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# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

*Bereans “received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so.”*

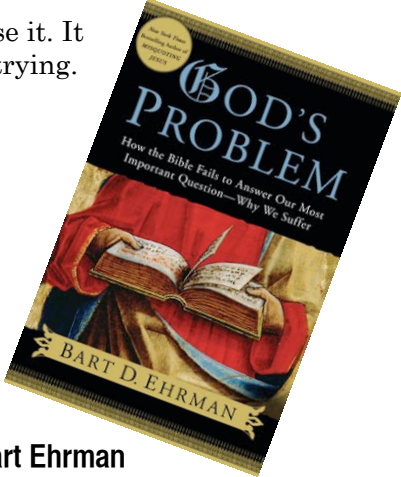
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# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

**Hebrews 12:1-3**  
**Lesson #30**  
**Managing Expectations**  
**12/21/2025**

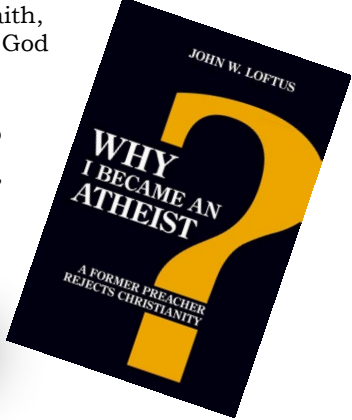
“I just began to lose it. It wasn’t for lack of trying. But I just couldn’t believe there was a God in charge of this mess.”



**Dr. Bart Ehrman**


“My expectations of faith, prayer, the church, & God were crushed.”

“I had too much to live with and not enough to live for.”



**Rev. John W. Loftus**

**When we expect the kingdom before its time and without its King we set ourselves up for **false expectations** which can lead to **spiritual shipwreck.****




**You can be anything you want to be.**

**Dream BIG**

**You are limited only by your dreams, faith, and work ethic.**

**Plan your work - work your plan.**

**DEDICATION DETERMINATION DOMINATION.**

**Whether you think you can, or you can't, you're right.**

**The sky is the limit.**



## 2 Timothy 2:15

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, **accurately handling the word of truth.**”

**Bereans seek the SCRIPTURES**  
(not proof-text) but:

CONTEXT

CONTEXT

CONTEXT

CONTEXT



## Psalms 37:25

“I have been young and now I am old, yet **I have not seen the righteous forsaken** or his descendants begging bread.”

## Psalms 22:1

“My God, my God, **why have You forsaken me?**”

## Psalms 34:10

“The young lions lack and suffer hunger; **but those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing.**”

## Romans 8:36

“For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; **we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.**”



## John 10:10

“I came that they may **have life**, and have it **abundantly.**”

## John 14:27

“**Peace** I leave with you; **My peace** I give to you; **not as the world gives, do I give to you.** Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”

## John 16:33

“**in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation**, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”

God’s visual aid -  
**abundant life and peace**  
in the midst of tribulation  
as witnessed by Jesus  
& his followers.



The Devil presents as an  
“**angel of light**”, a messenger  
of misplaced faith, hope,  
and love resulting in false

# expectations.

Christ in the wilderness - Matt.4:1-11

Suffering saints - Heb.11:36-40, 12:1-3

Paul’s thorn - 2 Cor.12:7-10

Job’s losses - Job

Eve’s fall - Gen.3



## Hebrews 12

“<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and **the sin that so easily entangles us**, and let us run with **endurance** the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> fixing our **eyes on Jesus**, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him **endured** the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> For **consider Him** who has **endured** such hostility by sinners against Himself, so **that you may not grow weary and lose heart.**”

What is the “**sin that so easily entangles us**”?

Could it be “**false expectations**”?

*Hebrews 11:1*

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things **not seen**."

**1. Bereans witness comes more from what they endure than from what they escape.**

*Hebrews 12:1*

"... we have so great a cloud of **witnesses** surrounding us,"

*John 15:20*

"Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' **If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you;**"

*1 Corinthians 15:19*

"If we have hoped in Christ **in this life only**, we are of all men most to be pitied."

*Romans 8:18*

"For I consider that **the sufferings of this present time** are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

*Hebrews 11*

"<sup>36</sup> and others experienced **mockings** and **scourgings**, yes, also chains and **imprisonment**. <sup>37</sup> They were **stoned**, they were **sawn in two**, they were tempted, they were **put to death** with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being **destitute**, afflicted, **ill-treated** <sup>38</sup> (men of whom the world was not worthy), **wandering** in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

**39 And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised,**  
**40 because God had provided something better for us,"**

*Hebrews 10:39*

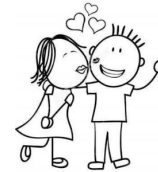
"But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, **but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.**"

**The Word of the Cross**  
is our security for heaven.

**The Way of the Cross**  
is our significance in this life.

Paul's power and ours comes from  
**our RESPONSE to life's ups and downs.**

**We must seek to know God's will,**  
**not for God to grant us our will.**



Three issues  
to address  
In premarital  
counseling

Know **yourself**  
and **who** you  
are marrying.

Know what the  
world **grooms**  
**you to expect.**

Know what God  
**expects you**  
**to handle.**

God calls us to (agape) the person we marry,  
**not to marry the person we love, or to**  
**expect them to meet needs that**  
**only God can meet.**

*James 1*

"<sup>2</sup> Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various **trials**, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces **endurance**. <sup>4</sup> And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. <sup>5</sup> But if any of you lacks **wisdom**, let him **ask of God**, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. <sup>6</sup> But he must ask **in faith** without any doubting, for the one who doubts ... <sup>7</sup> ... ought not to **expect** that he will receive anything from the Lord,"

**Wisdom**  
is knowing God's will  
and stepping out in it with faith.

**Man's wisdom starts with God's will.**

*James 4*

"<sup>1</sup> What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? **Is not the source your pleasures that wage war** on your members? <sup>2</sup> You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. <sup>3</sup> You do not have because

you do not ask. **You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives,** so that you may spend it on your pleasures."







## The temptation of Jesus and all humanity

*Matthew 4*



### Change the circumstances!

“<sup>3</sup> **Command** that these stones become bread.”

### Claim the promises!

<sup>6</sup> **He will command His angels concerning you** so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”

### Compromise the means!

<sup>9</sup> All these things I will give you, **if you (prostrate yourself before) me.**”

*Hebrews 12*

“<sup>1</sup> ... let us also lay aside every encumbrance and **the sin which so easily entangles us,**”

## 2. Bereans must watch out for misplaced hopes.

What is this sin that  
“so easily entangles us”?

Could it be the expectations  
of a distorted reading of the  
Word and Way of the Cross?



*Hebrews 12*

“<sup>1</sup> ... and let us **run with endurance** the race that is set before us,”

## 3. Bereans expect life to be an endurance race on an obstacle course.

The way Jesus and  
the Apostles address  
hardships in this life is

**significant  
& shocking.**



## The WAY of the Cross

*1 Peter 3*

“<sup>8</sup> To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; <sup>9</sup> **not returning evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead;** for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing. . . .

<sup>15</sup> but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give **an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;**”



*Hebrews 12*

“<sup>2</sup> fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, **who for the joy set before Him endured the cross**, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

## 4. Bereans expect to bear a cross to a banquet.

**“It’s Friday now  
but Sunday’s coming.”**

*Philippians 2*

“<sup>5</sup> **Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,** <sup>6</sup> who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> **Therefore also God highly exalted Him,** and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,”

*Things that a Berean should be aware of  
in building Godly Expectations.*

- **Promises** - God expects us to take our baptism seriously and die to self in this life.
- **Bibliolatry** - Don't treat the Bible as an **encyclopedia** of proof texts without a **context**.
- **Old Covenant** - Don't assume all Scripture (ie. Old Cov.) is **directed TO or ABOUT us**.
- **Examples** - Jesus, his Apostles, and all his followers are **alien ambassadors** in this world and expect experiences that are a **platform for witness**, not heaven on earth.

*What can we expect?*

- ✓ **A broken world** - THIS world will never become heaven on earth.
- ✓ **The dignity of God's image** in all humans (appetite, antenna, accountability).
- ✓ **Four things we can't change** - the past, the truth, other people, consequences of events.
- ✓ **Don't take responsibility** for things we can't control.
- ✓ **Take responsibility** for our response to life's ups & down.

*Expectations are at the heart  
of the Christian Gospel*

- ✓ **Faith & Hope** = expectations
- ✓ **Covenant & Promises** = expectations
- ✓ **Peace & Ministry** = expectations

*Expectations are not  
a problem when we  
seek wisdom,  
have faith &  
show up.*



# Hard Questions

