

Sermon Series: *Identity*

8/2/26, “Discernment,” Eph. 5:6-21

INTRODUCTION Ever been tricked into doing something wrong?
discernment: Ability to decide between truth & error, right & wrong

MAIN IDEA: Use God’s discernment to live as God’s child.

How? Here three examples.

I. First, in ideas (6-10)

Empty: false, deceitful **Words (*logos*)**: word, message, argument

A. guard against deception... *attempts to cause us to sin*

1. ideas intended to lead us astray
2. that oppose true God, His commandments
3. bringing God’s wrath on unbelievers/rebels

Sons of disobedience: any who have not surrendered to Jesus

4. we were once like them, in darkness

B. slow down & test to learn if it pleases Him

Prove: test, discern

1. recognize what pleases Him by fruit... *godly [good, doing right, true] or ungodly*
2. as we obey His word (walk in light, experience His fruit)... *live His holiness, truth so we know it*

ILLUSTRATION: church full of hypocrites; grace: follow feelings

II. Second, in fellowship (11-17)

Fellowship (*sugkoinoneo*): to share in company with, co-participate

A. guard against corrupting fellowship... *appeals to old nature, way of life, leading to our involvement in sin*

unfruitful: bad fruit **works of darkness**: sinful behavior, per God

1. should view such attitudes & acts as shameful
2. even practitioners of some of these things hide them

B. refuse such fellowship

1. it’s not *koinonia* (fellowship of believers)
2. look to Jesus & good, not what is have left behind

C. expose these deeds of darkness

1. they lose power (God works in light, devil in dark)
2. people confronted with light... *chance to be free*
3. God desires that those who sleep (*spiritually dead*) will awaken (*become spiritually alive*, 14)

D. live wisely (15-17)

1. according to God’s ways (Bible & Spirit)
2. to bring light in darkness (these evil days)

ILLUSTRATION: 1983, trying to stop swearing, others pushed—refusal bothered them. Concussion, 2 softened re: Jesus

III. Finally, in influence (18-21)

A. guard against old influences [such as wine]

1. lead to reckless living

Reckless: no hope of safety; easily influenced & tempted to sin

2. harm us & possibly others

B. choose to be filled with Holy Spirit... *repeatedly* (18)

1. more than in-dwelling
2. allows Him to fill us with Himself... *joy, power, direction, gifts*

C. need to cooperate with Holy Spirit

1. in speech [**Psalms**: bible; **hymns**: confess faith in Jesus; **spiritual songs**: honor God & lift us up]
2. in rejoicing in Him... *make melody in our heart*
3. in submitting to one another in fear of God

ILLUSTRATION: country music as PIT

CONCLUSION: risks all around us; Spirit given to help us discern & remain free

ALTAR: will you be filled today? Pray for one another in groups, share praise reports