

DISCERNING THE POWER OF GOD

JUNE 19, 2016

INTRODUCTION

How do we discern the Power of God? In today’s message, Pastor Joe listed four indications of the Spirit’s leading: 1) Is it consistent with God’s will/nature? 2) Is it consistent with His Word? 3) Is it consistent with His people? 4) Is it consistent with His path? As we walk in relationship with the Holy Spirit, spending time in the Word and drawing closer to the things that God has a heart for, we will grow more and more accustomed to the voice of the Holy Spirit. Let’s look at the Scripture from the sermon (Acts 11) to see how Peter listened to the Spirit.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever had an element of your theology or thinking challenged by the obvious hand of God? If so, share it with your group.
2. Read Acts 11:1-3. What words are used that express how the ‘apostles and the believers throughout Judea’ felt about Peter’s interaction with Cornelius?
3. Read Acts 11:4-10. Peter is re-telling the story from Acts 10, when God told him in a vision to eat unclean animals. God tells Peter three times, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean” as Peter protests God’s command to him. How often do you question your discernment of the Spirit’s voice when you sense Him asking you to do something?
4. Read Acts 11:11-14. What does the Spirit tell Peter to do? Why would it take the Spirit of God to tell Peter to go with these men?
5. Read Acts 11:15-18. Peter shares that the Spirit “came on” the Gentile believers. What is Peter’s response? What is the final result for those who heard his explanation?
6. What insights regarding the voice of the Spirit do you gain from the following verses?

Psalm 119:105 _____

Proverbs 3:5-6 _____

Proverbs 11:14 _____

Study Questions for Community Groups

Romans 12:1-2 _____

1 Thessalonians 5:19-21 _____

2 Timothy 3:16-17 _____

James 1:5 _____

7. It is often said that ‘knowledge is power’. What can you do to get to know Him more in order to better discern His Spirit’s voice?

APPLICATION

In Jeremiah 33:3, God said, “*Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.*” God loves to speak, but are you listening? Jesus often said, “*Whoever has ears, let them hear*” (Matthew 13:9, Matthew 11:15, Mark 4:9). Is there something you believe the Holy Spirit is calling you to do? If so, spend time listening to God, and ask yourself if what you are being called to do is consistent with God’s will/nature, Word, people, and path?

SCRIPTURE

¹The apostles and the believers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the Word of God. ²So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him ³and said, “You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them.” ⁴Starting from the beginning, Peter told them the whole story: ⁵“I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was. ⁶I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles and birds. ⁷Then I heard a voice telling me, ‘Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.’ ⁸I replied, ‘Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ ⁹The voice spoke from heaven a second time, ‘Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.’ ¹⁰This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven again. ¹¹Right then three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea stopped at the house where I was staying. ¹²The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man’s house. ¹³He told us how he had seen an angel appear in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. ¹⁴He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved.’ ¹⁵As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as He had come on us at the beginning. ¹⁶Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁷So if God gave them the same gift He gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God’s way?” ¹⁸When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life.”

Acts 11:1-18 (NIV)