

THE REDEMPITIVE NATURE OF SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT

JEFF HOOVER - MAY 3, 2015 - EVANGEL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Spiritual Maturity...Knowing who you are,
what you're here for, and how life in the kingdom of God works!

How then does a man gain the essence of wisdom?

We cross the threshold of true knowledge when we live in complete awe and adoration of God.
(Prov 1:7 PASSION)

- **We want the wisdom that comes from God.** We're not talking about "intelligence," but Godly wisdom...having the wisdom to know what to do in any given circumstance. A couple days ago, **Bonnie Jones** saw what I believe is just around the corner for the church...

"In a vision I saw a **wealthy businessman** as he came to visit **my mother** at her house. I acknowledged his presence but nodded so he would not enter my room and be recognized by guests because I knew he was a married man. He smiled as he turned and walked the other way.

I believe my mother represents the church and the businessman was the Lord coming to marry her. And He's bringing the wealth of the Kingdom with Him. He will only come to where He is welcomed. **He's coming to those "virgin" churches that have made themselves ready.** They have prepared the oil in their lamps and have learned how to rest in Him. (Matthew 25:1-13)

There were ten virgins that had the same opportunity for visitation by the Lord yet five were foolish and made little preparation. They continued looking good in the eye of man and held on to religion depriving the body its spiritual maturity. While the other five virgins were wise they suffered persecution by the foolish ones. Yet **they continued to mature in the gifts of the Spirit, were grounded in the Word and learned to love.**

Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. (Matthew 25:2-5)

Behold, the Bridegroom is coming! It's not a time of visitation. He's coming to marry the church!"

- **This is what we are really seeking?**...to continue to **mature** in the gifts of the Spirit, to be **grounded** in the Word of God and to **learn to love**. At the center of this pursuit is **spiritual discernment** (Where we "cross the threshold of true knowledge" which opens the door to spiritual discernment).
- **THE BIG IDEA:** When we pair **spiritual discernment** with **spiritual love**, discernment becomes more than knowledge and wisdom from God. When this happens, the discernment we get from the Holy Spirit becomes **redemptive in nature**. It is a discernment that **rescues** people and **delivers** them from evil! Today, I want to talk about...

"The Redemptive Nature of Spiritual Discernment"

- What does it mean for something or someone to have a "**redemptive nature**?"
 - **Redemption** is *the action of saving or being saved from sin, error, or evil*. In the case of Christians, we believe we are "saved" or redeemed through the actions of Jesus on the Cross.
 - If we want to **appropriate the benefits of this redemption**, we must choose to consciously and intentionally invite Jesus to be the Lord of our lives.
 - So, **for those who are separated from God by their sin**, the way back into relationship with Him is to receive **salvation** (a free gift), which is possible through the **redemption** as a result of Jesus' sacrificial death on the Cross.
 - God sent him (Jesus) **to buy freedom for us** who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children. (Gal 4:5 NLT-SE)
 - **God paid a high price for you**, so don't be enslaved by the world. (1 Cor 7:23 NLT-SE)

- **PRE-BELIEVERS Returning to God through REDEMPTION...**Through Jesus, pre-believers are redeemed from the penalty of sin and it's stain. Redemption is defined as..."Acting to save someone from error or evil."
- The **benefits of redemption** are:
 - **Eternal life...**
 - ⁹ And they sang a new song with these words: "You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it. For you were slaughtered, and **your blood has ransomed people for God** from every tribe and language and people and nation. ¹⁰ And you have caused them to become a Kingdom of priests for our God. And **they will reign on the earth.**" (Rev 5:9–10 NLT-SE)
 - **Freedom from the Law's curse...**
 - But Christ has **rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law.** When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for our wrongdoing. For it is written in the Scriptures, "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." (Gal 3:13 NLT-SE)
 - **Adoption into God's family...**
 - ⁵ God sent him to **buy freedom** for us who were slaves to the law, **so that he could adopt us as his very own children.** ⁶ And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father." ⁷ Now you are no longer a slave but **God's own child.** And since you are his child, God has made you his heir. (Gal 4:5–7 NLT-SE)
 - ¹⁵ So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, **you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children.** Now we call him, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. (Rom 8:15–16 NLT-SE)
 - **Deliverance from sin's bondage...**
 - He gave his life to **free us from every kind of sin**, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing good deeds. (Titus 2:14 NLT-SE)
 - **Peace with God...**
 - ¹⁸ Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So he is first in everything. ¹⁹ For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, ²⁰ and through him God reconciled everything to himself. **He made peace with everything** in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross. (Col 1:18–20 NLT-SE)
 - **The indwelling Holy Spirit of God...**
 - ¹⁹ Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the **Holy Spirit, who lives in you** and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, ²⁰ for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body. (1 Cor 6:19–20 NLT-SE)
- **BELIEVERS Return to God through RESTORATION...**Through the Holy Spirit, believers are **guided, protected, confronted, cleansed, and empowered** by the grace of God to this end...that, through this process we are **restored to the joy of our salvation.**
 - David talked about it, even **before** salvation in Jesus was available!
 - ¹² **Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you.** ¹³ Then I will teach your ways to rebels, and they will return to you. (Psa 51:12–13 NLT-SE)
 - Now all glory to God, **who is able to keep you from falling away** and will bring you with great joy into his glorious presence without a single fault. (Jude 1:24 NLT-SE)
 - "My wayward children," says the LORD, "**come back to me, and I will heal your wayward hearts.**" "Yes, we're coming," the people reply, "for you are the LORD our God. (Jer 3:22 NLT-SE)
 - **I am overwhelmed with joy in the LORD my God!** For he has dressed me with the clothing of salvation and draped me in a robe of righteousness. I am like a bridegroom in his wedding suit or a bride with her jewels. (Is 61:10 NLT-SE)

- **Falling away** from relationship with Jesus is very real and not really as uncommon as we would like to think, because it is subtle, deceptive, insidious, and ...
 - ¹⁹ They (false prophets) promise freedom, but they themselves are slaves of sin and corruption. For you are a slave to whatever controls you. ²⁰ And when people escape from the wickedness of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get **tangled up** and **enslaved** by sin again, **they are worse off than before**. ²¹ It would be better if they had never known the way to righteousness than to know it and then reject the command they were given to live a holy life. (2 Pet 2:19–21 NLT-SE)
 - These are some of the **transgressions we are redeemed from**...
 - Falling asleep
 - Buying into deception
 - Falling and not getting back up
 - Believing lies
 - Unforgiveness, bitterness and resentment
- **WRAP-UP:** When we choose to love and ask for God's wisdom

My child, only when you **treasure my wisdom** will you acquire it. And only if you accept my advice and **hide it within** will you succeed. So **train your heart to listen when I speak** and **open your spirit wide to expand your discernment**...For the Lord has a hidden storehouse of wisdom made accessible **to His godly lovers**. (Prov 2:1-2, 7-8 PASSION)

- What we're after is the **full expression of God's love** that comes through **spiritual discernment**...
 - ⁹ **God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him**. ¹⁰ This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. ¹² No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his **love is brought to full expression in us**. (1 John 4:9–12 NLT-SE)
- **Spiritual discernment** comes to those who make the choice to “**live in love**.”
 - ¹⁶ **We know** how much God loves us, and we have **put our trust** in his love. God is love, and all who **live in love** live in God, and God lives in them. ¹⁷ And as we live in God, **our love grows more perfect**. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world. ¹⁸ **Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear**. (1 John 4:16–18 NLT-SE)