

# True Spiritual Discernment

by Horatius Bonar

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*True spiritual discernment is essential for Christians to distinguish between truth and error, and to recognize the false prophets that have gone out into the world.*

**Scripture:** Revelation 2:6

**Topics:** "Spiritual Discernment", "Truth vs. Error"

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## Description

Horatius Bonar emphasizes the necessity of true spiritual discernment, urging believers not to confuse error with truth for the sake of charity. He warns against praising earnestness in error, highlighting that true earnestness must be rooted in truth, which is pleasing to God. Bonar calls for a clear distinction between good and evil, true and false, and critiques the modern notion of 'liberality' that blurs these lines. He reminds the congregation that discernment is a Christian grace that should be actively sought, as all error misrepresents God's character. Ultimately, Bonar stresses that truth holds immense value in God's eyes, regardless of human perception.

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## Transcript

Be discriminating. Do not call error truth for the sake of charity. Do not praise earnest men merely because they are earnest. To be earnest in truth is one thing; to be earnest in error is another. The first is blessed, not so much because of the earnestness, but because of the truth; the second is hateful to God, and ought to be shunned by you. Remember how the Lord Jesus from heaven spoke concerning error: 'which thing I hate' (Revelation 2:6-15; 1 Timothy 6:4, 5). True spiritual discernment is much lost sight of as a real Christian grace; discernment between the evil and the good, the false and the true. 'Beloved, believe not every spirit; but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world' (1 John 4:1).

This 'discernment,' which belongs to every one who is taught of God, is the very opposite of that which is called in our day by the boastful name of 'liberality.' Spiritual discernment and 'liberal thought' have little in common with each other. 'Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good' (Romans 12:9). The 'liberality which puts bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter' (Isaiah 5:20), is a very different thing from the 'charity which thinketh no evil' (1 Corinthians 13:5). Truth is a mighty thing in the eyes of God, whatever it may be in those of men. All error is, more or less, whether directly or indirectly, a misrepresentation of God's character, and a subversion of His revelation (Revelation 22:18, 19).

-Taken from Follow the Lamb, 1861.

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