

The following article is provided primarily as an aid to those who are using the UNBOUND model of deliverance. It is not intended to be complete in itself. Reading *UNBOUND: Practical Guide to Deliverance*, attending an UNBOUND conference and/ or listening to the conference CD's is recommended.

Discernment of Spirits

To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

1 Corinthians 12:8-10

Discernment is a gift from the Lord. By this gift, God enables us to understand the motives of one's heart and to recognize where an action comes from. Is it from the Spirit of God, the human spirit, or an evil spirit? Does it flow from truth or a lie?

Since it is a gift of the Holy Spirit, we need to continually rely on the Lord to lead us and not operate simply on our own knowledge. As with any gift, discernment is not isolated from knowledge. The gift develops in the context of reflection, study and experience. Whether we have a strong spiritual gift or small gift of discernment, we can learn to be more effective in using the gift we have been given.

The context of discernment must be love and humble service. The gift of discernment used by immature or wounded individuals may become a means of self-protection or control. Under a spirit of self-deception, one may disguise judgment, criticism, gossip, and even slander as the gift of discernment. It can be a weapon: "You are filled with pride." "You need deliverance." "You need to renounce rebellion." "She has a spirit of division." "He has a spirit of envy." "You have a controlling spirit." Statements like these can cause great harm. Anyone seeking to grow in the gift of discernment should be aware of these dangers. The best preparation for using the gift of discernment is self-knowledge. The Holy Spirit brings us through a process of brokenness in which God reveals to us our hearts. The first book I wrote was *The Older Brother Returns*. This is my story of how God exposed my heart and what I learned from it. Being aware of our own weakness enables us to serve another humbly.

Spirits are Related

In the interview process that we use in the Unbound model of deliverance, spirits, lies, and/or bindings are revealed. We are aware spirits work together as a means of hiding the root entryway or root spirit, deepening their binding of the person, and building a pattern of thinking that is a stronghold. It is helpful to become aware of typical groupings of spirits. For example: anger, rage, hatred, revenge, retaliation, bitterness, resentment, violence, murder, unforgiveness... Consider how these spirits are interrelated. Think about how similar and different they are. We cannot name and gain authority over hatred by calling it anger. We cannot have victory over a spirit of violence if we do not name it but simply call it something else. If we are in denial about one member of an interrelated group or we are simply blind to it, God in His mercy will help us to see. But we still need to take responsibility and name our enemy.

Superficial vs. Significant

Many times the spirits that seem most superficial are really important because they are present to cover up and disguise or hide the more significant ones. Freedom will come when the deepest bondage is uncovered and renounced.