

BIBLICAL

a four-week Bible study for women

DISCERNMENT

heidistjohn.com

Hello sweet women!

Welcome to week THREE of our study together! Thank you so much for joining me.

I hope you're enjoying spending time in the Bible as we study *Biblical Discernment in an Unbiblical Age*. I'm praying that your times together are rich and encouraging. We need each other now more than ever.

This week, we're diving deep into a topic that is dividing the church today: gay marriage and the issue of homosexuality. Many in the church today argue that God's Word needs to change with the times. Many will say that God doesn't want us to be "lonely" therefore He is pleased when we find a partner to go through life with... even a same-sex partner. This is the argument you'll hear presented as you watch the interview I reference in the podcast. It's a very common argument used by many who claim the name of Jesus today—and it's dangerous territory, because it goes against the teaching of the Bible.

As you study this topic, I encourage you to pray together. We need God's help to be both loving and wise. It is untrue that we must separate grace from truth. Jesus never did this. He was always full of both, because of the power of God. Today's Believers need to be both loving and truthful and with God's help, we can be.

Most of us know people who are wrongfully representing God's heart on this issue. I encourage you: Be gentle with each other. Listen to each other with the goal of understanding.... but never put the truth of God's Word aside. God's Word never changes. His love is immeasurable. He does not see one sin as any worse than another. All sin, no matter how small, separates us from God. The mistake many Christians are making today is to sacrifice truth on the altar of misguided compassion. In the name of "love" we often stop short of calling sin out when we see it. Jesus said, "You will know the Truth and the Truth will make you free." Lies do the opposite. That's why I'm also addressing the commonly misused phrase "judge not lest you be judged" this week.

Lies put us in bondage. Let's be discerning and loving. I'm praying for you as you study this very important topic. Bibles open at: Romans 12. (I said that in my best grandfather voice!)

His Truth—in Love,

heidistjohn

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WEEK THREE - LEADERS GUIDE

MAIN SCRIPTURE: Romans 12:2

Podcast URL: <http://heidistjohn.com/podcast/bible-study-biblical-discernment-week-three>



What is biblical discernment?

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Write out Romans 12:2



What does it mean not to be conformed to the pattern of this world?



When the Bible says we are supposed to be “different,” what does that look like today?



Why is it so important to know how God feels about the things we struggle with?



In Romans 12: 2 - “Then you’ll be able to test and approve what God’s will is” What does it mean to be able to test and approve what is around us?

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WEEK THREE - LEADERS GUIDE

MAIN SCRIPTURE: Romans 12:2

Let's talk about this:

"do not judge lest you be judged."

 Read Matthew 7:1-5. What is Jesus teaching us about using wise judgment?

When Jesus says, 'Don't judge,' He is not asking us to surrender the judgment of discernment. The judgment that we are asked to surrender is the judgment of condemning others. "Don't judge" does not mean that we surrender our critical thinking and biblical knowledge of right and wrong. We are not to turn a blind eye on sin and pretend it is not there. This kind of thinking and lack of judgment is destroying the church.

 In Matthew 7, the command 'don't judge' means 'do not be judgmental.' In other words, do not have a **critical spirit, or a condemning attitude**. As Christians, we are not to condemn, or pass judgment on somebody. That is God's place, not ours.

 Write Romans 2:1:

A few thoughts on this issue:

Here we can see that 'judging another' is the same thing as 'passing judgment' on a person.

Jesus is referring to a **judgmental attitude** that, rather than seeing it's own faults, focuses on the faults of others and seeks to tear them down. This kind of person is negative and destructive in her attitude.

Have you ever been around a person who wants to point out another person's sin but does not give a thought to helping them? In fact, this judging (as it is used here in Matthew) this condemning, is exactly the opposite of saving. Jesus is encouraging us to be very careful in the way we approach the sin of another person. We must be very aware of our own sin; and we must be seeking to help the other person rather than pointing out their sin without godly motive.

Jesus said in John 12:47, **I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.** 'To judge' and 'to save' have opposite meaning. When we are judging a person with a condemning attitude, we are not concerned to save him or build him up—and this is what Jesus is warning us about.

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Let's talk about this:

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Biblical discernment means that we must use our minds to discern between truth and lies good and evil.

The Bible teaches that this is not optional for the Believer. The command Jesus gave not to judge others is followed immediately by **two other commands** that cannot be obeyed without using discernment.



Write Matthew 7:6.



What are we commanded to do?



Write Matthew 7:15



What are we instructed to do in this verse?



How does this require discernment? Is this the same as judgment? Why or why not?

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MAIN SCRIPTURE: Romans 12:2

This is a tender topic—and Christians must treat it with tenderness and truth. We are called to speak the truth in love. Love apart from truth is not love—and truth apart from love cannot have the impact that it would have if it were loving.

 A discerning Christian must resist _____ of moral issues.

Can you think of some areas where Christians are defaulting to worldly wisdom on moral issues?

 Watch the video of Rob Bell and Oprah Winfrey and talk about it.
<https://youtu.be/nx9XaBVjFx4>

 What is missing in Mr. Bell's defense of gay marriage?

 Why is it missing?

 Read the following passages about homosexuality and write what God's Word says about it:

Romans 1:24-25

1 Timothy 1:8-11

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

 Does God's Word change with the culture? Read Isaiah 40:8 and write your answer.

 Read 2 Peter 1:3. What does it say God has given to Christians?

 What matures a Believer?

1 Peter 2:2 says we should "long for the pure milk of the Word that by it we might _____!"

A TIME FOR PRAYER

Pray for the Church today. Ask the Lord to help us to be both loving and truthful—discerning and kind—and ask Him to help you grow and mature in your faith.