

This is a great piece on the difference between the Holy Spirit's conviction and Satan's condemnation. It appeared one day on my desk top. I'm not sure where it came from, but it has been very helpful in helping recognize the Father's voice.

Two voices. Which one do you listen to? 10 ways to tell the difference between the conviction of the Holy Spirit and the condemnation of the devil.

1. Tone of Voice:

Holy Spirit: Gentle, loving voice of our Father; imploring, beseeching, and urging our return to Him.

Devil: Accusing, nagging, mocking voice; generating fear, causing confusion, projecting a sense of rejection; questions like "Has God indeed said?..."

2. Focus:

Holy Spirit: Specific. The Spirit says, "Fix this one thing, and you will be free." He commands you to take one specific action! To make a choice of the will. Conviction of the Spirit is specific to the sin. The Spirit defends you against your over-sensitive conscience.

Devil: Vague and general. Satan generates a blanketing, choking sense of general guilt, as though everything is wrong and there is no one action you can really take to overcome. Often a sense of complete hopelessness and weakness prevails. Satan attacks you in general.

3. Encouragement

ENCOURAGEMENT is God's message. He encourages you to rely on God's power, not your own righteousness or strength.

DISCOURAGEMENT. Satan centers his attack on you as a person. Cuts your self-image to ribbons. Tells you you are weak, and not one of God's chosen ones.

4. The Past:

"Forget the past!" is the Spirit speaking. The Holy Spirit tells you your sin is forgotten, cleansed, removed, covered and put away, never to be held against you. (John 1:29, I John 1:7, 9; Psalm 51:7, Micah 7:19, Hebrews 10:17).

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

I John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

I John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Psalm 51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Micah 7:19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and

thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

Hebrews 10:17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more

“Remember all the past!” says Satan. Satan replays the video tapes of your past memories of sin and guilt and shame. He draws up accounts of your past sins, failures and offenses that are under the blood.

5. Attraction to God:

Holy Spirit: There is a pull of attraction toward God. He generates in you an expectancy of kindness, love, forgiveness and a new beginning with God’s help. The Holy Spirit speaks of your permanent relationship; the Son of your Father. (John 20:17).

John 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

Satan: Rejection as though by the Holiness of God. Satan disguises himself as an agent of holiness. He produces the feeling that God has rejected you as unworthy and unholy. Satan speaks of God as your judge, and you as a miserable sinner. (John 3:17).

John 3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

6. Use of Scriptures:

Holy Spirit: Brings POSITIVE SCRIPTURES to your remembrance (John 14:26). He speaks of the unchanging nature of God; of His steadfast love toward us. He confirms that God remains faithful to His covenant (I John 3:20). The Spirit reassures us that there is no law that is effective against us who rely on Christ's work. (Col. 2:14).

John 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

I John 3:20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

Colossians 2:14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

Satan: Brings NEGATIVE SCRIPTURES to your mind. Shakespeare said, “The devil knows how to quote Scripture to his purpose!” Satan threatens judgment, says “Grace is denied because you didn’t fulfill the conditions!” Satan uses the Law against you, to press you to justify yourself, and rely on your own righteousness. (Romans 10:3, Gal. 2:16).

Romans 10:3 For they, being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

7. Regarding the Body:

Holy Spirit: DRAWS YOU INTO FELLOWSHIP. The Spirit sends others to minister to you in love. Thus you learn to accept others’ words of encouragement and to appreciate one another and their ministry to you.

Satan: ISOLATES YOU. Satan sows suggestions that cause you to withdraw from other Christians,

and think they reject you. In your isolation, you then feel lonely, hurt, unworthy, rejected by others and/or angry.

8. The Word of God:

Holy Spirit focuses on FACTS OF THE WORD OF GOD. The Holy Spirit states facts, truths about you and God. Feelings must follow faith in these facts! The Holy Spirit gives you correct doctrine. Learn your theology to avoid being fooled by Satan.

Satan focuses on FEELINGS. The devil tells you that the way you feel is the way things really are (i.e. feelings are truth). He will stress feelings of guilt, despair, hopelessness, feelings of doubt of God's love for you and feelings of frustration at God's unfairness -- partiality.

9. Discipline:

Holy Spirit: DISCIPLINE of the Holy Spirit. (Restoration is the goal.)

Satan: DESTRUCTIVE attack of the devil.

10. Sins past:

Holy Spirit: REASSURES you of God's forgiveness and the fact that it is Christ Who saved you and continues to keep you.

Satan: ACCUSES you of having committed the unpardonable sin.