

God in the right by confession ; and we not only get relief, but we actually learn that God is right, and understand His ways. O if saints did know the toilsome process of self-vindication, and instead of justifying themselves were to justify God, what sorrow would they avoid. And it betrays so much want of confidence in God to be anxious to vindicate ourselves ; as if, after all, it was our own character, and not His grace, which was the real power of blessing. I think we see the design of the apostle in using the word "discern," not simply judge (in the Greek, 1 Cor. xi. 31). If we would "discern" ourselves, we should not be judged. Self-discernment, getting a positive insight into the real moving springs of the activity of the flesh. Who can bear to look too closely into it, unless he know the blessed truth that God had judged the flesh in the cross of Christ : "Our old man has been crucified with Him" (Rom. vi. 6). The new evil which we discern in it God had seen from the beginning, and allows us now to see, that we may justify Him in His total judgment of it. The flesh cannot discern itself—it cannot stand before God. It is by the power of life, communicated directly from Christ, brought into this exercise by the Holy Ghost Himself, that we thus discern ourselves ; and this in the immediate presence of God Himself. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned.