

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR UNDERSTANDING HAS BEEN TAKEN CAPTIVE?

Question: *How can you tell if your understanding has been taken captive by the enemy? What are the signs?*

Blessed be the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Before evaluating whether our understanding has been taken or influenced by spiritual darkness, we need to first understand what the Bible defines as **true understanding**.

1. What Is “Understanding” According to the Bible?

Let’s look at **Job 28:28**

“And he said to man, ‘Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding.’”

Biblically, **true understanding is not just intellectual knowledge or common sense**—it is moral and spiritual discernment. It’s the ability to recognize evil and to **turn away from it**. According to this verse, someone who does not or cannot separate themselves from evil **lacks understanding**. In a spiritual sense, their mind has been taken captive.

This echoes **Romans 1:21**

“For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

When a person continues in sin and refuses to separate from evil, their thinking becomes **futile and darkened**—this is evidence of a **captive or corrupted mind**.

2. What Does It Look Like When Someone’s Understanding Is Taken Captive?

To “shun evil” (as Job 28:28 says) means more than resisting temptation in the moment—it means **actively distancing yourself** from sin and anything that leads to it.

Here are a few examples:

- **Drunkenness:** A person with understanding avoids places, conversations, and friendships that encourage it. *(See Proverbs 20:1; Ephesians 5:18)*
- **Sexual immorality:** They avoid flirtatious behavior, inappropriate dress, unguarded communication, and any digital content that fuels lust. *(See 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5; 2 Timothy 2:22)*

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- **Gossip and slander:** They stay away from conversations and social groups that spread rumors. *(See Proverbs 16:28; James 3:5-6)*
- **Anger, foul language, theft, and corruption:** They step away from all environments that normalize or justify such behavior. *(See Ephesians 4:29-32; Colossians 3:5-10)*

But if someone continually participates in or is comfortable around these things, it reveals that their spiritual discernment is **either weak or taken over**. They are no longer led by the Spirit of God but are operating under the influence of **the ruler of darkness—Satan**.

As Paul warns in **2 Corinthians 4:4**

“In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.”

This kind of spiritual blindness or confusion can affect **anyone**—regardless of position or title. Whether you’re a pastor, bishop, prophet, choir member, president, or a highly respected public figure—if you cannot depart from sin, your understanding has **been taken captive**.

As Jesus said in **Matthew 7:21-23**

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

3. Can Understanding Be Restored?

Yes—but **not by human effort alone**. Restoration is only possible through **God’s grace**, beginning with genuine repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

Acts 3:19– “Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out.”

When we turn to Christ with sincere repentance, God gives us **the gift of the Holy Spirit**, who renews our minds and restores our ability to discern right from wrong.

Romans 12:2- “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God.”

The Holy Spirit enables us not just to resist sin but to hate and avoid it—to shun it as Job 28:28 describes. This is how we know our understanding is being restored.

4. The Results of Restored Understanding

- **Eternal Life:** Through restored understanding, we walk in holiness and are reconciled with God. (*John 17:3*)
- **Freedom in This Life:** We live with purpose, clarity, and the ability to overcome destructive habits. (*John 8:32*)
- **Spiritual Maturity:** We grow in wisdom and make choices that reflect God’s will. (*Hebrews 5:14*)

If you find that you are unable—or unwilling—to distance yourself from sin, it may be a sign that your spiritual understanding has been compromised. But there is hope. Through repentance and surrender to Jesus Christ, your mind can be renewed, and your understanding restored.

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Proverbs 3:5-6 - "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

May the Lord bless you, open your eyes, and restore your understanding.

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