

## The 72 – Kingdom Leadership & Ministry Equipping

Spiritual Discernment—Part 2

Teaching Notes

February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021

### 1 WELCOME TO THE 72

- The 72 bring the Word, power, and love of Jesus wherever they are sent.
  - See **Luke 10:1-12, 17-20**.
  
- The Call:
  - The 72 are CHOSEN.
  - The 72 are SENT.
  - The 72 are KINGDOM MOTIVATED.
  - The 72 are SUPERNATURALLY RESOURCED.
  
- The world needs 72 believers more now than ever.
  
- Right now, the atmosphere is pregnant with possibilities...but our awareness to those possibilities is being diminished by the chaos around us...some of which we're creating ourselves.

### 2 OUR NEED TO GROW IN SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT HAS NEVER BEEN MORE CRITICAL.

- We live in a nation that's unhealthy on multiple levels:
  - Spiritually
  - Racially
  - Morally
  - Politically
  - Emotional/Psychological
  - Environmentally
  - Health
  
- What are the signs of health? Peace, rest, security, confidence, etc.
  
- What happens when you bring that kind of distress into the Church?
  - Unhealthy believers raise-up unhealthy sons and daughters of God.
  - You, as a leader and ministers of God, have to become something far greater than anything previously expected.
  
- At the top of the list of *need to grow areas of our faith-walk is spiritual discernment*.

### 3 BIBLICAL DISCERNMENT

- **Definitions:**
  - Discernment answers the question: *What's really going on here?*
    - Everyone believes they know what the answer is, but not everyone can be right.

- Discernment is a supernatural *spiritual knowing or perceiving* regarding the truth behind the activity of God, spirits, and people in any given situation.
- Discernment is the spiritual cheat-sheet.

➤ **Some Key Scriptural Examples of Discernment:**

- **(Discerning thoughts) Matthew 9:4–6 (ESV)** — 4 But Jesus, **knowing their thoughts**, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? 5 For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? 6 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he then said to the paralytic—“Rise, pick up your bed and go home.”
  - What people say and what people are thinking can be two different things.
- **(Knowing motivations) John 2:23–25 (ESV)** — 23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. 24 But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because **he knew all people** 25 and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.
  - You can’t trust your life with everyone.
- **(Internal awareness) John 6:61 (ESV)** — 61 But Jesus, **knowing in himself** that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this?
  - The sensitivity of checks and balances within you are real.
- **(Knowing the timing, demonic activity, personal assignment, prophetic seasons) John 13:1–3 (ESV)** — 1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus **knew that his hour had come** to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. 2 During supper, when **the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him,** 3 Jesus, **knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands,** and **that he had come from God and was going back to God,**
  - Life is too important to neglect the real movement of God in it.
- **(Awareness of demonic strategies) Acts 16:16–18 (ESV)** — 16 As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. 17 She followed Paul and us, crying out, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.” 18 And this she kept doing for many days. **Paul, having become greatly annoyed,** turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour.
  - Not everything that appears to be good is good.
- **(Judging correctly) John 7:23–24 (ESV)** — 23 If on the Sabbath a man receives circumcision, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because on the Sabbath I made a man’s whole body well? 24 **Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.”**
  - We must develop spiritual eyes in order to see beyond the flesh.

- **(Understanding prophetic seasons) Matthew 16:2–3 (ESV) — 2** He answered them, “When it is evening, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.’ 3 And in the morning, ‘It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.’ **You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.**
  - Jesus mandates that we should have a prophetic discernment of the times.
- **(Knowing the will of God) Romans 12:1–2 (ESV) — 1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.**
  - You must break off a worldly mindset to discern the will of God.
- **(Being sensitized to truth in the Spirit) 1 Corinthians 2:10–11 (ESV) — 10** these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. 11 For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also **no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.**
  - If we’re not sensitized to the Spirit, how will we understand God’s thoughts.
- **(Understanding the Spirit’s thoughts) 1 Corinthians 2:14 (ESV) — 14** The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because **they are spiritually discerned.**
  - Discernment is the product of moving from a natural mind to a Spirit mind.
- **(Gaining supernatural insight and wisdom) Ephesians 1:15–17 (ESV) — 15** For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you **the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,**
  - Spiritual discernment is received on purpose.

#### 4 THE POWER OF DISCERNMENT

- Discernment strengthens and encourages our resolve to fulfill our calling and assignment.
- Discernment reveals the true battles we’re facing.
- Discernment creates strategies for success in any given situation.
- Discernment motivates us to forge ahead when resistance is high.
- Discernment identifies the focus of our prayers and declarations of faith.
- Discernment develops proper relationships.
- Discernment aids us in our maturing process.

5 **THE SHORTCOMINGS AND DOWNSIDE OF DISCERNMENT**

- A General Statement: discernment is highly susceptible to deceptions of all kinds.
- Immaturity compromises the integrity of discernment.
- Emotional and psychological distress distorts discernment.
- The Cycle of Pain (from our last session) can derail our intimacy with the Lord, and therefore, our ability to discern His heart and will in any given situation.
- Our cultural and historical predispositions can fuel false discernment or false prophetic insight.
- Personal emptiness will cloud our spiritual judgment, producing manipulative strategies.
- Personal offenses will produce false prophetic insight or wisdom.

6 **GROWING IN HEALTHY DISCERNMENT**

- Create opportunity for regular personal encounters with Jesus.
- Create a Kingdom culture within the culture of your heart.
- Develop accountability with other believers, especially mature believers.
- Discipline your life in Word and Prayer.
- Don't allow culture, politics, and flesh to dominate your perspective or the agenda of the Kingdom.
- Work on personal healing and deliverance every day.
  - 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Ephesians 5:22-23
- Focus on mission more than accusation.

7 **FINAL WORD**

- Our God is a good God...the lover of our souls...provider...healer...full of grace...our deliverer...our peace...our rest...our restorer... When we stop representing these things, we lose our ability to discern His will for all humanity.