

GOD HOLDS US RESPONSIBLE

God holds us responsible to discern and hold to the Truth, providing ample warning in His Word. “Do not judge” has become widely misunderstood and misapplied, even by (misguided) Christians. We are commanded to test (judge); it is our responsibility. There is no provision for “sympathy” for “sincerely” following false doctrine.

NOTE: See separate study entitled “[Only One Way](#).”

Do not judge?

- Mt 7:1 "Do not judge, or you too will be judged.
Lk 6:37 "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.
Rom 2:1 You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.
(Jam 2:10-11) For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. ¹¹For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.)
Jam 4:12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you-who are you to judge your neighbor?

We are commanded to test (judge); it is our responsibility

- 1Jn 4:1 Dear friends, 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.
1Th 5:21-22 Test everything. Hold on to the good. ²²Avoid every kind of evil.
Mk 4:24 "Consider carefully what you hear," he continued. "With the measure you use, it will be measured to you-and even more.
Pr 10:21 The lips of the righteous nourish many, but fools die for lack of judgment.
Lk 12:57 "Why don't you judge for yourselves what is right?
(Jn 8:15a) You judge by human standards;)
Jn 7:24 Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment."
Jn 7:50-51 Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, ⁵¹"Does our law condemn anyone without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?"
2Co 13:5-6 Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you-unless, of course, you fail the test? ⁶And I trust that you will discover that we have not failed the test.
Gal 6:4 Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else,
1Co 11:28 A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.

- 1Ti 3:10 They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.
- 1Co 5:9-12 I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people-¹⁰not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. ¹¹But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. ¹²What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside?

Warnings to watch out for false prophets and deceivers

- Mt 24:4-5 Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. ⁵For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.
- Jn 10:1-2, 9a "I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. ²The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. ... ⁹I am the gate;
- Mk 13:21-23 At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it. ²²For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive the elect-if that were possible. ²³So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time.
- 2Co 2:17 Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God.
- 2Co 11:13-15 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. ¹⁵It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.
- Act 20:30 Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.
- Eph 5:6-7 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. ⁷Therefore do not be partners with them.
- Col 2:4 I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments.
- 2Th 2:3a Don't let anyone deceive you in any way,
- Jam 1:16 Don't be deceived, my dear brothers.
- 2Pe 2:17-19a These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them. ¹⁸For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. ¹⁹They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity-
- 2Pe 1:20-21 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. ²¹For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
- Jn 7:18 He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him.
- 1Jn 2:26 I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray.
- 2Jn 7 Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist.

Warnings to guard against false teaching

- Gal 1:6-7a I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel- ⁷which is really no gospel at all.
- Pr 14:15 A simple man believes anything, but a prudent man gives thought to his steps.
- Eph 4:14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.
- Col 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.
- Mt 16:12 Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.
- 1Ti 1:3-4a As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer ⁴nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies.
- 1Ti 4:1-2 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. ²Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.
- 1Ti 4:7 Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.
- 1Ti 4:16a Watch your life and doctrine closely.
- 1Ti 6:3-4a If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴he is conceited and understands nothing.
- Tit 1:9-11 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. ¹⁰For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group. ¹¹They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach-and that for the sake of dishonest gain.
- Tit 2:1 You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine.
- Tit 2:15a These, then, are the things you should teach.
- Heb 13:9a Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings.
- 2Jn 10-11 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. ¹¹Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work.

Warnings regarding those who cause divisions

- Rom 16:17-18 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. ¹⁸For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people.
- Gal 1:7b Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.
- Gal 2:4 [This matter arose] because some false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves.
- 1Ti 1:4b These promote controversies rather than God's work-which is by faith.
- 1Ti 6:4b-5 He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions ⁵and constant friction between

- men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.
- Tit 3:9-11** But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.¹⁰ Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him.¹¹ You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.
- Jude 17-19** But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold.¹⁸ They said to you, "In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires."¹⁹ These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.

Warnings to avoid evil and the evil schemes of men and Satan

- Act 20:29-31** I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock.³⁰ Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.³¹ So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.
- Lk 10:3** Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.
- Eph 5:15-16** Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise,¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.
- Eph 6:10-11** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.
- 2Co 2:11** in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.
- Phl 3:2** Watch out for those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh.
- Isa 5:20** Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.
- Mt 4:10** Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"
- 2Th 2:9-10** The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders,¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.
- 2Ti 3:6-8a** They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires,⁷ always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth.⁸ Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth—men of depraved minds,
- 2Ti 3:12-13** In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,¹³ while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.
- 2Pe 3:17** Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.

Seek Truth; obtain knowledge, understanding, wisdom and discernment

- Pr 23:23** Buy the truth and do not sell it; get wisdom, discipline and understanding.
- Pr 19:2** It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be hasty and miss the way.
- Rom 10:2b** they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge.
- Pr 4:5** Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or swerve from them.

- Pr 4:7 Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.
- Pr 8:10-11 Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold,¹¹for wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her.
- Pr 16:16 How much better to get wisdom than gold, to choose understanding rather than silver!
- Pr 15:14 The discerning heart seeks knowledge, but the mouth of a fool feeds on folly.
- Pr 18:15 The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge; the ears of the wise seek it out.
- Pr 19:8 He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who cherishes understanding prospers.
- Pr 23:12 Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge.
- Pr 24:14 Know also that wisdom is sweet to your soul; if you find it, there is a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.
- Ps 119:66 Teach me knowledge and good judgment, for I believe in your commands.
- Phl 1:9-11 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight,¹⁰so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ,¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ-to the glory and praise of God.
- Col 1:9-10 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.¹⁰ And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,
- Col 2:2 My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ,
- 2Pe 3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.
- (Hos 4:6a my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.)

Warnings to stick to the Truth

- Ecc 12:11-12a The words of the wise are like goads, their collected sayings like firmly embedded nails-given by one Shepherd.¹²Be warned, my son, of anything in addition to them.
- 2Co 10:5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.
- 2Ti 3:14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it,
- 2Ti 4:2-4 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage-with great patience and careful instruction.³For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.⁴They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.
- Lk 8:18 Therefore consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him."
- Heb 2:1 We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.

- 1Jn 2:20-21 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth.²¹ I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth.
- 1Jn 2:27 As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit-just as it has taught you, remain in him.
- Rev 1:3 Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.
- Rev 22:7 "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book."
- Pr 30:6 Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.
- Dt 4:2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.
- Dt 12:32 See that you do all I command you; do not add to it or take away from it.
- Rev 22:18-19 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book.
¹⁹ And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

No excuse

- (See separate study entitled "[The Resurrection of Jesus.](#)")
- Rom 1:19-20 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities-his eternal power and divine nature-have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.
- Jn 15:22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sin.
- Isa 43:10-12 "You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me.¹¹ I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior.¹² I have revealed and saved and proclaimed-- I, and not some foreign god among you. You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "that I am God."
- Mk 6:2 When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. "Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles!"
- Mt 9:6 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins . . ." Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home."
- Mt 11:20-24 Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent.²¹ "Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.²² But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you.²³ And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day.²⁴ But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."
- Mt 13:58 And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.
- Mk 6:5-6 He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them.⁶ And he was amazed at their lack of faith.

- Jn 10:24-26 The Jews gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." ²⁵Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, ²⁶but you do not believe because you are not my sheep.
- Jn 10:31-39 Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, ³²but Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?" ³³"We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God." ³⁴Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods'? ³⁵If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came-and the Scripture cannot be broken-³⁶what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son'? ³⁷Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. ³⁸But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." ³⁹Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.
- Jn 14:11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.
- Jn 15:24 If I had not done among them what no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have seen these miracles, and yet they have hated both me and my Father.
- Lk 19:37-38 When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: ³⁸"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"
- Act 2:22 "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.
- Heb 2:3b-4 This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. ⁴God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

How to recognize legitimate teaching/teachers

- Dt 18:21-22 You may say to yourselves, "How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the LORD?" ²²If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him.
- Jer 28:9 But the prophet who prophesies peace will be recognized as one truly sent by the LORD only if his prediction comes true."
- Mt 7:15-16a "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. ¹⁶By their fruit you will recognize them.
- Mt 23:1-3 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: ²"The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. ³So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.
- Jn 10:37 Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does.
- 1Jn 2:6 Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.
- Tit 1:16 They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.

- Lk 6:43-45 "No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. ⁴⁴Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. ⁴⁵The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.
- 1Jn 3:7-8 Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. ⁸He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.
- 1Jn 3:10 This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.
- 3Jn 11b Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God.
- 2Co 2:17 Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God.
- 2Ti 3:1-5 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ²People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God- ⁵having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.
- 1Jn 2:22 Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist-he denies the Father and the Son.
- 1Jn 4:1-6 Dear friends, 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. ²This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. ⁴You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. ⁵They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.
- Act 17:11 Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.
- Rom 14:5b Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.

Sure judgment of false teachers/deceivers

- 2Co 11:13-15 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. ¹⁵It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.
- 2Pe 2:1-3 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them-bringing swift destruction on themselves. ²Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth

- into disrepute. ³In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.
- 2Pe 2:13a They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done.
- 2Pe 2:17 These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them.
- Jude 4 For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.
- Jude 14-15 Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones ¹⁵to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him."
- Gal 5:10b The one who is throwing you into confusion will pay the penalty, whoever he may be.
- Rev 12:10, 12 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. ... ¹²Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short."
- Rom 16:20a The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.
- Rev 19:20 But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.
- Rev 20:10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Able/not able to understand (discern)

- Eph 4:11-15 (God's formula and provision for church sanity) It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹²to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.
- 1Co 12:3 Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.
- 1Co 2:9-14 However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"- ¹⁰but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. ¹¹For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹²We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is

from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. ¹³This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. ¹⁴The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

2Co 3:14-16 But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. ¹⁶But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

Mt 13:14-17 In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: "You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. ¹⁵For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.' ¹⁶But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. ¹⁷For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

(Jude 22) Be merciful to those who doubt;)

Jer 6:10 To whom can I speak and give warning? Who will listen to me? Their ears are closed so they cannot hear. The word of the LORD is offensive to them; they find no pleasure in it.

Jn 8:43-44a Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. ⁴⁴You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire.

Jn 8:47 He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God."

Jn 10:4b-6 his sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." ⁶Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

Jn 10:8 All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.

Jn 10:25b-27 The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, ²⁶but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. ²⁷My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

2Co 4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

(Act 5:34-40) But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while. ³⁵Then he addressed them: "Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. ³⁶Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. ³⁷After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered. ³⁸Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. ³⁹But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God." ⁴⁰His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them

- flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.)
- (Act 7:25 Moses thought that his own people would realize that God was using him to rescue them, but they did not.)
- Jn 1:5 The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.
- Lk 24:45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.
- 2Co 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.
- Act 16:14 One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message.
- Pr 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.
- Pr 9:10 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
- Pr 15:33a The fear of the LORD teaches a man wisdom,
- (Ps 34:11-14) Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
¹²Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, ¹³keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies. ¹⁴Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.)
- (Pr 8:13a To fear the LORD is to hate evil;)
 (Pr 3:7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.)
- (Job 28:28 And he said to man, 'The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding.'")
- Pr 15:32 He who ignores discipline despises himself, but whoever heeds correction gains understanding.
- Pr 28:5 Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the LORD understand it fully.
- Pr 2:1-5, 9-10 My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, ²turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, ³and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, ⁴and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, ⁵then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. ... ⁹Then you will understand what is right and just and fair--every good path. ¹⁰For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.
- Jn 7:16-17 Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. ¹⁷If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own."
- Jn 8:31-32 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³²Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
- Rom 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.
- Phl 1:9-11 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ¹⁰so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, ¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ--to the glory and praise of God.

- Col 1:9-10 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.¹⁰ And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,
- Col 2:2 My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ,
- Eph 5:15-17 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise,¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

Applying discernment

- Rev 2:2 I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false.
- 1Ti 5:22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.
- 2Th 3:6 In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.
- 2Th 3:14 If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed.
- 1Co 5:3 Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present.
- 2Co 6:14a Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.
- Rom 16:10a Greet Apelles, tested and approved in Christ.
- (Act 28:18 They examined me and wanted to release me, because I was not guilty of any crime deserving death.)

Examples to follow/the example to set

- Rom 14:22b Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves.
- 1Co 11:1 Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.
- 1Co 4:16-17 Therefore I urge you to imitate me.¹⁷ For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.
- Phl 4:9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.
- Phl 3:17 Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.
- 2Th 3:7a For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example.
- Tit 2:7-8 In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness⁸ and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.