

Clogged Filters & Cluttered Minds

The topic Discernment

The object Different kinds of clean and dirty filters—automobile air or oil filters (auto tune-up shops always have old dirty ones lying around), furnace or air conditioning filters, clothes dryer filters, swimming pool filters.

The lesson A good filter allows air, water, oil—whatever's being filtered—to flow through it, but keeps the dirty particles from passing through. That's what *discernment* is—a mind filter. The ability to

screen out what's false and accept what's true. From what St. Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:14, discernment is a big part of spiritual maturity.

The Word Philippians 1:9-11;
Philippians 4:8-9
See also Ephesians 4:14

Discussion starters

1. What's the difference between a mind that's open enough to consider new ideas, and a mind with a gaping hole that let's absolutely *everything* in?
2. How can your mind filter get messed up?
3. How can you clean out and clean up a clogged, malfunctioning mind filter (for example, Romans 12:1-2)?



Life changers

1. Any of the following explain why your mind filter might be getting clogged up?

- HBO
- MTV
- NPR
- Elle*
- Rolling Stone*
- Seventeen*
- GQ
- Mad*
- General Hospital
- Ally McBeal
- Allan McNeal (your neighbor)
- Leonardo Di Caprio
- Leonardo da Vinci
- Danielle Steele
- Stephen King

(If you want less humorous, more open-ended choices for your students to respond to, try these instead:)

- Movies I watch
- Music I listen to
- Books and magazines I read
- Friends I spend time with
- Other?

2. Considering what it is that's clogging up your mind filter, how do you go about cleaning it? In other words, **how do you renew your mind, as St. Paul recommends in Romans 12:1-2?**

3. If you took Philippians 4:8-9 seriously in your own life, how might your daily life be different? What might you have to change?