

Discernment

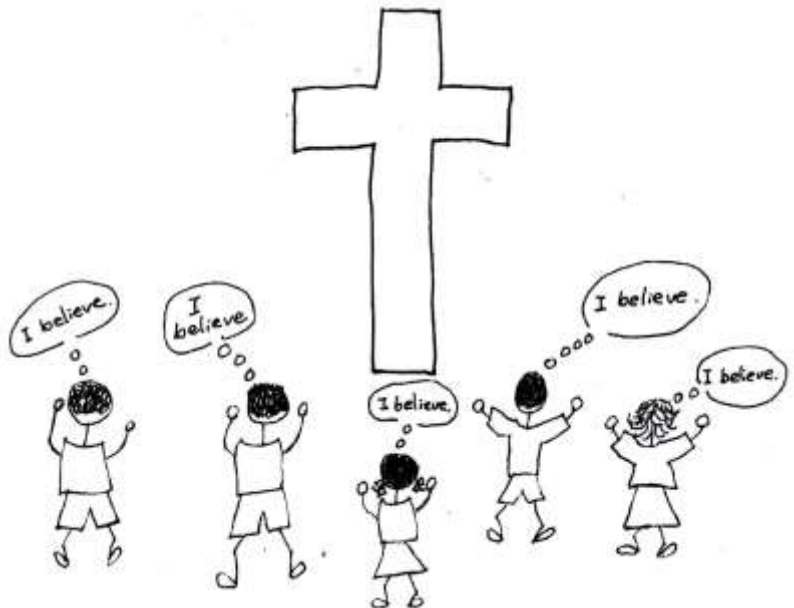
Part 1

(Revised: 5/18/2013)



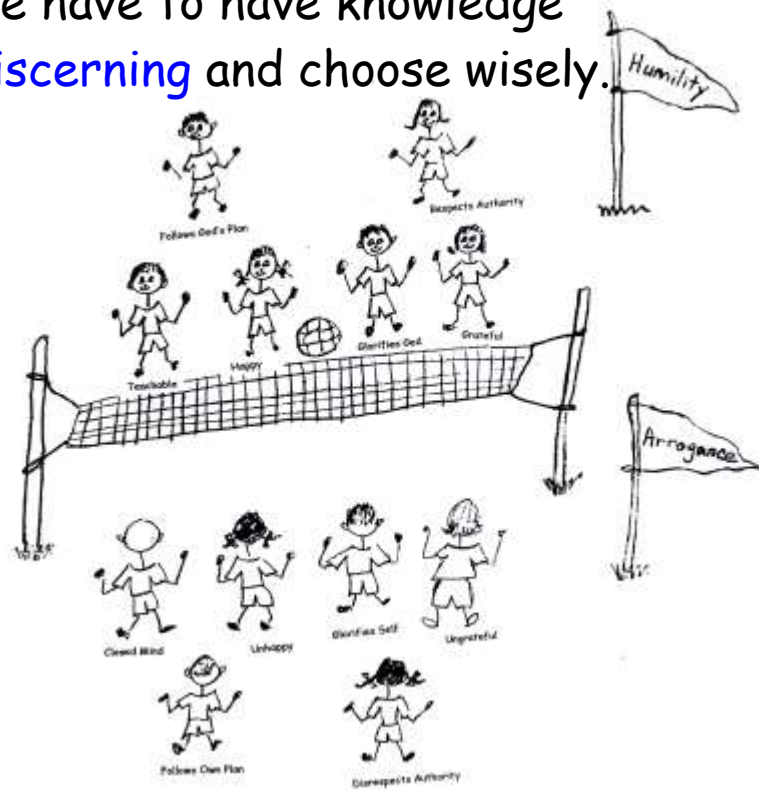
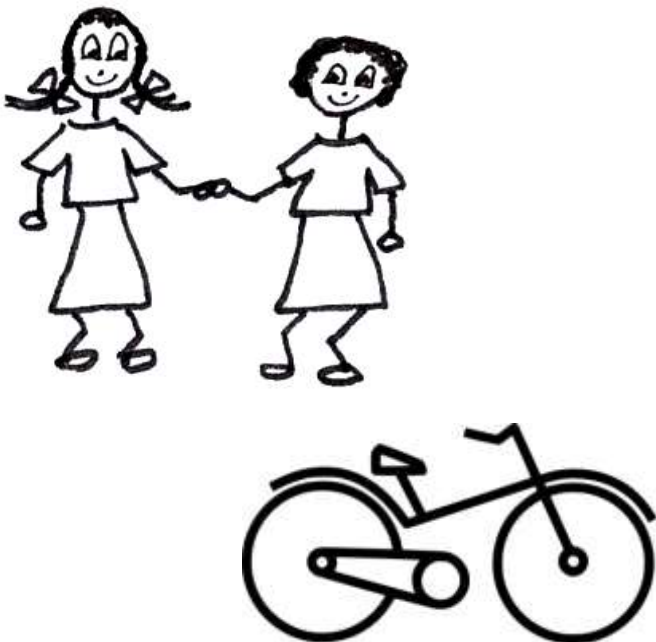
GOOD NEWS FOR UNBELIEVERS! Jesus Christ died spiritually on the Cross for everyone's sins. Then He died physically, was buried and rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father! If you are an unbeliever, you have the opportunity right now to believe! Simply tell God the Father that you are believing in His Son Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. If you make the decision to believe in Him in simple faith based on His work on the Cross, you are now a believer! You will spend eternity in heaven with Jesus Christ, your Savior!

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.



Discernment! Dis - what - ment?

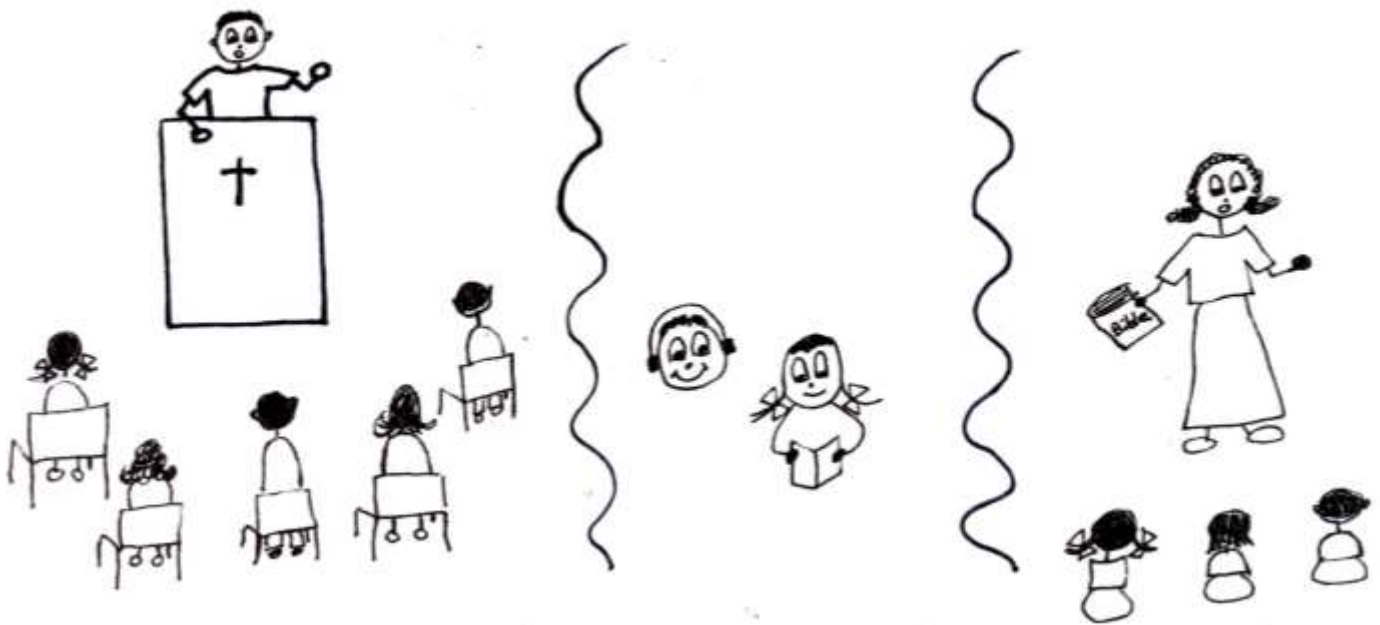
Dis - cern - ment: The ability and practice of examining or looking at something carefully; keen perception, understanding or judgment. In order to have keen perception we need to have knowledge about the person, thing or situation. For example, before we choose a friend, we need to know the person. Before we buy a bicycle, we should study the different types of bicycles. Before we join a team, etc. we need to know about the group. Before we make choices in life, we have to have knowledge about the choices so we can be **discerning** and choose wisely.



Proverbs 3:21 My son, let them [God's word] not vanish from your sight; keep sound wisdom and discretion [discernment].

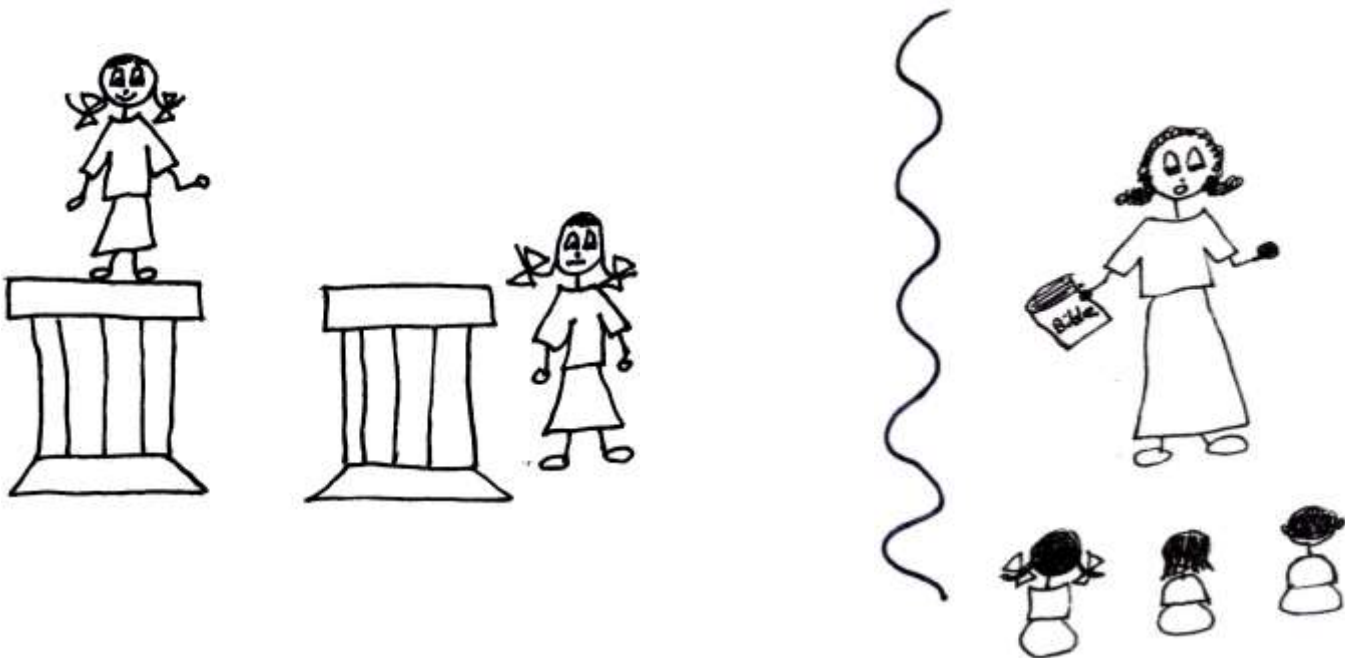


As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we get our **discernment** from the word of God which is the thinking of Jesus Christ! Great thoughts! And, the Holy Spirit is the One giving us the power to **discern**. Super power! He uses the Bible doctrine we know as truth in our souls. This knowledge is necessary for our spiritual lives. In our spiritual lives, **discernment** means we are able to see and tell the difference between divine viewpoint and human viewpoint. It is the skill of separating divine truth from error and half truth. We **can** be **discerning** because of the filling of the Holy Spirit and the word of God in our souls. We **can** use the thinking of Jesus Christ to make our decisions!



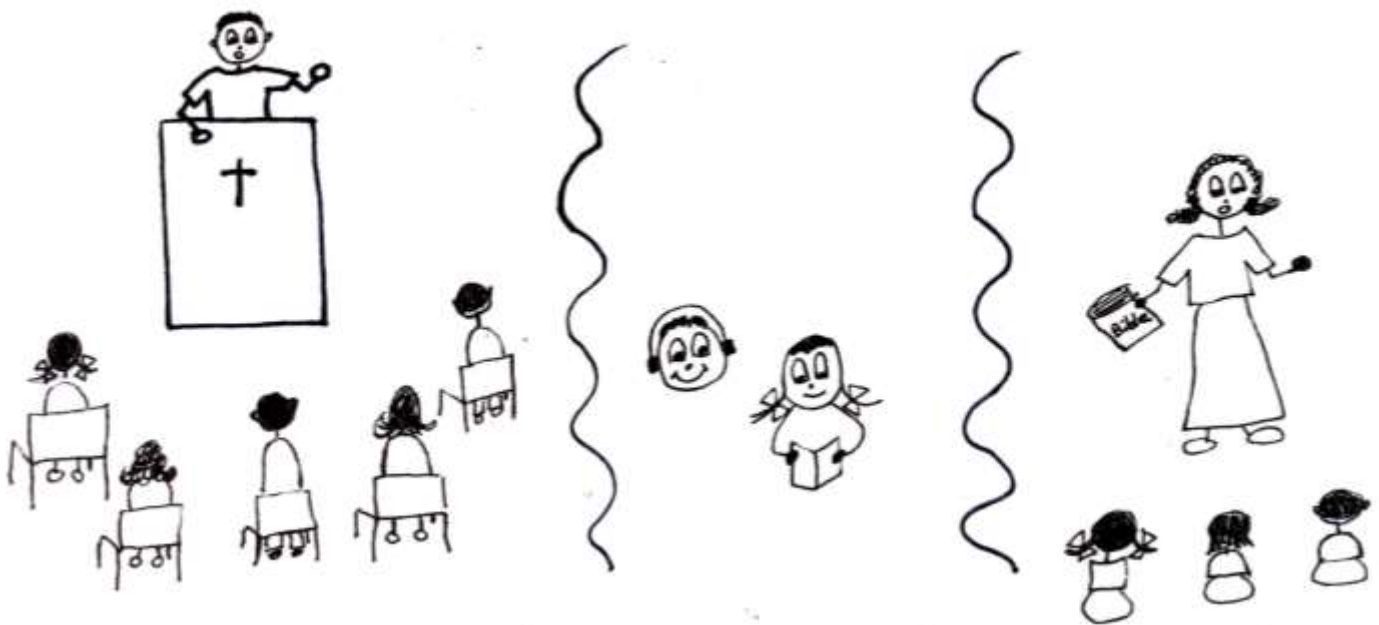
1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil.

After we make our choices based on the word of God, we have to continue to look at them through the thinking of Jesus Christ. This is looking at them through the glasses of reality. In regard to people, sometimes we put them on a pedestal - unreality! We expect them to act a certain way. When they don't act that way, we are disappointed. We see them fall off the pedestal we created! This is arrogance or self-centeredness on our part. Anytime we put someone, including ourselves, on a pedestal we can expect a fall. Instead, we are to see others through God's eyes - divine viewpoint. Then we will be using good **discernment**.



Psalm 119:125 I am Your servant; give me understanding [discernment] , that I may know Your testimonies [statutes, commands].

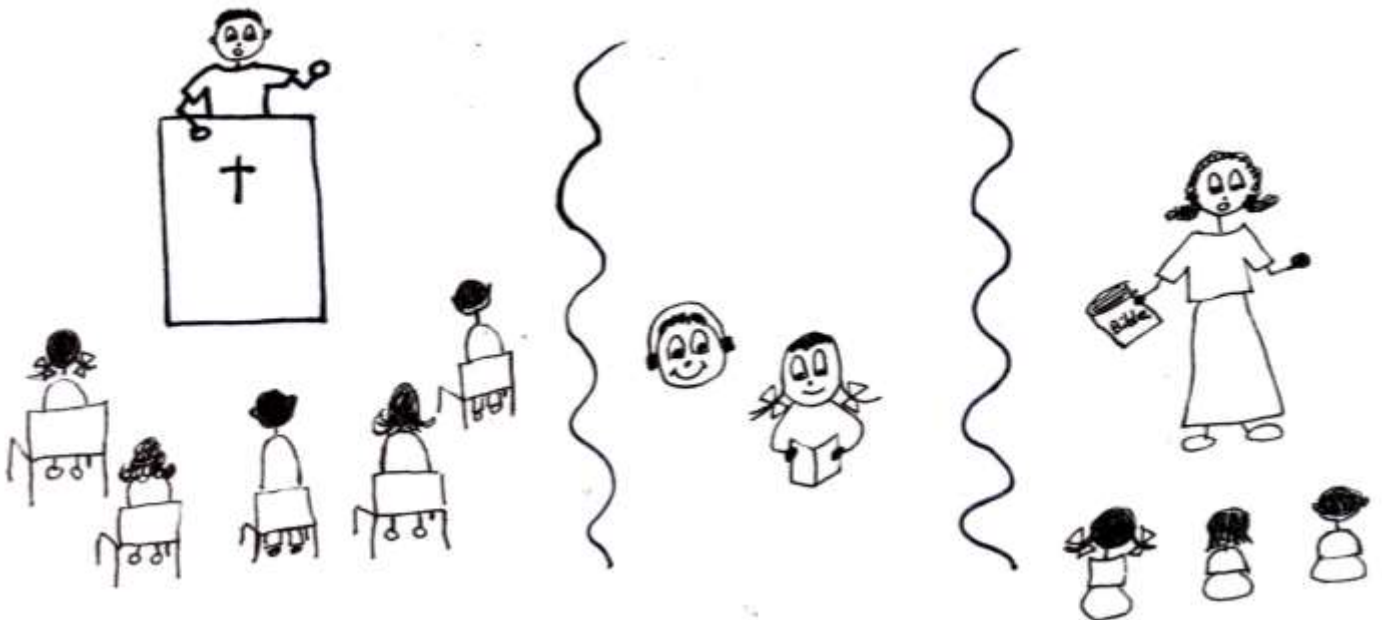
In regard to things, sometimes we can let them be more important to us than the word of God. WHOOPS! Not a good thing to do! There is a difference between things we need and things we want. Some of the things we need are: food, shelter, clothing, the word of God, and a pastor-teacher. Some of the things we want are: new toys, a trip, _____ (you fill in the blank.) God has already promised to take care of all of our needs! When we have the capacity or ability in our souls to enjoy the things we want, God can put them in our lives if He so desires. If He gives them to us before we have the capacity, they will only make us miserable! So, we need to increase our spiritual capacity by learning God's word!



Matthew 6:33 But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

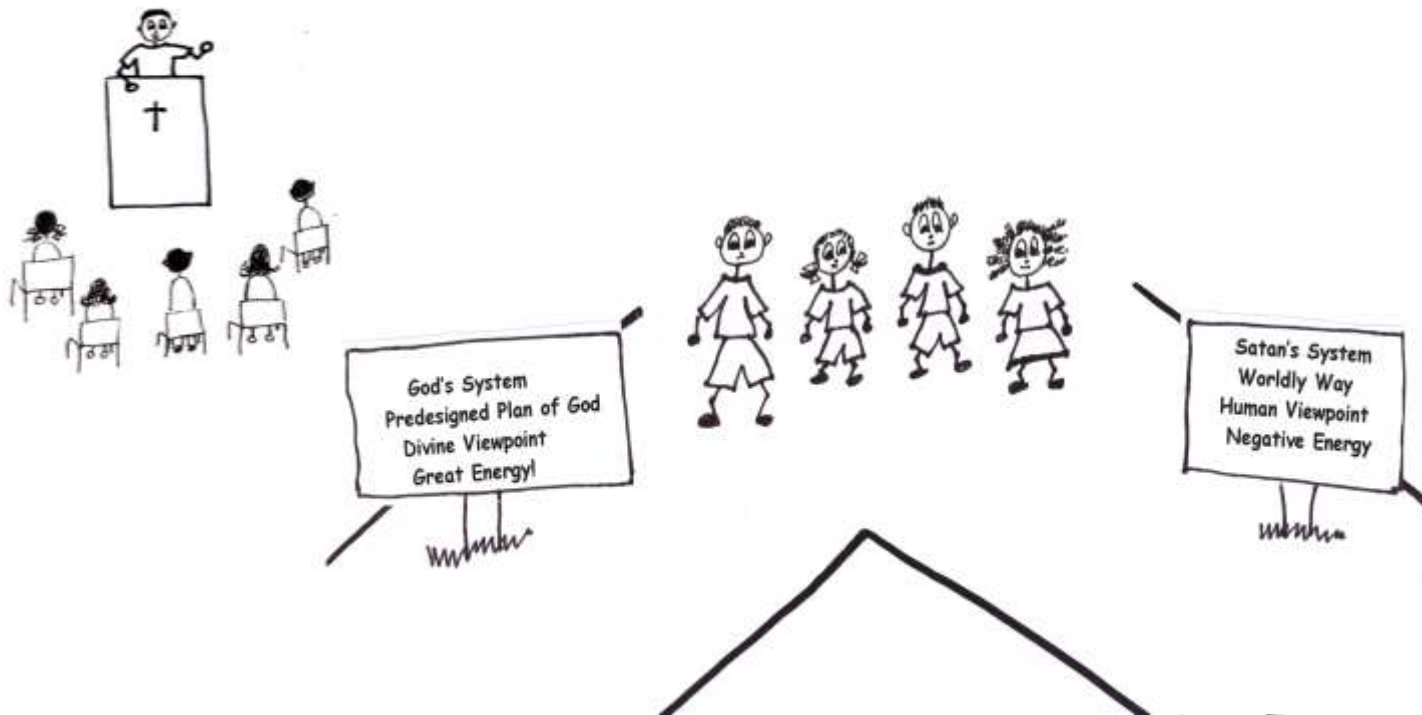


After we learn and believe the word of God, we are to use it. The more we use it, the better we get at using it in different situations. We become more **discerning!** We have success because of the filling of the Holy Spirit and the Bible doctrine in our souls, which He uses! In fact, we can't do anything spiritual without the Holy Spirit! Remember, the Holy Spirit will never leave us. We may turn away from Him; we may say "no" to Him influencing us; but we just have to turn back to Him and say "yes" to walking by means of the Spirit!

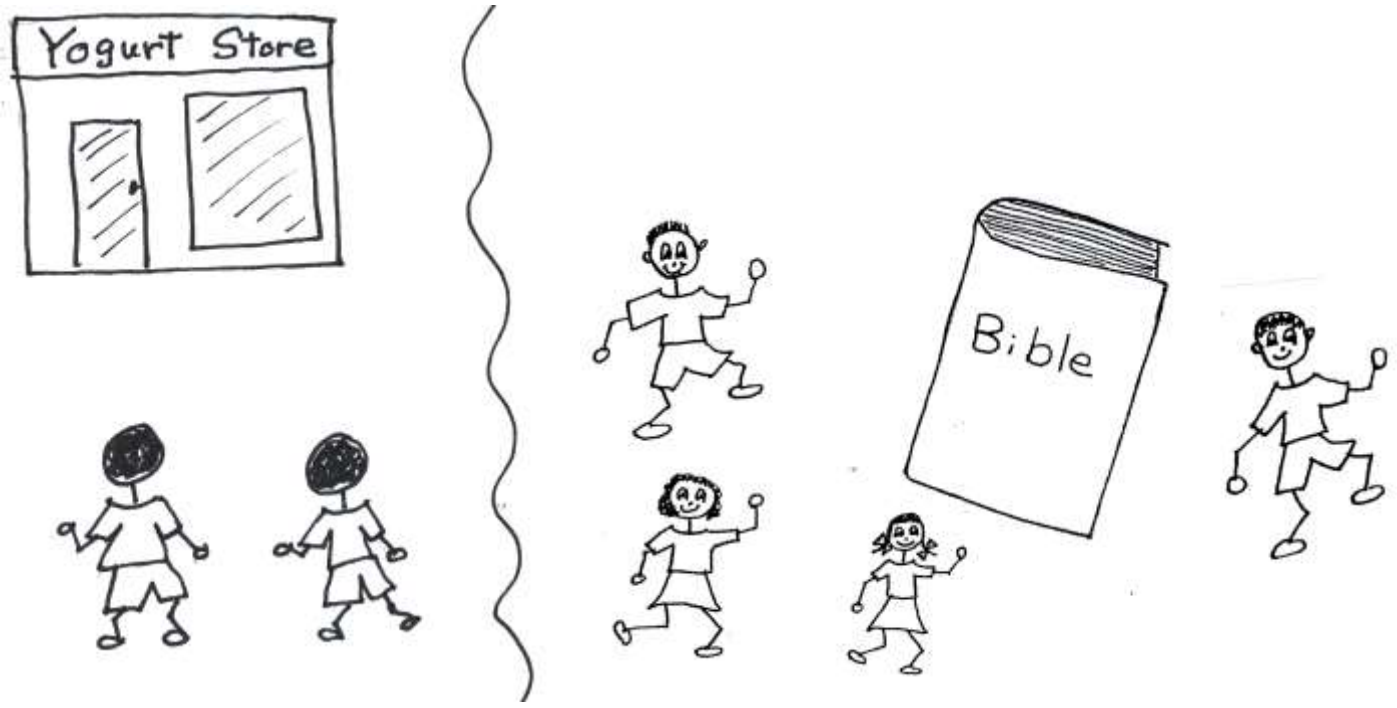


Galatians 5:16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

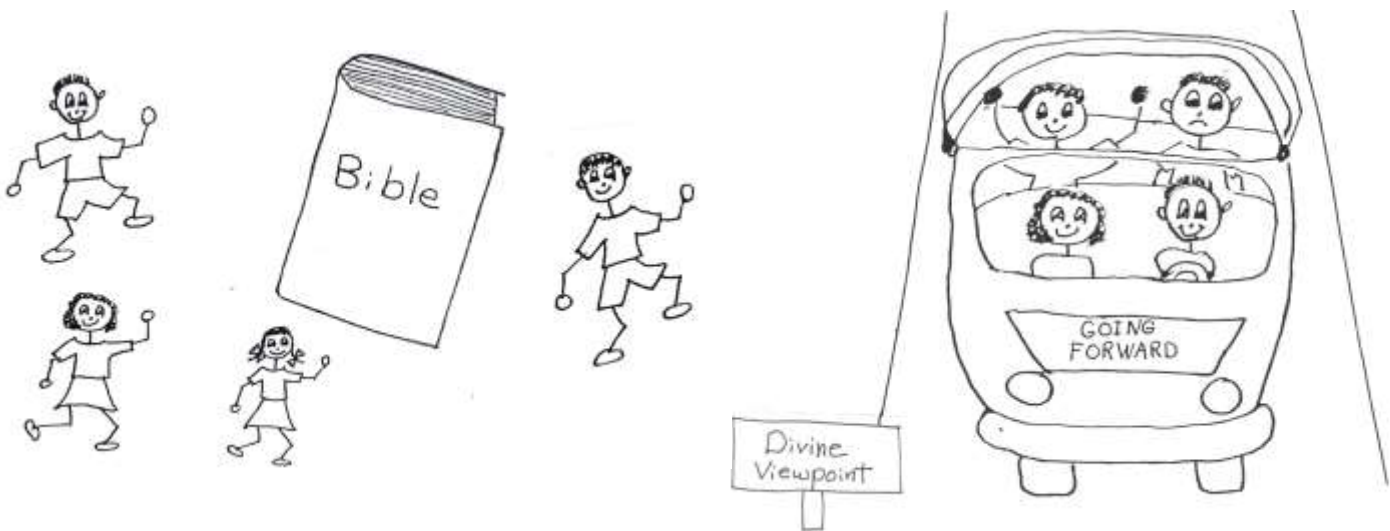
The Holy Spirit teaches us how to tell the difference between human viewpoint and divine viewpoint. Let's say your mom told you to come home right after soccer practice. One of your friends asks you to go to the yogurt store with him after practice. You're thinking, "I could go quickly to get yogurt and then run home. Or, I could go right home like mom told me to do." *Ephesians 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.* The correct thing to do would be to go right home and not even think of disobeying! We show Biblical **discernment** when we use the correct application of sound doctrine or divine viewpoint to our circumstances. We have to make sure we learn the word of God daily so we have something for the Holy Spirit to use to give us correct thinking!!



Let's say that in the situation on the previous page, you went to the yogurt store with your friend. You disobeyed your mom. Not a wise choice; not good **discernment**. She wanted you to come home right away after school because she had a special treat waiting for you! You had to suffer the consequences of your poor choice. You didn't get the special treat and you had to do extra chores! Hopefully in similar situations in the future you'll be more **discerning**.

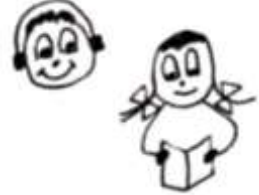


There are attacks that are going to come against the word of God, the divine viewpoint, in our souls! These attacks will tell us that we don't have sound doctrine in our souls. They will try to get us to doubt the word of God! The world and our old sin natures don't want us to be controlled by the Holy Spirit, to believe the word of God, and to use it in our daily lives. They don't want us to have Biblical **discernment, the thinking of Jesus Christ!** Without the thinking of Jesus Christ in our souls we will be helpless against these attacks! So, you can see why we need to learn, believe and use Bible doctrine - divine viewpoint - daily!



1 Kings 3:9, 12 So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?

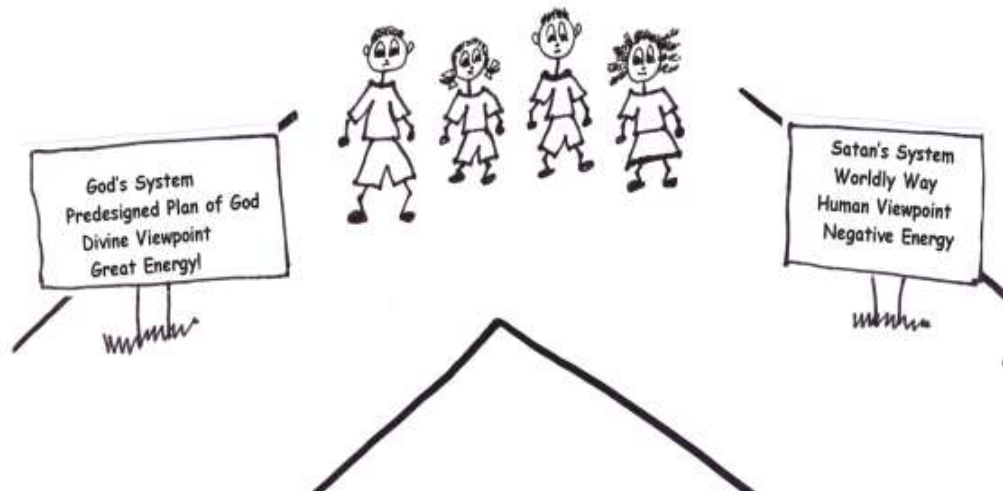
Again, what is spiritual **discernment**? It is the increased ability we receive from the Holy Spirit using the word of God in our souls: to read or hear a teaching,



to meet a problem,



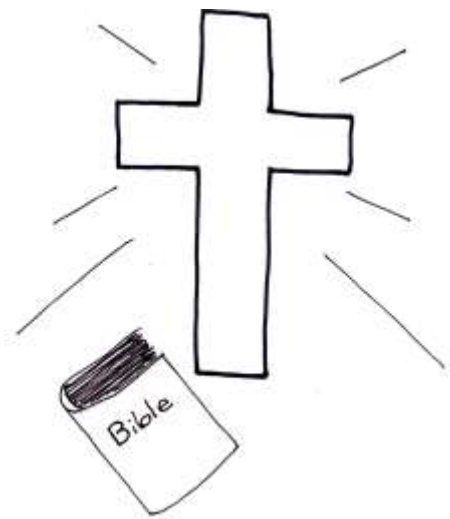
or to consider a suggested course of action,



and then to be able to decide how to respond to it using divine viewpoint!

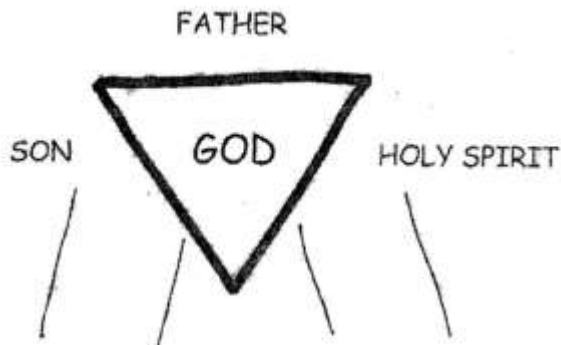
Points To Remember

1. **Discernment!** The ability and practice of examining or looking at something carefully; keen perception, understanding or judgment.
2. As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we get our **discernment** from the word of God which is the thinking of Jesus Christ!
3. After we make our choices based on Bible doctrine, we have to continue to look at them through the thinking of Jesus Christ - through Bible doctrine.
4. In regard to things, sometimes we can let them be more important to us than the word of God.
5. After we learn and believe the word of God, we are to use it.
6. The Holy Spirit teaches us how to tell the difference between human viewpoint and divine viewpoint.
7. There are attacks that are going to come against the word of God, the divine viewpoint, in our souls!



Questions For Discussion

1. What is spiritual discernment?
2. How do we get spiritual discernment?
3. Where do we get the thinking of Jesus Christ?
4. What happens when we put people on pedestals?
5. What happens when we are too concerned with things and situations?
6. Who gives us the power to learn the word of God and then use it?
7. What kind of attacks will come against the word of God in our souls?



My Word Search

S P P K U N P H C P N U G T S
I P L S R O O X O M R P R N K
D A I N R X W S C L Z E G B F
I C T R A V E H J E Y D O J R
H F A T I K R B N X H E I V I
E M U N A T E I K H T S G I E
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Z K K K C I K H C H W A C H D
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W I S E H X R A A X E U V E R
K F V D L V J K E R K D Q S S
O T N I O P W E I V O J O P Q
Y O Q G F F I L L I N G Y P T

Find These Words:

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FILLING
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SPIRIT

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PEDESTAL
VIEWPOINT

CHOICES
DOCTRINE
HOLY
POWER
WISE