



Accessing the Kingdom - Part 1: Discerning Truth

by John Himmelberger

Intro

Deception is subtle, and without the Spirit of Truth, we'll mistake opinion for revelation. This teaching lays the foundation for Kingdom living by confronting bias and revealing how to rightly discern God's voice in the midst of noise. You can't access what you can't recognize. Discernment comes first.

My Intention and Assumptions

I hope that your relationship with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit is strengthened through this teaching. My assumption is that you have read or are reading all 66 books of the Bible for context. This is meant to be 'salt' and make you thirsty. You're welcome.

About the Author

John Himmelberger is a teacher, pastor, and lifelong learner. With decades of experience walking with Jesus and leading others into transformational truth, John brings a grounded yet radical perspective rooted in Scripture, personal growth, and kingdom living.

<https://johnhimmelberger.com> | johnhimmelberger@gmail.com

Accessing the Kingdom – Part 1: Discerning Truth

Introduction: The Challenge of Recognizing Truth

Last week, we asked the hard question: *Is it true?* We challenged ourselves to examine what we believe and why. But once we begin questioning, a new challenge arises: **How do we recognize truth when we find it?**

The world is full of deception, half-truths, and competing narratives. Culture, tradition, personal bias, and even religious teachings can cloud our understanding. Jesus warned us about deception, and the enemy has been using it since the beginning (Genesis 3:1). So how do we discern truth and ensure that we are walking in alignment with God?

1. The Reality of Deception

Jesus repeatedly warned His disciples about deception:

- *“See to it that no one misleads you.”* (Matthew 24:4)
- *“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.”* (Matthew 7:15)
- The Pharisees had all the evidence they needed to recognize Jesus, yet they rejected Him because their traditions blinded them (John 9:39-41).

The enemy does not always use outright lies; he distorts the truth just enough to lead people astray. The best deception contains an element of truth, making it difficult to recognize.

Key Question: *How do we know we’re not being deceived?*

2. The Role of the Holy Spirit in Truth

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would be our guide into all truth:

- *“When He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth.”* (John 16:13)
- *“The natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.”* (1 Corinthians 2:14)
- *“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”* (John 10:27)
- *“But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie.”* (1 John 2:27)

Accessing the Kingdom – Part 1: Discerning Truth

3. Testing Everything: How to Discern Truth

Paul commands us:

- *“But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:21)
- *The Bereans were more noble because they examined the Scriptures daily to see if what Paul taught was true.* (Acts 17:11)
- *Wisdom from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, full of mercy and good fruits.* (James 3:17)

Four Tests for Truth:

1. **Scripture** – Does it align with God’s Word?
2. **Spirit** – Does it resonate with the Holy Spirit?
3. **Fruit** – Does it produce righteousness, peace, and good fruit?
4. **Wisdom** – Does it align with the character of Jesus?

4. The Dangers of Following Feelings Alone

Many people rely on their emotions to determine what is true, but the Bible warns us about this:

- *“There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.”* (Proverbs 14:12)
- *“The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?”* (Jeremiah 17:9)
- *“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”* (Galatians 5:16)

If we let emotions dictate our beliefs, we risk being led astray by deception rather than by truth.

5. Practical Ways to Walk in Truth Daily

1. **Stay Rooted in Scripture** – *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”* (Psalm 119:105)
2. **Remain in Prayer and Intimacy with God** – *“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.”* (John 15:4)

Accessing the Kingdom – Part 1: Discerning Truth

3. **Surround Yourself with Wise Counsel** – *“Where there is no guidance, the people fall, but in an abundance of counselors there is victory.”* (Proverbs 11:14)
4. **Keep a Soft, Teachable Heart** – *“He leads the humble in justice, and He teaches the humble His way.”* (Psalm 25:9)

Final Thought: Are We Willing to Be Led?

Jesus said: *“You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”* (John 8:32) But recognizing truth is not enough; we must **embrace it, surrender to it, and live by it.**

- The biggest barrier to truth is not **intelligence**; it’s **willingness**.
- People don’t just resist **changing their beliefs**; they resist **being changed**.
- Truth requires **surrender**, not just agreement.

Call to Action:

- Are we truly willing to let the Holy Spirit lead us into all truth?
- Will we surrender our need to be right and submit to God’s truth?
- The goal is not just believing the right things; it’s being shaped by Truth Himself.

Prayer: *Lord, open our eyes to Your truth. Give us discernment and wisdom. Teach us to recognize Your voice above the noise of this world. We surrender our opinions, traditions, and biases to You. Transform us by the renewing of our minds so that we may walk in truth. Amen.*