

Discerning the Community I

Discernment is the ability to sift and sort and determine what is operating. Discernment is ability to see behind and beyond the seen. Discernment is the ability to sense and see God, angelic, human, satanic or demonic activity.

The city is the abode and battle ground of God and Satan.

1 Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, and Thessalonica were the most important cities of their respective Roman provinces.

- Rome, of course, dominated the world.

I

Every city has a “spirit”, dominate *characteristic* and *presence*.

Consider **Colossians 1:14-16**

- Everything He created was good however they are corrupted.

“Thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers” Paul uses to describe the forces of evil throughout the universe.

II

Consider what these words actually mean.

Throne—The throne is simply the institution of power in a state, city, or economic body.

Dominion—A dominion is the territory influenced or ruled by the throne; it is the sphere of formal influence of that structure of power.

Principality—The principality or prince is the specific person who currently occupies the throne.

Power—The power of a throne comprises the rules, legalities, traditions, and sanctions that legitimize the throne's rule over that dominion.

III

The church has believed for centuries that the principalities and powers are solely spiritual forces.

The church believes that they have their abode and authority in the “heavenlies only.”

Such forces may be celestial or terrestrial, earthly and heavenly.

Consider **Psalm 8, 1Peter 3:22 and Psalm 103:12-22**

Mankind is **impacted** by celestial and terrestrial realms.

Mankind can **impact** celestial and terrestrial realms. **Ephesians 2**

But the principalities and powers are the spiritual forces that work through the **structures** and **systems** of a city, nation or universe.

Grace is God **doing** for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Grace is God's **activity** **working** around us, in us and through us.

Grace is His **guarantee** to start and complete the work.

ESV Philippians 1:6 ^{And} I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.