

# AI, Idolatry, & The Image of the Beast 3

## *Discerning of Spirits*

(preached 7/16/23)

Please turn to *1 Corinthians 12*.

### Sermon #1:

- IDOLATRY: the result of idolatry is to create a graven image and worship it.
- What drives a person to do so is the attempt to connect with an unseen spirit through a physical medium/representation.
- God told us in the Bible that idols are empty of life and spirit, and anyone who attempts to connect with them also become desolate
- AI is growing fast and is already intertwined in our lives.
- It cannot become “self-aware” because it has no soul/spirit/life.
- The mysterious “Image of the Beast” is a lifeless idol that is somehow given the ability to speak and hear.
- A.I. is unique in that it’s not physical, yet it can speak and hear.
- I believe it’s the perfect tool for Satan to speak and act in this world.
- For the first time, he no longer requires a human medium or avatar to do so!
- Jesus and Daniel referred to the Beast’s Image as “The Abomination that Makes Desolate” and whoever worships it, will end up taking the Mark.

### Sermon #2:

- God is Spirit and His true worshippers connect with Him in Spirit and Truth.
- In other words, the whole “we can’t see, hear, and touch” Him thing is not a thing for us.
- We can and do connect with God—in our hearts and spirits—despite the fact that He’s not here physically.
- The Second Coming will be great! We’ll finally see Jesus face to face.
- Yet the Lord has NOT restrained our relationship in the here and now.
- He literally created us for relationship with Him and each other.
- He made us temples of God’s Spirit, then gave God’s Spirit to us!
- We have been denied nothing! We’re not “settling” until the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming!
- We have intimate closeness with God right here, right now!

TODAY we’re going to proof ourselves against 2 enemies who are both very alluring and seductive. I would call them an unholy couple who work together to draw us further away from Christ and the Church.

**They are DECEPTION and its spouse PARANOIA.**

CONSPIRACY THEORIST. For some, it's become hip to be a conspiracy theorist nowadays but I've been one since the late 1970's. When modern people claim they've been "red pillled" by certain "recent" revelations my response is "*come on in, the water's warm.*" I've already believed most of that stuff for decades and even tried talking about it back then.

Now let me tell you the dark side of becoming a conspiracy theorist, whether you're secular or a Christian: **PARANOIA WHICH LEADS TO ISOLATION.**

*A CT can become so afraid of being deceived, misled, gaslit, etc. that they begin to suspect most everyone else of giving forth misinformation and disinformation.*

PREACHERS, POLITICIANS, ETC. By "everyone else" I mean more well-known people whether preachers, politicians, commentators, or what have you. Even the ones who they started out agreeing with and seem to preach most of the same doctrine...well...they might just be deep state shills secretly working for the other side. In the shadows they're nothing more than globalists with ties to the WEF.

**If it's a preacher, teacher, or prophet then PARANOIA can lead one to believe they're one of the end-times "wolves in sheep's clothing" who is attempting to deceive them.**

As I've said from this pulpit before, I can spot these folk ten miles away. *The Christian ones see apostasy & "false teaching" everywhere.* They tried this church, then that one, then another one...but had to leave because of false teaching. At first they liked this minister and that prophet, only to discover they were sharing demonic doctrine and false prophecies that were only leading people astray.

**The group of people they "trust" becomes smaller and smaller until it eventually becomes just them.**

**They isolate themselves from the Church and others which is the OPPOSITE of what Jesus said to do.**

**This is not healthy and the Holy Spirit is NOT the Spirit behind these thoughts & actions.**

You cannot separate Jesus from His Church. We are one.

**Church is a gathering of Christians, a fellowship of communal worship, teaching, encouragement, and works for God's Kingdom.**

**You cannot love Jesus and hate/avoid/seclude yourself from His Church.**

So our question is: *how can we avoid end-times deception yet not fall into fear, paranoia, and isolation?*

- How do we discern the difference between false teaching and real, good and evil, and true prophecies vs. false ones?

Let's start with the following statement: **GOOD GODLY DISCERNMENT IS NOT MARRIED TO FEAR OR PARANOIA.** One doesn't have to come with the other.

**Discerning of Spirits a supernatural gift that comes from God and not one of human intellect or wisdom.**

- It won't lead us to looking down upon others not flowing in it.

9 GIFTS. In *1 Corinthians 12*, Paul is explaining the 9 spiritual gifts God gave to us and let's start with verse 10:

**[1Co 12:10 ESV]** 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

DISTINGUISHING. First let's focus on the word "distinguishing" and your translation might say "discerning"—they mean the same thing. It translates to "judicial estimation." Your kid comes home with a black eye and says he ran into a wall—is he telling the truth or did he get into a fight? Is he being honest or trying to cover something up? You need to make a judicial estimation and the need to do so takes place when we're presented with something...usually information, teaching, news, evidence, etc.

Now comes the important part that you and I should be including in this gift: **God calls upon us to distinguish SPIRITS.**

GREEK LABELS EVERYTHING. The NT is written in Greek and Greek is a thorough language. There are labels and names for everything including physical humans, ideas, concepts, teaching, doctrine, prophecies, news, data, you name it.

**The supernatural gift that the Holy Spirit gives isn't any of the above—it's so we can see the spirit BEHIND all the above.**

There are only two types of spirits:

- God/those who come from Him.
- Satan/those who come from him.

*There are many spirits and their types greatly vary.* Yet none of them are “neutral,” there are no “ET” spirits who give wisdom outside of “religion,” and no nature spirits who are “outside good and evil.”

**The only way Christians know the Truth is because the Spirit behind the truth is the Holy Spirit.**

Satan is the spirit behind falsehood and deception.

**The purpose of the Gift of Discerning of spirits is to discern which spirit is behind the person, organization, government, ministry, movement, party, church, doctrine, teaching, theology, etc.**

*Let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater:* a preacher can get something wrong, a prophetic person prophesy and it doesn't come true, etc. and doesn't mean that the Devil is running the show. I've said things in the past that came from my flesh vs. the Holy Spirit, but Satan is most certainly not the spirit behind myself or Gateway.

**That being said...**

- When I see politicians consistently passing laws that directly fly in the face of God's commandments, then I know the spirit behind it is Satan.
- If a church or ministry embraces the morals and values of the world, calling evil good and good evil (as Isaiah said), then a demonic spirit is running the show.
- Any person or organization seeking to confuse and corrupt kids is being directed by the Devil.

JUST ASK. The good thing about all the Gifts of the Spirit Paul referred to in 1 Corinthians 12 is that we can and should ask for them.

**[1Co 12:31 ESV]** 31 But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

ASK FOR DISCERNMENT. My temptation has been to ask for the more dramatic gifts like healing or miracles, and I confess that it's been awhile since I asked God for Discerning of Spirits. Speaking for myself, I have the tendency to rely more upon my mind or sum of my experiences.

- The intellect we have now is not this gift.
- The wisdom we have born from experience, trial, and error is not this gift.
- We don't have this gift "naturally."

All 9 GIFTS are *supernaturally given by the Holy Spirit*.

**Discerning of Spirits is supernatural, outside of the mind & heart, greater than our intellect or experience.**

**IT CAN BE GIVEN TO A CHILD WHO HEARS SOMETHING FROM A POLITICAL OR RELIGIOUS PULPIT AND KNOWS SOMETHING IS OFF.**

*Listen to your daughter when she tells you Uncle Johnny is creepy and she doesn't want to be around him!*

Let me quote a verse that's likely familiar to you:

**[1Co 1:18 ESV]** 18 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

HS MUST REVEAL. Before and after this verse, Paul takes the time to explain that Salvation isn't understood with the mind, but only when the Holy Spirit reveals it to our spirit.

"SPIRITS." What's the gift called? The one we're talking about today? Not "discernment." It's called Discerning of Spirits. Making the connection?

WHICH SPIRIT? If we hear the Gospel and interpret the whole thing as foolish, ridiculous, unnecessary, or what have you then haven't realized that it comes from the Spirit of Truth, Who is God. Our earthly minds and hearts reject it. Let read the next verse now:

**[1Co 1:19 ESV]** 19 For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

- A high intellect cannot understand the Gospel.
- A person with lots of wisdom born from trial, error, and experience cannot discern the Gospel.

## **Discernment is supernatural and tells us WHO the spirit is behind the message.**

- An unbeliever will only believe when they finally have a REVELATION.
- A revelation only takes place when the Holy Spirit talks to their spirit and reveals.
- He reveals that the Gospel is coming from GOD.
- Then and only then is said person ready to repent and receive Jesus.
- Then the “aha!” moment comes and the person passes from death to life.

Reading about the **end times** in the Bible can be scary. Look at this:

**[Mat 24:21-24 ESV]** 21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. 22 And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. 23 Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it. 24 For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, **so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.**

*Some read these verses and go “ahhhhhhhhhhhh! I don't wanna be deceived!”*

How about these verses:

**[1Ti 4:1 ESV]** 1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons,

*Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!! I don't wanna fall away!*

We read **Revelation 13** and see that many will worship the Beast AND the mysterious “Image of the Beast” that we’ve talked about and I think will be an AI. The FP convinces people to worship the Beast and its image by performing great signs and wonders.

*Ahhhhhhhh! I don't want to take the Mark!!!*

What’s the answer? ***Ask for the gift of being able to distinguish between spirits.***

It’s a whole lot easier to do that than to:

- fall into fear, suspect every preacher and prophet of being a wolf
- accuse the “vast majority” of churches of apostasy
- isolate yourself whilst clutching your Bible.

# **It's easier to approach God's Spirit with humility and just ask Him to gift you with knowing which spirit is talking.**

When we combine this with Spirit-led knowledge of God's Word, the Bible, here's the result:

*[Heb 5:14 ESV]* 14 But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

## **The combination of Spirit and Word is far more effective than that of paranoia and isolation.**

- The Lord wouldn't have created the office of pastor and teacher if He didn't want people pastoring and teaching others.
- He wouldn't have created Prophets if He didn't want them prophesying to people.
- He wouldn't have created the Church if He didn't want us doing faith together.

Ironically, right after Paul reveals the 9 gifts of the Spirit, he goes on to say:

*[1Co 12:12-21 ESV]* 12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and all were made to drink of one Spirit. 14 For the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? 18 But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. 19 If all were a single member, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

SAME LANGUAGE. Here's what's interesting: Paul is using the same language and phrases to describe God creating the Church as he does the Gifts—that each was God's choice and He designed things this way on purpose.

In other words: **He made us to need each other.** And we do!

- I grieve whenever I see churches or ministers embracing the world and calling the doctrine of demons that of God.
- I don't like it when prophetic people don't seek out multiple witnesses to what they prophesy and expect us to believe every word is right from God with no error.
- There are certainly wolves in sheep's clothing out there, attempting to deceive, and sent by Satan.
- As we draw closer to the second coming, these deceivers are on the increase.

***But I don't have to be afraid.***

- I don't have to reject everything I hear and trust only in myself.
- I don't need to isolate myself, clutching my Bible to my chest until the Rapture happens.

I can ask the Holy Spirit to help me discern other spirits!