

Gospel Centered Discernment
2024-09-08

2 Corinthians 10:5

We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,

Not everything that sounds “**godly**” is the **Holy Spirit**. You must **determine** if it’s **God**, the flesh, **opinions**, or the enemy.

- **Discern thoughts** and advice **through** the **filter** of **Gospel truth**. 1 John 4:1, Jeremiah 17:9, Psalm 1:1-2

Put **thoughts** and **advice** into a few **concise sentences** and **use scripture** as a **filter**.

- **Is it sinful? Will it be sin if it’s acted** upon? The **Bible defines sin**, not society or our heart.
- **Is it un-Biblical? Is it contrary** to what the **Bible** says about **God**, man, gospel, **church**? Example: revenge.

- If it’s **not sin** or **unbiblical**, then **continue** to **discern** by these **3 filters**:

1. Does it produce condemnation or conviction in your heart? Romans 8:1, John 16:8

- To condemn: means to **find fault** with, or to **judge against**.
 - To convict: means to **tell a fault**, rebuke, or **convince**.
- **Condemnation** is **faults** usually **stated GENERALLY** to **discourage us**.
 - Common examples: **lousy Christian**, hypocrite, **nothing good** happening, or that nobody cares.
 - **It’s feeling-focused**: EVERYTHING is **wrong** but you **can’t identify ANYTHING**.
 - **Response**: “If you are the Lord, **show me exactly** what I’ve **done**, or done **wrong!**”
- **Gospel-centered** thoughts and advice **produces conviction**. Example: a **SPECIFIC** fault, like you **lying**, **intended to lead to repentance**. Hebrews 12:10-11
 - Conviction is like a **surgeon’s knife**, **precise** with a **goal to heal through repentance**.
 - Condemnation is like an **attackers** knife, **randomly slashing** to harm and **destroy**.

2. Is God’s favor and acceptance based on your works or God’s grace? Isaiah 1:18, Romans 8:2-4, Romans 5:1

- **If it is based on your works**, the Law, or your **performance** means: “**If I obey, I’m accepted.**”
 - **It uses the law against** you, and **often** dwells on or **reminds** you of **past failure**.
 - Still _____, so you must do _____ to get God’s favor back.
- **Grace focused favor or acceptance** means: “**I’m accepted through Jesus Christ**, so I have a **desire to obey.**”
 - **We have God’s acceptance and favor because of Jesus’ performance** for us, **not my performance**.

- **Repentance** and joyful **obedience** are **not** to **earn** Jesus' favor, but **because** we **already** have it.
- **Jesus** does **not** drive us **by** the **law** but **draws** us in **with love**.
 - **He calls** us to **trust** and **rely** on **Jesus'** desire and **power** to **save** and **keep**, and to **mature you**.

3. **Does it lead** toward **lesser** or **greater fellowship** with **Jesus** and His **body**? Luke 15:20-22

- **The enemy discourages us by** distorting our view of the Lord: **condemnation**, **legalism**, and a **judgmental** spirit.
 - **The enemy encourages you to stop** fellowshiping because **you**, or **they**, or the **church** too sinful or **not spiritual**.
 - **The enemy isolates** you, then you **feel lonely**, hurt, **rejected** by **others**, and **angry**.
 - He's like a **wolf**: he **separates** a lamb from the **shepherd** and the **flock** to **destroy it**.
- **God convicts** yet **leads** you in **closer fellowship** with Jesus and Christians. Hebrews 4:15-16, Hebrews 10:24-25
 - The **Holy Spirit** convicts and **disciplines**, yet gives **hope**, **reassurance** of Father's **UNCONDITIONAL** love, **COMPLETE** forgiveness and **amazing grace**
 - **Condemnation** is a *feeling not truth*...Jesus' **love** accepts and **forgives YOU**.

Spiritually unhealthy thoughts and advice **just come** but **what we do** with **them** is our **choice**.

- You will **reap what you sow** in your **thought life**. Garbage in, then garbage out.
 - The **Holy Spirit** enables **self-control (fruit)** to **take** thoughts **captive and not run wild** or **free**.

Discern thoughts and **advice** through **Gospel truth**: the **Word**, conviction or condemnation, **grace** or **work**-based acceptance, and **more** or **less** fellowship with Jesus. Colossians 2:8, 2 Corinthians 10:5, James 4:7, Philipians 1:9-11,

- **Daily**, let the **Gospel** be the **filter** for ALL **truth** about God, **yourself**, the **world**, sin, and **problems**.
 - You'll **find** that **Gospel truth** will **produce** peace, hope, **enduring joy** **grounded** in **person**, work and **presence** of **Jesus Christ** in your life.