENCE. THEREFORE DO NOT BE PARTAKERS WITH THEM: Ephesians 5:6-7

CHRISTIANS CAN BE DECEIVED

STUDY TO SHEW THYSELF APPROVED UNTO GOD, A WORKMAN THAT NEEDETH NOT TO BE ASHAMED, RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH.

The Word of God tells us about a certain time at the end of the age where deceivers will become commonplace and there will be so much confusion that truth will become rare, few will speak it because few will know it.

We are to correct those in opposition but not by calling them names nor with ad hominem attacks, that are directed against a person to try to humiliate them. To not quarrel, one must be in control of both their heart and their tongue. Again, our goal is to win the person back with the truth and renew themselves to do God’s will.

John the apostle who was known for his love warns the church:

1Jn. 2:26 “These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you.”

1Jn. 3:7 “Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.”

John the apostle who loved much and was especially loved by Jesus speaks directly about liars who deny Jesus and “that no lie is of the truth.”

Paul writes to the Corinthian church but I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted— you may well put up with it! (2 Cor. 11:3-4)

THE BIBLE IN CONTEXT
Believers are commanded to Judge and to be Critical

In Hebrews 4:12 the Greek word translated as “discerner” is kritikós (κριτικός) and it is pronounced (krit-e-kos’). It is where we get the word in the English language for Critical. The word means, Critical and able to judge!

The Word of God is what we use to be critical of everything and what we use to examine and judge all things, because the human heart is desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9) and the Devil is a deceiver (Revelation 12:9). This is not critical in the sense of fault finding or sin sniffing, but critical in obedience to the command of God to test all things and to hold fast to what is good. The only way to know if a thing is good is to measure by the Word of God.

Christianity is not consistency to conscience or to convictions; true Christianity is being true to Jesus Christ & His Word! ~ Patrick O’Brien

Read It In Greek

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12)

Ζὴν γὰρ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἑνεργής καὶ τομώτερος ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν μάχαιραν δίστομον καὶ διϊκνούμενος ἀχρι μερισμοῦ ψυχῆς καὶ πνεύματος, ἀρμῶν τε καὶ μυελῶν, καὶ κριτικὸς ἐνθυμήσεων καὶ ἐννοιῶν καρδίας. (Hebrews 4:12 SBL)
Love only grows where a real knowledge of God, Who is Love, increases. This is a knowledge only found in the Bible. A real knowledge of God must be accompanied by “all” discernment. All three go together or not at all. For a love of God to increase there must be an increase in a real knowledge of who God is (John 17:3) and there must be discernment. Believers must take every thought captive and test it to the Word of God, no matter how right something sounds or feels. Feelings are a good servant, but a deadly master. Don’t be led by feelings but only by the Word of God.

**And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,**

*Philippians 1:9*

**Departing from Sound Doctrine Leads to Apostasy**

The Bible says to be sober minded and watchful. It’s a command NOT a request. We are in a battleground not a playground! Some have already turned aside to follow Satan.

Read 1 Timothy 5:15

Professing Christians today are flocking to churches to see what’s “new”. This has become more important to them than the expositional teaching of God’s Word. Because of this emphasis, many believers do not know how to identify error, nor have a clue on what to do about it. Churches are not teaching the doctrines of our Faith and this has led to people believing they can be a Christian without the confines of Biblical Doctrine.

Many church attendees enjoy the moral teachings and higher ethics that Jesus offers. They will often try emulating Jesus, but they never find it necessary to do it by the Book. Jesus just becomes their “mentor” that helps them reinforce their views of what they think is right in life.

Paul wrote to Timothy, who was trained in the Jewish Scriptures since his youth, in 2 Timothy 4:3-5: “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”
Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.”

God changes the believer’s life through the Word, it is a steady work of the Holy Spirit as we walk, yield and obey. He fills us with the Spirit. There is no impartation that will change us like this. The Word is Spirit, and the Word affects us by our understanding it so we can be changed into the people Christ wants us to be.

Arriving at a right doctrinal position and discerning things in a biblical manner in times like this has become more and more difficult for many sincere believers genuinely wanting to know the truth so as to do what is right & God’s Will.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth (John 16:13). There is no unity in the Spirit if there is not unity in Truth. They cannot be separated. The Word of God is Truth (John 17:17). True Unity is based on the obedience to God’s Word.

God is Love and the Word is God (John 1:1). To speak the truth in love simply means to use God’s Word, which is Love, to reproof and to correct others. It’s not our opinions or even our interpretations. It is literally showing another person the Truth of God’s Word and giving them the choice to line up with what God has said.

But you’ll always get the same story “Don’t be negative. Don’t be too critical. We have to unite. We have to stand together in face of the common threat.” Continue to speak the Truth and live in the Truth. Never mind what others think.
Why We Must Discern

A mixture of truth and error has been Satan’s trick from the beginning. He deceived Eve by mixing truth with error when he subtly distorted what God truly said out of context. In the temptation narrative, he likewise tempted Jesus by twisting scripture out of context. This reflects his nature as disguising himself as an angel of light. This is why Paul warns that Satan’s servants are sent by him to deceive the church camouflaging themselves as angels of light (2 Corinthians 11:3 & 13-15). Peter warns they similarly twist the scriptures out of context unto their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16).

The New Testament describes this mixture of doctrinal truth and error as ‘secretly introducing destructive heresies’. In 2 Peter 2:1 Peter uses the Greek term parasoxousin, meaning they place truth next to error. This passage tells us that such men are false teachers and false prophets using the Greek prefix psuedo meaning pretending to be real ones. Peter tells us that such men even deny the master who bought them, which is exactly what we see today. Wrong doctrine (wrong orthodoxy) always leads to wrong practice (wrong orthopraxy). If you don’t know God’s Word says about righteous living in Christ, you won’t be living a righteous life in Christ by His strength.

The Core Mission of Philippians 1:9 Ministries:

To Alert believers in Christ of the unbiblical teachings and practices influencing the church.

To Exhort believers to give greater heed to Biblical discernment and Truth regarding teachings and practices being currently promoted in the church.

To Supply believers with teachings, information, and materials which will encourage the love of God's Truth and assist in the development of Biblical discernment.

To Mobilize believers in Christ to action in obedience to the Scriptural command to "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3).

To Impact the church of Jesus Christ with the necessity of trusting the Scriptures as the only rule of faith, practice, and a life pleasing to God.
Philippians 1:9 Ministries is a place for new believers as well as older believers to come together and study God’s Word. This a community of Bereans that help hold one another accountable to studying the Word of God and applying it to their lives.

I begin by teaching newer believers who are just born again, or who have just come out of deception, how to approach the Bible and begin studying it for themselves.

I help infants in Christ who are on the milk of the Word learn about the Bible in chronological order and in its original historical setting. I then help them transition to the meat of the Word by being able to compare Scripture with Scripture. A student on the meat of the Word will be able to make sense of the various Bible translations and begin to understand the Languages (Hebrew & Greek) of the Bible too.

Once a believer is consuming a strong diet of the meat of the Word, I help them to be the light in the world by teaching them how to defend the Faith. They learn how to answer the difficult questions by learning apologetics. Lastly, a believer will learn to discern by understanding Truth and the deceptions aimed against the church today. They will learn how to use the sword of the Word.

Want to be notified when the doors reopen for our membership community? Join the Waitlist today!

**YOUR WAITLIST LINK**

Grow in a knowledge of Christ with us! Become a student of the Word who is capable of rightly judging all things by the Scripture.