

# Handout

## *Session Three: Distinguishing Law and Gospel*

**Memory Verse:** "The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (2 Corinthians 3:6).

In our society, the majority idea that people have different worth simply based on stereotypes has done much harm to all people. This behavior is based on the practice of false discrimination. We still hear a lot about false discrimination. Employers, for example, announce that they do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, sex, or other criteria. Reputations can be ruined by the mere accusation of discrimination.

But there is a difference between false discrimination and making valid judgments based on fact instead of fiction or stereotypes. When based on the facts, discriminating, which simply means "making distinctions," is often a useful—even necessary!—skill. Despite the negative connotations the word may have in certain situations, we all must discriminate among sets of facts.

1. In what ways do you discriminate or make distinctions in your daily life? Think of circumstances under which discrimination may be necessary. Why is it so?
2. Read 1 Timothy 1:8 and 2 Timothy 2:15. What instructions are given to Timothy about the use of God's Word?
3. Read 2 Corinthians 3:5–11. In this passage, what two things does Paul compare and contrast? What are the effects of each?

4. Read Galatians 3:15-25. In this passage, what two things does Paul compare and contrast? How are they related?
  
5. Compare Exodus 20:1-17 and Isaiah 53 with Romans 2:1-9 and Ephesians 1:2-8. What do such passages reveal about the location of Law and Gospel in Scripture?
  
6. Read Luke 4:16-21, followed by Acts 10:43. What do these passages say about the content of Scripture? How might this influence your understanding of Law and Gospel in the Old and New Testaments?
  
7. Compare 1 Timothy 1:15 and Romans 6:23. As Paul explains God's Word to his audiences, how does he summarize and emphasize its content?
  
8. Read Hebrews 11:6. How might this passage confirm the necessity of properly distinguishing between the Law and the Gospel?