

*Note: Because of the AI technology used in the transcription of the video, the message below is accurate, but not an exact translation.*

## **Discipleship Groups — Level 5**

### **WEEK 4**

#### **The Gift of Discernment of Spirits**

Hello everyone

We are in class number four. With this class we finish Level 5 of our Discipleship series. Wow, what joy and satisfaction!

Our desire is that all the information you received at each level will be of great value to your life and help you in your growth as a disciple of Christ.

Before I begin this class, let me pray, *"Lord, I ask You to open our understanding and that through this class we may receive fresh knowledge of Your word."*

Up to this point we have taught about eight of the gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit: Word of Knowledge, Word of Wisdom, Faith, Healings, Prophecy, Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues, and Miracles. Today I want to teach you about the Gift of Discernment of Spirits.

The apostle Paul in the first letter to the Corinthians writes:

*"... He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit." — 1 Corinthians 12:10 NLT*

We live in a time when we receive hundreds of messages every day: on social media, on TV, at work, at school, and even in conversations with friends. Some of them seem good, even spiritual, but not all of them come from God.

The apostle Paul taught that one of the gifts that the Holy Spirit gives to the church and to Christ's disciples is the ability to discern spirits: that is, to recognize if something really comes from God, if it is just a human idea, or if it comes from a spirit that seeks to confuse us. This gift is very important today.

#### **Why is it important?**

- It is important because it helps us not to be deceived by messages that seem biblical but distort the truth.
- It is important because it allows us to identify what builds our faith and what destroys it.
- It is important because it protects us from spiritual fads, ideologies, and teachings that can lead us away from the way of Christ.

We can say that the discernment of spirits is like a spiritual alarm that sounds to alert us when something is not aligned with God's Word.

Just as we need traffic lights on the streets to guide traffic and avoid collisions, we also need discernment to avoid spiritual errors and stand firm in the truth. This gift is extraordinary because it allows us to see beyond what the natural eyes see, to identify whether something comes from God, man, or the enemy.

It is important to emphasize that the gift of discernment of spirits is not an action of suspicion. Suspicion is born from the human heart and arises from distrust, prejudice, or negative past experiences. Spiritual discernment is supernatural revelation of the Holy Spirit.

This revelation is objective, clear, and does not bring confusion. The gift of Discernment of Spirits leads us to recognize what really comes from God.

The gift of discernment of spirits is not natural intuition. We can all have hunches or "gut feelings," based on past experiences, emotions, or human perceptions. But that is not a spiritual gift.

The discernment of spirits does not depend on what we feel or think, but on what the Holy Spirit reveals to us deep down. The gift of discernment is a God-given ability that transcends our personal logic or experience. The Holy Spirit opens our eyes to see the invisible: whether if a message, an attitude, or a spiritual manifestation comes from God, from human flesh, or from forces contrary to the Spirit of Christ.

The discernment of spirits is like spiritual lenses that God lends us to see beyond what the human eyes and heart can perceive. The apostle John writes, *"Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world."* —1 John 4:1 NLT

The apostle John warns that not everything that sounds spiritual comes from God. In his day there were false teachers who claimed to speak in the name of the Lord, but taught things contrary to the truth of Christ.

On social media, podcasts, books, or even in churches we can hear attractive, motivating messages that seem biblical...but they are not always faithful to God's Word. The command is to test the spirits: John invites us to "test" every message. That means comparing it to the Bible, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and not just getting carried away by emotions.

The discernment of Spirits protects us from being confused. We must be believers who think, who examine, who do not accept any teaching just because it sounds nice, but who filter it with the Word of God and the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Here are some BIBLICAL EXAMPLES where we see the use of the Gift of discernment of spirits.

### **Ananias, Sapphira and the Apostle Peter (Acts 5:1-11 NLT)**

In the early church, Ananias and Sapphira sold property and took only a portion of the money to the apostles, but they pretended to give it all. At first glance, it seemed like a generous offering, and humanly speaking, anyone would have thought, "What a blessing!"

But Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, discerned the lie. He did not act out of suspicion or human intuition. The Spirit revealed to him that Ananias and Sapphira were not lying to men, but to the Spirit of God. The discernment of spirits revealed what was hidden to the apostle Peter.

### **Jesus our Savior**

The examples given by Jesus are the best examples of the gift of discernment of spirits. The Pharisees and temple members along with the Roman government sought to catch Jesus in some error in order to bring him to trial. To achieve this end, they set traps for him.

Several times during his ministry, they tried to set traps for him to accuse, discredit, or put him to death. On a human level, these were well-thought-out questions, but Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, discerned the real intention of their hearts, and always emerged victorious.

Examples:

### **Caesar's Tax (Matthew 22:15-22)**

In this account, the Pharisees, the Jewish people, and those who supported the Roman government come together and ask Jesus the following question: Is it legal to pay tribute to Cesar or not?

If Jesus said that it is legal to pay the tax to Rome, the Jewish people and the Pharisees would see him as a traitor since they hated everything that came from the Roman empire.

If Jesus said that it is NOT legal to pay the tax to Rome, the faithful of the Roman government could accuse him of rebellion against Rome. The intention was to commit him to Rome or to the people.

Jesus discerns malice and answers wisely:

When they handed him a Roman coin, he asked, "Whose picture and title are stamped on it?" "Caesar's," they replied. *"Well, then," he said, "give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God."*  
— *Matthew 22:21 NLT*

As a result of Jesus' response, everyone was amazed and could not catch him.

Another example

### **The woman caught in adultery (John 8:3-11)**

In this account, the scribes and Pharisees of the temple take a woman caught in adultery and put her in the midst of everyone. When they see Jesus in the crowd, they ask Him. "Master, this woman has been caught in adultery. In the law of Moses, he commands us to stone her. What should we do? What is your opinion?"

If Jesus answered to do what the law of Moses says, the Romans would put him in prison, since the Jews were not allowed to execute the death penalty, If Jesus said do not stone her, the Jews would accuse Him of contradicting the law of Moses.

Jesus discerns their hypocrisy, and their intention was not to do justice, but to arrest him. Jesus answers:

*"They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, "All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!"*

*— John 8:7 NLT*

As a result of Jesus' response, the accusers left one by one, and the woman was restored.

### **Finally:**

#### **If you have the Gift of Discernment of Spirits**

The Holy Spirit is going to open up opportunities for you to activate this gift. When the Holy Spirit directs you, obey and do what He tells you. That is the time to see the supernatural.

#### **If you don't have the Gift of Discernment of Spirits, what should you do?**

Ask the Holy Spirit.

Pray this way: *"Holy Spirit, if you want to use me with the Gift of Discernment of Spirits, here I am, give me this gift."*

#### **In closing, I want to pray**

*I pray that the Holy Spirit will fill you and pour out His anointing upon you.*

*I pray that the Holy Spirit will distribute in each of you His gifts, according to His perfect will.*

In Jesus' name.

Love

Up Next:

See you at the next level

A Thousand Blessings