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The Three Battlegrounds by Francis Frangipane

Chapter 10 - The Gift of Discernment (Part 1)

The Holy Spirit will open up the timeless truths of the Bible; He will also speak to our inner man in dreams, visions and prophetic words. Yet, much of what God reveals must pass through the filter of our degree of purity of heart. Thus, if we will move in true discernment, our view of life must be purged of human thoughts and reactions. We must perceive life through the eyes of Christ.

To Discern, You Cannot Judge

We will never possess true discernment until we crucify our instincts to judge. Realistically, this can take months or even years of uprooting old thought-systems that have not been planted in the divine soil of faith and love for people. To appropriate the discernment which is in the “mind of Christ” (see 1 Corinthians 2:16), we must first find the heart of Christ. The heart and love of Jesus is summed up in His own words: “I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world” (John 12:47).

Spiritual discernment is the grace to see into the unseen. It is a gift of the Spirit to perceive the realm of the spirit. Its purpose is to understand the nature of that which is veiled. However, the first veil that must be removed is the veil over our own hearts. For the capacity to see into that which is in another’s heart comes from Christ revealing that which is in our own hearts. Before He reveals the sin of another, Jesus demands we grasp our own deep need of His mercy. Thus, out of the grace which we have received, we can compassionately minister grace to others. We will know thoroughly that the true gift of discernment is not a faculty of our minds.

Christ’s goal is to save, not judge. We are called to navigate the narrow and well-hidden path into the true nature of men’s needs. If we would truly help men, we must remember, we are following a Lamb.

This foundation must be laid correctly, for in order to discern, you cannot react. To perceive, you must make yourself blind to what seems apparent. People may react to you, but you cannot react to them. You must always remain forgiving in nature, for the demons you must cast out will challenge you, masquerading as the very choice of the person you seek to deliver. You must discern the difference between the oppressing spirit and the person oppressed.

Thus, Jesus prepared His disciples to be proactive in their forgiveness. Using Himself as their example, He taught, “Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him” (Luke 12:10). Jesus prepared His heart to forgive men before they ever sinned against Him. He knew His mission was to die for men, not condemn them.

Likewise, we are called to His mission as well. In His prayer to the Father, Jesus said, “As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them” (John 17:18). We are called to die so that others may live. Therefore, we must realize that before our perception develops, our love must mature until our normal attitude is one of forgiveness. Should God reveal to us the hearts of men and then call us to release them from captivity, we cannot react to what they say. As our perception becomes more like Christ Himself and the secrets of men’s hearts are revealed to us, we cannot even react to what they think.

If we do not move in divine forgiveness, we will walk in much deception. We will presume we have discernment, when in truth, we are seeing through the veil of a critical spirit. We must know our weaknesses, for if we are blind to our sins, what we assume we discern in men will merely be a reflection of ourselves. Indeed, if we do not move in love, we will actually become a menace to the body of Christ.

To be continued...