

Discernment Through His Living Word

By Betty Harstad

“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and the intentions of the heart.”

(Hebrews 4:12 NASB)

What astounding power there is in the Word of God to be able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Even as believers, we may be tempted daily to succumb to the disorder of the World System caused by sin in the hearts of man. There is not a family or government that is left unaffected by this fallen world.

To read that *“the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword”* helps us wake up and pay more attention to the Word. We discover that we do gain discernment and understanding as we respond to the living Word. We learn that all our sustenance and life comes from our Lord Jesus Christ, as His Word reminds us that our own strength is extremely weak. *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not of ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing”* (2 Cor. 4:7, 8).

His Word is specially prepared so that we can confidently go to it each day to have our Lord and Savior patiently teach us and direct us. We see what is truth and error through the living Word, so we need not blindly believe any falseness that may be taught by a church, a teacher, or a discernment ministry. God has His faithful, humble, and truthful teachers of His Word, who are very important and necessary to help bring us to maturity and to be guardians of His Word. How thankful we can be that His Word is alive and brings comprehension and wisdom to every willing believer’s heart. As we encounter the seemingly endless troubles and wickedness in the world, we find that it is not wise to stray from our own personal fellowship with our Lord and Savior or allow ourselves to be away from the true body of Christ as we are a vulnerable people.

John, in his first epistle, calls us “children” and goes on to remind us to walk in the Light to have fellowship with the Father. With sober warnings mixed in with words of assurance, John tells us of the enemies and false teachers that we will face. We are reminded that hearts can be deceitful and so we need the warnings in 1 John and elsewhere to test our own hearts also: *“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is of the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever”* (1 John 2:16, 17). Thankfully, there is not only this epistle but many books written for us in the Bible from which we may glean insight and continue to learn to abide in Christ and know God’s ways through the power of the Holy Spirit.

“And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.”

(1 John 5:20)