

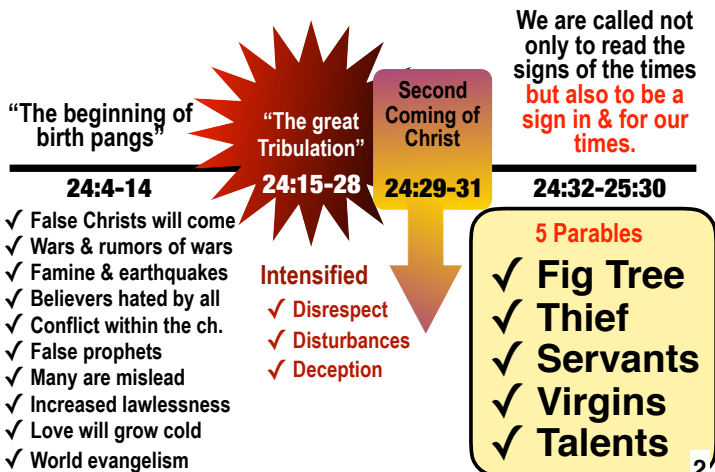
# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

**Luke 6:39-45**  
**Lesson #38**  
**Spiritual Eyesight**  
**06/14/2020**



## “Signs of the Times” (Matthew 24-25)



How can we all get along?

**The parables of Matt. 24-25**

1. Be patient and **wait** - this world is not nor will it be heaven.
2. **Conflicts** come from **fears** that are linked to false **perceptions** and **expectations**.
3. We reap what we **sow**.

3

## Hebrews 10

“23 Let us **hold fast** the confession of our hope without wavering, . . . 24 and let us consider how to **stimulate** one another to love and good deeds, 25 . . . **encouraging** one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.”



Richard John Neuhaus

“Idolatry is trying to bring in God’s Kingdom before its time and without its King.”

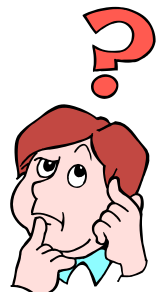
It is popular with both the political right and left.

4

**We know that life in a fallen world will be unfair.**

**The kingdom of God is promised but conditioned on Christ’s return.**

How are broken people in a broken world to find peace and be peacemakers as they wait?



5

### Luke 6

“39 And He also spoke a parable to them: “A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit? 40 A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.”

1. Right **perceptions** are critical to our response to life's challenges.
2. These perceptions are not all intuitive or instinctive but many are **taught** by Jesus.

What we see with our **senses** is given meaning in the context of what we are taught from **Scripture**.

6

### Luke 6

“41 And why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 42 Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.”

3. Right perceptions start with how we see **ourselves** in key relationships to God and others.
4. They extend to how we can help **others**.

7

### Luke 6

“43 For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit; nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. 44 For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush. 45 The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart.”

5. Our nature as humans **bearing God's image**, will be revealed in our words and deeds.
6. To the extent that God's love & truth are **integrated** into our lives we will have peace and be peacemakers.

8

### Matthew 6

“22 The lamp of the body is the eye; **if therefore your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.** 23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!”

#### Acquiring good spiritual eyesight:

- This cannot be **reduced** to prayer & memorizing Bible verses.
- This cannot be done in **isolation**.
- This is a **process** that will not be finished in this life.

9

- Be careful who you listen to, where you get your information, and who **is your tutor**.
- The **internet** is a great tool for learning, but only for those who are trained to be critical listeners.

“Don't confuse the two.”



“Don't believe everything you read on the internet just because it has a respected name and face attached.”

Abraham Lincoln



10

#### What to look for in a teacher.

- Seek out teachers with **broad experience** in life - “Elders” are called elders for a reason.

Teachers should be **students** of Scripture, life, culture, and themselves.

- “Sound doctrine” is a function of **how the Biblical text is interpreted**.
- Biblical texts do not come with a **transparent “true interpretation”**.
- Seek out teachers who will help you **learn how to listen and discern** rather than tell you what you must believe and do.

11

- Seek out teachers who don't **punctuate** every idea in the same way.

(**?**), (**,**), (**.**), (**!**).

- ✓ Major on majors, minor on minors and strive to know the difference.
- ✓ When we stop asking and listening, we stop learning and growing.

Some of my favorite clipart pals



12

### How to process sources and information.

- History that is **repressed** or **redacted** is likely to be **repeated**.
- **Study the historian** before you buy into his or her recording of history.
- If it **sounds too good or bad to be true** - be careful - it probably is.
- On controversial issues, hear both sides **FROM BOTH SIDES** before you draw dogmatic conclusions.
- **Respect the bias** of both source & recipient.

*How well (honestly) can you argue AGAINST a controversial idea you hold?*

13



Greater Carolina Association of Rabbis' Kallah (retreat)



- **Presuppositions** - The conservative rabbi and I were on one side and the reformed rabbis and liberal protestants on the other.
- **Empathy** - A rabbi convinced me that he understood the strengths of my position and yet rejected it. This caused me to want to listen to him.

- **Stereo types** - We nearly always distort the positions of people we don't listen to, communicate with, or understand.
- **Depersonalize** - We have a better chance of finding the truth when we 1) focus on the issue and 2) team up with those who see it differently so as to work together to find the truth.

14

- A **"straw man"** is easy to create & great to look at but it does not do well in a fire.

### 1 Corinthians 3

"10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. 11 For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, **wood, hay, straw**, 13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be **revealed with fire**; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. 14 If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire."

15

- History that is **repressed** or **redacted** is likely to be **repeated**.

**Study the historian** before you buy into his or her recording of history.

- The unacknowledged bias of modern media is not political so much as **RATINGS**.
- Fact check, listen, get other opinions, **be a Berean**.



16

### Help for addressing our fears.

- **Spiritual audits** are indispensable for Christian growth and health.
- But they must start with **our own souls**.



**Know yourself**

(get in touch with your heart)

**Accept yourself**

(apply grace to yourself with repentance)

**Get over yourself**

(remove defensive strategies)

**Give yourself**

(minister grace to others)



17

- Knowing oneself is the best **laboratory** for understanding others if you have empathy.
- Embracing **God's love and being baptized into Christ** are our keys to facing the dark side of life.

***Agenda for a self audit.***

- What am I afraid of and how do I manage fear and anger in my life?
- What were the core values of my home where I grew up? What experiences stuck?
- What is my temperament profile?