

How To Discern Between Right and Wrong
1 Thessalonians 5: 19-22

Russell Cook
West End Church of Christ
Knoxville, TN

1. The theology of many believers today is a lot like a patchwork quilt. They take a bit of this and a bit of that and piece it all together.

a. As a result, they accept anything. They hear what they want to hear. They are easily deceived.

b. Discernment is a mark, an identifying characteristic of a mature Christian.

2. Webster says discernment "stresses the power to distinguish and select what is true or appropriate or excellent."

3. Today we will learn that someone who is maturing in the faith learns to practice careful discernment. Our text gives us three keys to discernment. First, don't quench the Spirit. Second, don't despise prophecies. Third, test everything by truth.

1. "Do Not Put Out the Spirit's Fire." 1 Thess. 5: 19

1. Now when you read this phrase in verse 19, what do you think it means?

2. Evidently, in the young church at Thessalonica, this was happening. So how does one put out the fire?

1. First, we quench the Spirit by ignoring His teaching.

2. Second, we quench the Spirit by not yielding to His control.

3. Third, we quench the Spirit by not walking with Him.

3. The Warning about Quenching the Spirit.

1. First, we quench the Spirit's work in others by what we say.

2. Second, we quench the Spirit's work in others by what we do.

2. "Do Not Treat Prophecies With Contempt." 1 Thess. 5: 20

1. What are "prophecies?" What do you think of when you read this word?

2. How does one avoid despising prophecies?

3. "Test Everything. Hold On To The Good." 1 Thess. 5: 21-22

1. Verses 21-22 give us this last key for biblical discernment. In fact, we can break these two verses down in three parts. Let's look at each of them.

2. "Test Everything."

3. "Hold on to the good."

4. "Avoid every kind of evil."