



INVISIBLE POWERS AND PLACES

Lesson 12

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WORD FOR THE JOURNEY

- **Ephesians 6:10-12** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.
- Today we are moving our study to issues of deception within the church caused by false teachers and spiritual entities
- **Philippians 1:9-11** And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may **approve** the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.
- Approve: *dokimazo*: to accept after assaying, or refining

THE KNOWLEDGE DIFFERENCE

- **Colossians 1:9-10** For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the **knowledge** of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;
- Knowledge: *epignosis*: full discernment and processing of information stored in the mind by the brain, with the supervision and help of the Holy Spirit
- Knowledge: *gnosis*: accumulated facts taken in, categorized and stored by the brain in the mind
- In order to not be deceived, we have to be diligent in our study of the Word
- How does this affect the church?

FALSE PROPHETS

- **2 Peter 2:1-3. 9-10** But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce **destructive heresies**, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in *their* greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep...the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge the flesh in *its* corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties,
- The lure of false teachers may not primarily be doctrine – doctrinal perversions are secondary

EXAMPLES

- **Sensuality:** *aselgeia*: wantonness, licentiousness, immorality
- **2 Corinthians 11:13-15** For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.
- **Despise Authority:** *kataphroneo, kuriotes*: hating lordship
- Both the lordship of Christ and the authority of church leaders are despised because of their independent spirit and desire to do things their own way
- **1 Kings 3:9** "So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

ASK THE QUESTION

- Everything in the church claiming to be authored by the Holy Spirit may not be (this may be intentional willfulness, or ignorance/misunderstanding)
- **1 Thessalonians 5:21-22** But examine everything *carefully*; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil.
- **1 John 4:1** 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.
- HOW DO WE TEST THE SPIRITS? INSPECT THE DOCTRINE
- **1 John 2:18-19** Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.

BE ON GOD'S SIDE

- **Ephesians 4:30** Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
- Grieve: *lupeo*: to cause sorrow
- **1 Thessalonians 5:19** Do not quench the Spirit;
- Quench: *sbennumi*: put out, extinguish
- **THE THING GOD GAVE YOU TO DO ISN'T THE ONLY THING GOD IS DOING**
- **THE WAY GOD HAS YOU DO THINGS ISN'T NECESSARILY THE ONLY WAY GOD CAN DO THEM**
- **Luke 9:49-50** John answered and said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name; and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow along with us." But Jesus said to him, "Do not hinder *him*; for he who is not against you is for you."
- **God works in many ways in different people and places; different doesn't mean wrong**

RECOGNIZE CONFUSION

- **1 Corinthians 14:33** ...for God is not *a God* of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.
- Confusion: *akatastasia*: disturbance, disorder, commotion
- Peace: *eirene*: restful undisturbed quietness
- If confusion doesn't originate with God, that leaves the source as the world, flesh, devil
- **CAUTION: JUST BECAUSE SOMETHING IS ORDERLY DOESN'T MEAN IT IS FROM GOD!**
- **1 Corinthians 14:40** But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner.
- **James 3:14-16** But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and *so* lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.

EDUCATION THE ENEMY?

- God created people to be creative thinkers
- **Romans 12:2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.
- We cannot pursue education as an end in itself
- Neither can we consider things supernatural to be an end in themselves
- In certain circles, just doing the next thing God says is very troubling.
- In other circles, believing that God can speak through His word in logical and meaningful ways in unthinkable
- Spiritual people can be academics; academics can be spiritual people
- **Academics and being led by the Spirit should not be mutually exclusive!**

JESUS IS BUILDING HIS CHURCH

- **Matthew 16:18-19** "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."
- **1 Corinthians 3:9-11** For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
- **We are diverse workmen, each with a unique part**
- During the building process there may be creative tensions because of varied gifts and talents; however, God's desire is always to build His church

KNOWING THE WORD

- Our questioning should always center around Biblical truth
- **Acts 17:10-11** The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. 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.
- The Word tells us that personal holiness is important
- **2 Corinthians 7:1** Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.
- Since no one has all the gifts, we need to hear from each other to discern truth
- Discernment (*diakrino*) means to make a distinction: ours should be between truth and error, right and wrong

WE DECEIVE OURSELVES WHEN...

- Besides the deception of false prophets or teachers and the deception of evil spirits, the Bible warns us about self-deception:
- We hear the word but don't do it James 1:22; 1 Peter 1:13
- We say we have no sin 1 John 1:8
- We think we are wise 1 Corinthians 2:16 & 3:18, 19, Romans 1:22
- We think we're religious but don't bridle the tongue James 1:26
- We think we won't reap what we sow Galatians 6:7
- We think the unrighteous inherit the kingdom of God
1 Corinthians 6:6-10
- We think we can associate with bad company without being corrupted 1 Corinthians 15:33
- When the Holy Spirit warns, or when we lose peace within, we should stop and pray; we ask God to help; we allow the Holy Spirit to bring conviction; we respond appropriately