

# Discernment - Part 4

by Vance Havner

---

*Discernment is essential for Christians to distinguish between good and evil, and to understand spiritual things, and it requires spiritual growth, prayer, and study of the Bible.*

**Duration:** 41:29

**Scripture:** Psalm 84:6, Isaiah 26:3, Matthew 17:4, 2 Corinthians 6:10, 2 Corinthians 11:24-28, 2 Corinthians 12:9, 2 Timothy 4:13

**Topics:** "Discernment"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of living a genuine and authentic Christian life. He warns against the dangers of subjectivism and relying solely on emotional experiences. The preacher emphasizes the need for self-examination to ensure that one is truly in the faith. He shares a story about a counterfeit bill that was able to deceive people for a while but was eventually discovered. The sermon concludes with a powerful anecdote about an old general who had fought in World War II and remained faithful until the end, serving as an inspiration for believers to persevere in their faith.

---

## Transcript

During these days we have been thinking together about discernment. There are five passages in the New Testament, well, six, really, that use the word, but five in which various phases of discernment are listed. We thought first about discerning the truth, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.

For they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. And then Matthew 16, 3, discerning the times, ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times? And tonight, in 1 Corinthians 12, 10, we have in the list of the gifts of the Spirit, I'll not read them all, one of those gifts is the discerning of spirits. Now, that's a special gift there, but we also read in 1 John 4, 1, of what ought to be general among God's people.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets are going out into the world. You don't have the word discern there, but you have the sense of it. Every Christian should be discerning, discerning of the spirits, because John says many false, many pseudo-prophets will arise and have come.

And our Lord, in Matthew 24, told us about false prophets and false Christs who would arise and deceive many. It would pay you some time to study many and few in the New Testament. We are so statistics-wise

today, straight as the gate, narrow the way that leads to life, and whether we like it or not, f-e-w-f-u, there be the trouble.

That's what it says. Big crowds on the other road, and then many. In Matthew 24, again and again, it's many, many this and many that, but it's bad.

It's not good, many, it's bad. The few seem to be on the other side. We're living in the worst period of deception in all human history.

We're living in a day when the devil himself and his demons, strangely enough, in a time like this, just a few years ago, folks scoffed at the idea of a devil and demons. Now, today, they're getting a lot of publicity. Sometimes it's all mixed up and very confusing.

I never read as many books on the devil in my life. They got me to where I want to look under the beds at night sometimes. I'm glad Billy Graham wrote one on angels.

You need to offset that a little bit, it seems to me. Men scoff at the idea of demons, but never before have so many demonized faces leered at us from the newspapers and the TV screens and even as we walk the streets. These terrible things you're reading about today, this is not ordinary meanness.

We've always had ordinary meanness. This is double distilled, concentrated demonism in the last days, I believe. When our Lord was tempted, he was tempted in all points like as we are, and I believe the Church, Christians today, are subject to the threefold temptation.

Somewhat like our Lord, he was tempted, for one thing, to go into the bread business, command these stones be made bread. Now, the Church has fed more people than anything else in the world, but the Church gets on the wrong road when it goes into the bread business. If somebody had offered that prodigal son a bath and a bed and a bun, he never would have gone home to the father's house.

We're not in the bread business. That's not our main business. The Lord made that clear to the devil, and then the devil tried to get him in the show business.

Get our poster this afternoon, Jesus Christ is going to jump off Pinnacle Temple. That'll get out a big crowd, and you'll get some disciples out of that. That's the way they'd work it now.

And you can always justify anything by saying the end justifies the means, and you forget that the means determines the end. So today, the Church is getting into the show business and furnishing. We're in the circus business and furnishing the monkeys.

Then the devil tried to get him into politics. Now, Christians ought to get into politics the right way. We ought to get into everything for the Lord.

We're the soul of the earth, and you're not going to do much good if you don't get out there where the need is. We've got a lot of saints that are willing to be the soul of the earth after this world's been disinfected, deodorized, and all the rest of it. Listen, you're the disinfectant.

You're it. You're the soul of the earth. Jesus answered the devil with, it is written, it is written, it is written.

If he can defeat the devil with three verses out of Deuteronomy, we ought to be able to defeat him with the whole Bible, it seems to me. Paul writes that we are wrestling against the world of darkness, and I like the

way Phillips translates the last half of that great verse in Ephesians, against the unseen power that controls this dark world and spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil. Now, that's what we're up against, friend.

That's what we're up against. And that doesn't sound like fun, either. We wrestle.

Now, there's a lot of phony wrestling on TV. They swing each other around. You'd think they're going to kill each other any minute that that's all steadied out.

They don't get killed, I don't think. I hope not. But sure enough, wrestling is not dainty business.

It's the most strenuous of all the sports, because every muscle is tense and every nerve is taut, and your shoulders are only a few inches from the mat all the time. And it's not a graceful exercise of every muscle, give and take, you know. Paul believed that he was wrestling demonic powers.

He was conscious of that. And that's what we're doing, too. A lot of Church members don't know what we're talking about.

We talk about spiritual conflict. That's because there's never been any. The devil's not after folks that he's already got.

He's not going to waste time on them. He's going after the crowd that's giving him trouble. If you're going to have a battle, you've got to get into something.

An average Church member not giving the devil enough trouble to even get his attention. You've got to get into something. Our Lord believed that he was contending with this world, too, because all the way through my Lord's ministry he kept talking about, my hour has not yet come, has not yet come.

And then in the Garden of Gethsemane, when God and the devil met in a head-on collision, Jesus said, this is your hour. In the power of darkness, it's my hour and it's your hour. There they met.

You know, he'd said to his mother, my hour has not yet come. Oh, again and again you read about it. But this time it had come.

This is your hour and the power of darkness. My Lord was aware of the presence of that world of evil, and there the issue was brought to a head. We'd better understand and never underestimate our adversary.

You get in a lot of trouble if you don't know what you're up against. I heard of a fellow who had a little old dog that was always getting into fights and always getting licked. Somebody said to him, your dog's not much of a fighter.

And I said, good fighter, just a poor judge of dogs. Now, if you don't know what you're against, you're going to get licked every time. And so the Bible tells us what we're up against.

But then, on the other hand, don't ever underestimate your ally as well as your adversary. Thank God that the statistics are even on our side. That's what Elisha said, there'd be more that be with us than they that be with them.

You know about Elisha, my, he was a great man to have around. He could furnish a new water supply for the city, find lost tax heads, put a poor widow in the oil business. I tell you, he was great.

And he was a one-man CIA, Central Intelligence Agency. Because when the king of Syria, every time that the king of Syria made a move, that old prophet had a hotline to heaven and knew about it. And the king said, we've got to get that preacher.

So he sent soldiers, horses and chariots. And Elisha's servant came out and looked, and there were soldiers to the right of him and soldiers to the left of him. Here a soldier, there a soldier, everywhere a soldier.

And he said, they've got us, they've got us, we're surrounded. And old Elisha came out and said, don't be afraid. There'd be more that be with us than they that be with them.

I think that old servant might have asked, well, where are they? I don't see them anywhere. And Elisha said, Lord, open his eyes so he can see who's on our side. And when that happened, he looked up and he saw angels to the right of him and angels to the left of him.

Here an angel, there an angel, everywhere an angel. Because the angel of the Lord was encamping round about them that feared him to deliver them. He got his eyes open.

Now, if you go into what you see on TV and read in the papers, may the Lord have mercy on you, you need to get your sights up and get your eyes cleared up. You can't be optimistic with a misty optic. You've got to get your eyes open, see what's going on.

Satan is the master deceiver, disguised as an angel of light. He does far more harm as an angel of light than he ever does as a roaring lion. He mixes the tares with the wheat so that only the angels can distinguish them.

And they are separated. Don't you try it. We've got some self-appointed judges today of who's saved and who's not saved.

You'll be mistaken both ways, many a time. You can't start pulling up all the tares and the wheat. The Lord made that claim, but the angels, they'll know how to do it.

And these powers of darkness show up in the imitating business. Every time Moses performs a miracle, Jannes and Jambres over on the side, they can match it. And they specialize in simulation.

And of course, the word hypocrite means a play actor. That's simulation. The sin against the Holy Spirit was attributing the work of God to the devil, but we're seeing today the work of the devil attributed to God.

And I am more afraid of a false revival than I'm afraid of no revival. False gospel, false evangelist, false converts, false joy. I'm more afraid of that than I am of no revival.

We'd be better off with no revival at all than the wrong kind. And you had better have your eyes open for that, because some of it will seem so genuine as to deceive the very elect that could. Church leaders will endorse it, and other good people will not dare to oppose it for fear they'll be fighting against God.

And the farther we get from reality, the more we go, even in the church, into make-believe. That's why drama will flourish. The more the church goes into drama, the farther away she gets from real religion, because not having the real thing, she specializes on pretending.

That's why some of them have become glorified nightclubs, and others they worship the great God entertainment. And how frantically we plunge in all directions today, trying to popularize the gospel. The churches are trying it.

Over at the Ichabod Memorial Church, you know what I mean. They pack in the folks with a folk musical. And Pergamos puts on a TV celebrity.

And Thyatira has a fellow in there who can play a fiddle and beat a drum and blow a harmonica all at the same time. And over at Sardis, they're not going to be outdone, so they have Aunt Dinah's quilting party. Everybody dresses like they did a hundred years ago, and they all set out to bring the thing to a glorious conclusion and turn back the clock for a hundred years.

And not to be outdone, Laodicea has a talking horse. I heard of one of them some time ago. They had him trained so that he could stomp ten times for the commandments, ask him how many apostles, stomp twelve times.

And some smart aleck asked how many hypocrites in this church, and he went into a dance on all fours. You don't have to put on maude attire and pick a guitar and stage rock operas to put the gospel over. We've got a better song than that.

The church was never meant for an accompanist to anything. We've got our solo work to do. You don't have to go to the love-ins to see what the hippies are doing and how they feel about it.

You don't have to drink ginger ale at the cocktail parties in the country club to find out what they think, what difference does it make what they think. My ways are not your ways, and my thoughts are not your thoughts. So we're living in a fall, and the discerning Christian needs to learn that a lot of the spirits today look so good that they'll bear close scrutiny.

It's pretty hard to distinguish the divine from the demonic. Acting is hard work. You have to be good, in that sense of the word, to be a good actor.

The man who acts Abe Lincoln, studies Abe Lincoln, reads every book he can get about Abe Lincoln, tries to get the thought processes of Abe Lincoln so that when he gets up there you don't think you're looking at that man, but that you're looking at Abe Lincoln. When he gets that far, he's arrived. The same thing is true in the religious world.

Sardis had an aim to be alive and was dead, but you don't arrive at that quickly and easily. It takes hard work to be a phony and to be a faith. Teddy Roosevelt, who was just about my favorite President, said that in his early days he came across a line in a poem that helped him charter his course.

It was about a young duke who had come out of an illustrious family, but he didn't have it, but he tried to act like his forebears had when he didn't have what they had. The line read, "...what the old dukes were without knowing it, he, Thane, would know without being it." Now, there's an awful lot of that today. Folks are trying to be what they aren't.

Have you ever noticed that my Lord said, Consider the lilies of the field? Now, there are three kinds of lilies, three kinds of flowers. There are artificial lilies, and some of them are prettier than some lilies of the field. And today that art has been carried to such a fine point, you know it as well as I, it takes the closest examination to detect the difference between real and artificial flowers.

And sometimes a genuine Christian is not as pretty as a counterfeit. You can act so nice as to deceive everybody. The Pharisees in their robes and phylacteries looked a lot more religious than those poor old fishermen disciples.

And the trouble with these artificial lilies is they've got everything but life. And then there are hothouse flowers. They do have life, but they're protected.

They've never been exposed to the wind and the weather, and we've got a lot of Church members like that. They've never been out in the battle. They don't know anything about it.

But the Lord knows the difference. I sometimes almost have chills to this day when I read what our Lord said about phony preachers. This bothers me.

I get pretty serious in my heart when I read what he said. Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. But he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, many, now here it is again, many, will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works.

And then will I profess unto them I never knew yet. Depart from me that work iniquity. Have you ever considered that a man can be good enough to cast out demons and prophesy and do wonderful works and be a phony and be a worker of iniquity? A preacher can be a worker of iniquity? So the Lord said, so we need to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith.

I've heard of a counterfeit bill that got into circulation. It bought food for a hungry family. It bought medicine for some sick folks.

It even went to church and got on the collection plate. But at the bank, it fell under the sharp eye of the teller. And when he spotted it, it was all over.

And you can help sick folks and do a lot of good things and put your money on the collection plate. But if you're a phony, the day shall declare it, and you will be found out. I was down in Fort Myers at the wonderful retirement center out there at Shell Point, one of the most beautiful I've seen anywhere in this country.

The preacher said I'd had the flu. He said, come spend the week and rest, and then preach for us the next. It's run by the Christian Missionary Alliance, but people are there from everywhere, wonderful people.

And I spent a blessed week there in perfect weather, walking, walking, and thinking, trying to. And there was an old general there, 88, who had known every president since Theodore Roosevelt. And he had fought in World War II besides George Patton in the Battle of Normandy.

And he liked my sermon on Sunday morning, came over to talk with me, and I just kept him going. I knew he had more to tell me than I could tell him. And was he an encyclopedia of information, and that man knew what he was talking about.

But he told me this, he said, during the battle, the general and I were standing there, and along came about 30-odd boys who'd been all shot up. Some of them would die in a couple hours. And the general went over to him and said, how are you boys? And everyone who could get his hand up to his head saluted.

And they all said, fine, General. Almost dead, but fine, General. He said, Patton came back to me and didn't say a word.

And we walked down the road a little ways, and he didn't say a word. And I finally looked out of the corner of my eyes, and the tears were coursing down his rugged cheeks. They called him old blood and guts, but that got him.

And when I heard that, I thought, well, that's the test of a Christian, too. Can you be in the battle and fight with the stub of a sword and see your comrades pass away around you, and yet, shell-shocked maybe, from it all, God leans over the parapets of heaven and says, how are you doing? Can you answer, all right, Lord. Everything's all right.

The strife will not be long. Oh, they had one fellow in the New Testament who'd been through it. You talk about one who'd been all shot up of the Jews, five times received I forty stripes, saved one, thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I've been in the deep and journeyings often, perils of waters, of robbers, of countrymen and heathen, in the city, in the wilderness, in the sea, among false brethren, weariness and painfulness and watchings, in hunger and thirst and fastings, cold and nakedness, and besides all these, the care of the churches.

And he didn't, in his days, Paul didn't, writing his memoirs down on the Riviera. No, Paul, sitting in an old dungeon, waiting to have his head chopped off, when he said to Timothy, bring that old coat and my books. His arthritis may have been getting next to him in that old damned, dismal, desolate dungeon.

And yet he could say, I fought a good fight, finished the course, kept the faith. Everything's all right, General, waiting for the crown. Oh, are you going to be able to say that, that day? I thank God for such characters.

When I was a young preacher, I was riding along on a train and I spotted R. A. Torrey, that mighty evangelist, teacher, preacher, looked like a prophet out of the Old Testament, sitting over there in the pulpit, and I had brass enough to go over and sit down beside him and engage him in conversation. He looked at me and said, what are you doing? Well, I wasn't doing much. And I said, well, I'm interested in this a little, that a little, and so on.

And he said, young man, make up your mind on one thing and stay with it. Now I've gone up many times since to Montrose, Pennsylvania, where he lived. I've stayed in his house.

I've climbed that hill every day to his grave with that epitaph on it, I fought a good fight, finished the course, and kept the faith. Thank God for a man who could look me in the eye with those steely eyes. They always said Torrey never attracted anybody to himself, but a lot of people were attracted through him to Jesus Christ.

Young man, make up your mind about one thing, stay with it. Now, that's the kind of soldier the Lord is looking for. Are you a hothouse lily? You've not been out there where the battle is.

Ignorant of spiritual conflict, Dr. Torrey said, those people who tell us that they have attained to some spiritual height where they never feel any agony in prayer and in effort have gotten beyond the greatest heroes of faith and our Lord himself in that regard. And Amy Carmichael has always gotten next to my heart when she says in that marvelous poem, Can he have traveled far who has no wound, no scar? How many scars have you had for Jesus? You've been willing to be the scum of the earth and a spectacle to

the world for the scandal of the cross, the three S's. I wonder how many volunteers I'd get today if I'd say how many of you were willing to be called the scum of the earth.

And a theater, the original word is a spectacle, a laughing stock to this world for the scandal, the reproach of the old rugged cross. But they were, and then we're living in a day of subjectivism, of course. You've got to watch that spirit.

People today are trying to live on emotional experiences, and you can't do that. Paul told about his trip to the third heaven, and you know, if some fellow ever got up there these days, he'd never hear the last of it. He'd go around a great big poster, going to tell next Friday night about my trip to the third heaven.

Paul played it down, because he went all the way in the same chapter, all the way from the third heaven down to the thorn in the flesh. Then he said, I had to learn that God's strength made perfect in weakness. That's what God wanted to teach him.

Now, some people today are trying to live on experiences. You can't do that. It has been said and said well, there is nothing more dangerous to true Christian experience than too many experiences.

Now, that will do you think over. Some folks think if I could just have enough days up on the Mount of Transfiguration and stay up there building tabernacles all the time, that's what I want. No, no.

It's dangerous. Paul had to learn that the most important experience in this world is to get to that place where God's strength is made perfect in your weakness, and where you can say, and I had an experience along that line at the beginning of 1973. I had been exercised about my own Christian experience, and I found myself praying, Lord, at any cost, watch it.

You better watch asking that of the Lord. I want to get to the place where I can quit lying about it, and the next time we sing more love to thee, O Christ, I can mean it when I sing, once earthly joy I crave, so peace and rest, now thee alone I seek. Just give what's best.

That's an easy song to sing and a hard one to live up to. I didn't know what was coming. God took away the most precious person in the world to me, and I went through the valley.

But I read about the valley of Baca over there in the Psalms, where the man who goes through the valley digs a well for the next one coming along, and I started digging wells. I wrote that little book you've been reading, and I've never had such a response. It's the only book of mine I ever mention.

I'm not a peddler, I'm a preacher. But I refer to this one because it's part of my experience. Have you ever gotten to the place where you can honestly sing that, Lord, all I want is you? A dear Christian fellow, a young fellow who'd been through some fire himself, said to me some time ago, Preacher, I don't believe you can really say Jesus is all I need until you get to the place where Jesus is all you've got.

That's the way he put it. God brings you down to the lowest common denominator sometimes and gets you down to where you've got nothing but Jesus, and when you get to that place, you find out he is all you need, and a little later, he's all you want. But you've got to get to the place where it's all that you have, either actually or attitudinally.

Job, he lost everything, but over there in Paul's epistle, he said, They that have wise be as though they had none, they that weep as though they wept not, those that rejoice as though they rejoiced not. You

must either actually suffer the loss of all things or be as though you didn't have them, one or the other. Living as though is quite an art.

Not many people know much about that. I remember when I went to Charleston in 1934, I was much concerned about the filling. God brings you down to the lowest common denominator sometimes and gets you down to where you've got nothing but Jesus, and when you get to that place, you find out he is all you need, and a little later, he's all you want.

But you've got to get to the place where it's all that you have, either actually or attitudinally. And I remember when I went to Charleston in 1934, I was much concerned about the filling. of the Spirit.

I had heard so much and read so much, and the more I read, the more confused I was about it. And God created in my heart a great hunger for whatever it was that I needed. And I read, well, you know, the great list of books, everything in the Christian secret of the happy life, the Trumbull's Victory in Christ and Hudson Taylor's Exchange Life and Nee's Normal Christian Life and Ruth Paxton's Life on the Highest Plain and McConkie and Meyer and Murray and all the rest of them, and it all came down to the same thing, more of Jesus and less of me.

That's what it came down to, finally. And I remember that I went to see old Granny Russell. She was a saint.

She knew God. She gave me a little book, The Deeper Experiences of Famous Christians, and I took that back to my room. I couldn't go to sleep until I had read it, and then I couldn't go to sleep because I had read it.

And I woke up on that ocean beach, and in my room I said, Now, Lord, whatever I need, I want. I don't want to get in any wildfire here. I want whatever is right, whatever is true, whatever I need.

Well, I didn't see any visions or dream any dreams. I'm not constituted that way. I haven't had any great dynamic experiences of that kind.

But I settled with the Lord in John 7, 37 and 39, if any man thirsts. And I did thirst. That's the only requirement, he says.

But do you know what thirsting is? It's not just wanting a drink of water. It's getting to the place where all you can think of is a drink of water. It's the one, one great burning need of your heart and of your life.

If any man thirsts, let him come unto me and drink, he that believeth on me, from within him shall flow rivers of living water. This take ye of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive. And everything you get from the Lord, you get by believing and receiving, believing and receiving all the way through.

And today, when the church is swinging between rigor mortis on one side and St. Vitus on the other, how we do need to get established somewhere here. Some of them are freezing and some are fine, and that's where we are. And the devil, if you don't watch, the devil is going to trick us in that, because some of these are scared they'll get out on a limb, that they'll never get up the tree.

Whatever's true, they don't have, because they're scared of everything. And then there are others who would rather miss a blessing than give up a prejudice. The devil tries to scare us from the genuine by

getting us excited about the counterfeit.

Oh, there's so much today about healing and tongues and the rest of it, I wonder how many are praying for the gift of discernment. That's one of them. I never hear anybody praying for that one.

And that's the one we need above everything else, because that's the very thing we're short on today, is discernment. Now, I don't hear anybody praying, give me that, because there's nothing emotionally exciting about all that, you see. The New Testament just doesn't major in special experiences.

It majors in growth in grace. A Christian doesn't grow beliefs and bounds. If Junior woke up next morning and had gained ten pounds and six inches during the night, you'd take him to a doctor.

You'd be scared to death. Christians don't grow like that. That's not the Lord's way.

And you don't put on a show. You don't have to wear a great big button, I'm a Christian, carry a Bible as big as I say it is, and roll book catalog and let everybody know that you belong to Jesus Christ. Just be that.

Just let it. They'll find out. The word will get around.

I was riding with a dear saint down in Florida. I have the utmost respect for that fellow. He's not an old man.

Doesn't have much to say to me. We got talking along this line. He said, Well, Brother Abner, I haven't had many spectacular experiences.

I guess you'd call me just plain vanilla. I like that. You know, the theological fountains these days and the religious fountains and all kinds of fancy concoctions.

Now, I grew up in a country where you had to work all afternoon to have ice cream. Grind and grind and grind, and finally you had something that was cold and wet and sweet. But you know, I believe I enjoyed that more than I do these fancy concoctions all smothered in goo this day.

And I think maybe we'd better get away from some of those concoctions and get back to plain vanilla, because those saints will wear longer. And they're faithful. And you can depend on them.

And the greatest ability in this world is dependent on them. That's the one the Lord respects most. So I would say to you tonight, discern this faith.

Check your own faith. Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith. I don't mean we're to engage in ceaseless self-reproach, taking our spiritual pulse and temperature all the time.

That'll make you sick. Either way, humility does not consist in thinking meanly of yourself. It consists in not thinking of yourself at all.

Don't build yourself up. Don't tear yourself down. Let your eyes on the Lord.

Jesus said, Except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. But if it die twice, that word dies in that verse. That's the important thing.

Falling into the ground is not the important thing. Going to a mission field never made a missionary out of anybody. You have to die.

Die to yourself and die to what you want to be. If you don't, you abide alone. My daddy used to keep a little country store.

And I liked for spring to come. And before spring broke, a box of garden seeds always came in. And I left to see Dad prize off the lid, and here were the beans and the beets and the tomatoes and everything in their pretty packages.

But we wouldn't have had a bite to eat if we'd left them in those pretty packages. The packages had to be torn open and the seeds put into the old, dirty ground. And they had to die and come up again.

Sometimes on Sunday morning I look over my crowd and I think about that box of garden seeds. Everybody there in there, all their colors that morning. And I find myself praying, Lord, save us from packaged Christianity and give us more planted Christianity that's died to itself.

Have you ever done that? Have you ever come to the place where you're willing to say, come ill, come well, the cross, the crown, the rainbow, or the thunder? I fling my soul and body down for God to plow them under. Don't you try to pick the plot. God will pick that.

You may never be heard of. You might be world famous. I knew Billy Graham when he was at the Florida Bible Institute.

I remember meeting him there when he was a student, walking around over that golf course, praying and trying to get the will of God. I didn't know who I was dealing with then. And he didn't know that world fame as a preacher was coming.

But he was getting it settled that he wanted to die to the will and purpose of God. And I think he did. Now, on the other hand, you may never be heard of, but all of that must be left absolutely with the Lord.

Because when you have died to self, Paul said, I'm crucified with Jesus Christ. Man is going out to be crucified, not going out to have his life redirected, going out to have it ended, his own going out to get completely into the will of God. And oh, we are so likely to sing in that precious old song that you've sung many times, I take old cross that I shatter from my abiding place.

I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of his face, content to let the world go by. I wonder how many ever got that far. To know no gain nor loss.

That's all I want. My own selfish, evil self is the thing I'm ashamed of, and what I glory in is the cross of Jesus Christ. Have you ever got to that place in your own life where you can make that your prayer? I don't think you do that by walking down an aisle and shaking hands with a preacher.

It takes a little time. It may take a lot of time, not because God's reluctant, but because you're rebellious. But it's worth it.

I wonder if I've spoken tonight to some young person here trying to figure out what you want to do. When are you going to get to the place where you're ready to die, to all you want to be and all you want to do, and let the Lord determine where you're to be planted? You don't pick the plot. Where he plants you, the crowd may never go by and see that you're there.

And then again, it might be the other way, but all that's neither here nor there. You just get to that blessed place, and you will have arrived. That is success, living in the will of God.

I beg you tonight, ask God for discernment, to discern his will and to discern the Spirit's, because we're living in a time when a thousand voices are yelling in our ears, and even in the religious world we're confused and moving through a fog. But God will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on him, because he trusts in God. Now, Father, as we look over this group of dear people tonight, we wonder how many have come to this blessed place.

Once earthly joy, I crave so peace and rest. Now thee alone I seek, give what is best. May it be that by the Holy Spirit tonight, some dear ones who have listened to us right now in this moment of quietness, right now maybe with bowed head back there somewhere, may say, Lord, that's what I want, and I agree to it.

I'm willing to let the world go by. I'm not trying to keep up with it anymore. All I want is the will of God in my life.

I want to get to that blessed place that Paul reached when he said, I have nothing and I possess all things.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/19/SID19520.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/vance-havner/discernment-part-4/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**