

The Stumbling Block of Viewing Things From a Human Point of View

by Ian Robson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing and overcoming spiritual nearsightedness, which can lead to a lack of spiritual discernment and self-centeredness, and encourages listeners to seek spiritual insight and understanding through prayer and seeking God's truth.

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Scripture: Proverbs 22:3

Topics: "Spiritual Discernment", "Holy Spirit"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of discerning the times we live in spiritually, urging listeners to recognize the signs of the times and not be blind or short-sighted. It highlights the need to seek God's guidance, run from evil, and be filled with the Holy Spirit to overcome spiritual nearsightedness. The message encourages believers to remember God's mercy, follow His calling, and worship Him wholeheartedly.

Transcript

We've been thinking of the addiction of distraction these last couple of weeks. I've never intended that they're just messages I preach but for myself I know that God has been speaking to me and not only speaking to me but I've sought to let him work in me to deal with all the things that distract me and shift my focus away from God's purpose for my life and I believe it's a word that God speaks to us as a church. Like I said that it's an addiction and if you recognize it it's an addiction we can deal with it and seek God that he can free us from this addiction, get us focused and help us to view the things that he has in mind for us, the plan that he has for our life.

We looked at the beginning about what Jesus said to Martha, you're distracted about so many things, so many things but only one thing is necessary and he has chosen it and we saw that one thing necessary is to listen and not just to listen but we looked at Isaiah 50 to listen as a disciple. So one thing to listen, you're all listening now but to listen as a disciple and I don't believe everybody here really wants to be a disciple, I hope so but Jesus always spoke to those who had years to hear. So we have years to hear what the spirit is saying to listen, to listen as a disciple so that we can be given the tongue of a disciple so we know how to encourage others especially those who are weary.

We saw that that was so important, we saw Jesus was our example, Paul was another example and like I said in our myths and we're not ashamed to see that we see a brother like brother Zach as an example that was focused, nothing can distract him. We praise God and we God for other brothers among us and the elders that God has given us and so I hope that it's not just messages we're listening to but I hope we've begun to do something. I know for myself I have begun to do something like I said to pull out the weeds before they overtake the garden and we saw that Paul says I forget the things that are behind, I reach forward to the things that are before, I press forward to our high calling in God.

And we saw too last week about Jesus saying to Peter, get behind me Satan, you're a stumbling block to me, you set your mind on man's interests and not on God's. So I hope and pray my brothers and sisters that we take what we hear seriously, it's not just a message but we take it to heart and do something with it and meditate on what God is trying to say to each one of us and take seriously what learning to set our mind on God's interests and not on man's. We saw that very clearly last week and today I want to talk about the stumbling block of spiritual nearsightedness and that's something that God has been speaking to me and I look back on my life and see how nearsighted I have been and how do I know that in the way I reacted, in the way I dealt with situations.

In Matthew chapter 16 verse 23 we read in the living bible, this is how it reads, it says Jesus turned on Peter and said get away from me you Satan, you are a dangerous trap to me, you're thinking merely from a human point of view and not from God's. That's what it means to be nearsighted, I think merely from a human point of view and not from God's. This is nearsightedness, just like you know we for some of us as we get older when you cross 40 you suffer with this problem, they call it myopia, nearsightedness.

And it says, there was an article I was reading, it says a spiritual health warning, there is a deadly epidemic, I'm reading from that what I read, that is currently sweeping the church. The condition primarily affects the heart, mind and soul of its victim and can lead to serious even fatal spiritual health problems if left untreated, just like if you have a problem with your eyes and you can't see properly, you're neglected, come the time you will not be able to see at all. And this is you know unlike spiritual blindness, we're not blind really but we are nearsighted.

Those of us who have a physical eye problem, we're not blind, we don't get blind, we're nearsighted. And blindness affects, spiritual blindness affects only unbelievers. But spiritual myopia, that's what I want to call it or nearsightedness has been detected in a significant and growing number of Christians, it says.

This term myopia, you know a condition of the eye in which light does not directly focus on the retina but in front of it, causing distant objects to be out of focus while close objects are in focus. You know if you have a problem, you go to the doctor, you say you have myopia, you wonder what that is. It simply means you're nearsighted, that you cannot see distant objects.

Distant objects are out of focus while close objects are in focus. And spiritual nearsightedness is exactly this. Spiritual myopia means we focus almost exclusively on the immediate surroundings, you know circumstances and situations without seeing the bigger picture.

That's how it was with Peter. He focused when Jesus began to say that he had to go, he had to be rejected by the elders, he had to be crucified and die and be raised up again. He said no, that cannot happen to you Lord.

That's why he didn't see the bigger picture, he focused on what was there. That's how it is. We all have a problem to a greater or lesser degree.

The more we yield ourselves to God and to the Holy Spirit, we find we can get cured from spiritual nearsightedness. And it says as a result in this article, victims tend to view God's truth through the lens of their own circumstances as opposed to viewing their circumstances through the lens of God's truth. That's how it is.

You know we deal with situations, the home, the work spot and in the church. We can view it through our own lens instead of through the lens of God's truth. And so we end up seeing things from man's point of view like we just read from the living Bible.

Jesus said to Peter, you're a dangerous trap to me because you're looking at things from man's point of view and not from God's, instead of God's. And the danger, the danger of such a condition, if not corrected and cured, the result will be we will lack spiritual discernment and be more easily misled by false teaching or worldly temptations. That's the danger.

And that has spoken to my own heart. So need to get cured of spiritual nearsightedness, of spiritual myopia. This is a stumbling block.

That's why Jesus said you're a dangerous trap to me because you're looking at things from a human point of view and not from God's. And the end result, we end up self-centered. When we don't, we are not interested to get this cured, to begin to see all things from God's point of view, we end up self-centered instead of God-centered.

And we heard recently that in the last days there'll be, those will be lovers of self. There, this is where it leads. Lovers of self more than lovers of God.

That's the danger that we all face. And that's why Paul prayed for the Colossian Church. I want you to look at it in your Bible, but I'll read it from another translation which comes out very clearly.

Colossians 1.7. This is Paul's prayer for the Colossian Church. He says, we heard about your growth in Christian love. So you will understand that since we heard about you, we have never missed you in our prayers.

We're asking God that you may see things at its where, from his point of view, by being given spiritual insight and understanding. He says, we're asking God that you may see things from his point of view, from God's point of view, being given, he says there, by being given spiritual insight and understanding. And in our Bibles that we have before us, he says, it's only right for me to feel this way about you because I have you in my heart since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.

For God is my witness, how I long for you with the affection of Christ Jesus. And I pray that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent. And so that you see things from God's point of view, not from a human point of view.

And how could this be that God will give you, he says, the spiritual insight and understanding. He says there in verse 10, you may approve the things that are excellent in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ, having been filled with the fruit of righteousness, which comes through Jesus Christ to

the glory and praise of God. That was Paul's burden for this church.

It was a wonderful church. And Jesus never had to censure this church in Colossae. Ephesus, yes, but not the church in Colossae.

It was a wonderful church. And Paul prayed this prayer. He says, I pray that you will get spiritual insight and understanding so that you can see all things from God's point of view.

And so to really recognize this, that this is a stumbling block. This is what I see in my own life. I look back at many things, and it only makes me repent.

How we react, because we see things from a human point of view instead of from God's point of view. And to have clear vision. You know, we have physically, if we have a problem, we go to the eye doctor.

And he'll check out what it is. If it's only that we need glasses, he'll tell you that you need specs, or you want to have a contact lens, or you want to have laser surgery. It can get corrected so that we can have normal vision.

And normal or clear vision is 20 by 20. On the railways, when we went for a medical test, we had to have 20 by 20 vision to drive a locomotive with or without glasses. To drive any vehicle today, you got to have 20 by 20 vision.

There should not be any defect. You should not have myopia. You should not have the opposite of it, which is hyperopia.

Some people have that problem. But the myopia, it says there are millions of people in India suffer with it. Hyperopia physically is that you see things way before you, but you can't see things before you.

And that spiritually also, that's how it is. Some people will see things, they speak about the coming of Christ, they seem to have understanding about prophecy, they have TV programs, and people are taken up with that. This is going to happen, that's going to happen, that's what's happening there.

And people are just glued to the TV. I know my neighbors are listening to all this. People who have spiritual hyperopia, they can see things way behind, but they don't see the immediate.

They don't see what is before them. That we have to, like Jesus said, take up the cross, deny ourselves, and follow after him. So our problem is not, I don't think anyone here suffers with that, spiritual hyperopia, where you're looking, you're occupied with prophecy and what's happening in Israel, what's happening in Iran, and all that.

That's okay. You may want to read a little bit of it. But to get all occupied with that, and we miss out.

It's a stumbling block that we stumble over. And so, that's on my heart this morning, that we really ask the Lord to deal with this spiritual nearsightedness that many of us suffer from. You know, Paul said to Timothy, in 2nd Timothy, in chapter 2, 17 to 18, he says, avoid worldly and empty chatter, which leads to further ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene.

Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus. You know, you see that Paul names people. He didn't just say some brothers.

Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who have gone astray from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already taken place. And they upset the faith of some. And these are people who had hyperopia.

The resurrection has already taken place. They upset the faith of some. Paul named them so that, you know, they could, that Paul could warn the other churches.

In 1 Timothy, chapter 1, verses 18 to 20, he says, you can look at it, he says, this command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. These are people, you know, who were nearsighted. They rejected a good conscience.

Among these are Hymenaeus, I don't know if it's the same man, and Alexander, whom I've handed over to Satan so that they will be taught not to blaspheme. They began to say different things, like I said to you last Sunday. There are those who have gone from our myths.

We're preaching all kinds of things. You don't have to take up the cross. Jesus has already done it.

Hymenaeus and Alexander, he named them. And that is our responsibility, for those of us who have responsibility to shepherd the flock of God. We have to name people who are leading others astray.

Look at 2nd Timothy, chapter 1, verse 15. He says, you are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are figilists and hymogenes. He named them.

Demas, he said, having loved this present world, has deserted me and left for Thessalonica. Maybe to help the church there, that would have been a spiritual excuse. We are living in days, my brothers and sisters, where we need to take heed.

And if we don't get cured of spiritual nearsightedness, we will stumble. We will get deceived. Such people are easily deceived, and they are led astray, and can end up with an unbelieving and hard heart, and fall away from the living God.

That's the result. That's Hebrews 3. Take care, brethren. He's not talking to the world, people outside the church.

Take care, brethren, lest there be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God. Encourage one another. And we are to encourage one another, and we are to warn others.

And those who have responsibility, that's our responsibility, to warn others, to name them by name. We're not here to protect people and their reputation. If they are leading others astray, if they're a deceiver in the midst of God's people, we are to name them, and warn the flock of God.

So, it's not just the response of the elders. If we all have clear vision, we can see things clearly. We are not to be like that man who saw, when Jesus touched him, you know, the man that Jesus found in Bethsaida, and he had to take him outside that village, and touched his eyes.

It's there in Mark chapter 8, in verses 20 to 26. If you want, you can look at it. Touched his eyes, and then he said, do you see anything? He says, I see men as trees walking.

Brazak has made a comment on that. If it was today's healing preachers, he said, yeah, you're healed now. Praise God.

Put him up on the stage. And this poor man is looking at the congregation like a whole forest of trees. You're healed.

I've seen that myself personally. The boy that was lame and supposed to be healed, and he limped across the stage like a bird, like a lame bird. He's healed.

Praise God. That's the deception going on today, my brothers and sisters. And people are fooled, because they don't have 20 by 20 vision.

They don't see all things clearly. And this man was honest enough to say, I see men as trees walking. And Jesus put his fingers on his eyes again, put his hands on his eyes, and touched him, and said, now do you see? He says, now I see all things clearly.

He said, don't go back. That's right. Go home some other way.

Don't go through Bethsaida. Why? If you read another place that Jesus warned Bethsaida, woe to you, Bethsaida. If the miracles that happened in you happened in Tyre and Sidon and Sodom and Gomorrah, they would have repented.

So thick was unbelief then, Bethsaida. And I believe, my brothers and sisters, know better in Bangalore. So many churches, so much preaching.

But unbelief is like a mist, like a fog. People, God's people are being deceived, because they don't get cured of spiritual nearsightedness, of spiritual myopia. They're content.

Like that man, if he just went away and said, yeah, I can see now. I couldn't see before. But he saw men as trees walking.

Think what would happen. We are to see men as men, not men as trees walking. I used to see my brothers, my brother, my sisters, my sister.

And not, you know, that's okay. That's not my business. The elders have to take care of that.

I have a concern. It's not just the job of the elders. If you are part of this church, you're committed here.

You have a responsibility. You have a responsibility, first of all, to see that you have 20 by 20 vision, that you see all things clearly. You don't get deceived by things you see on the internet and Facebook and this and that.

And people have gone forth from among us. And you hear things and you get letters and you perhaps meet with them. And then you listen to them and say, yeah.

And you feel sorry for them. That's what's happening. Then that's because these people suffer from nearsightedness.

I've asked God, I said, Lord, I want to see all things clearly in these days. I want to see all things clearly. I don't want anyone's blood on my hands.

I want to shepherd the flock of God that you call me to do. That's our calling. But every one of us can be a shepherd.

And so to take it seriously, the only person who walked this earth who had clear vision, who had a 20 by 20 vision was Jesus. But if we all recognize that we have a spiritual disease, this is an addiction. We have a tendency, you and I, to see things from a human point of view.

And then the sad thing is we act according to that and react and make many blunders and do many foolish things. I know I have. And as God reminds me of them, I repent.

And I want to repent so that I can have clear vision, so that I can see things from God's point of view, so that I get insight and understanding to see everything, all things from God's point of view. Jesus says in John chapter 8 verse 12, he invites us to follow him if we want to have this clear vision. He says, I am the light of the world.

He who follows me will not walk in the darkness but will have the light of life. And you turn a few pages to John chapter 8 in verse 12. Sorry, John chapter 11 verse 10.

John 11, 10. Jesus says, if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles because the light is not in him. You know, I told you about myopia, that you know why people cannot see things only before them is because of the light that should shine on the retina shines outside.

And Jesus says, if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles because the light is not in him. So if I have the light in me, the life of Jesus in me, I will begin to see everything clearly. And the way I deal with situations will get better and better.

So the first thing that we have to recognize that the cause of spiritual nearsightedness or spiritual myopia is when we look at things from a human point of view and not from God's. That's the first thing I must acknowledge. I must humble myself and say, Lord, that situation, this situation, I looked at it from a human point of view.

I made a judgment. I acted and I did things foolishly. Repent, Lord, I want to repent.

I want to do things better. I want to see things from your point of view. Otherwise, we will stumble.

And stumble means we don't walk by faith. We walk by our senses. Second Corinthians 5:17.

We walk by faith and not by our senses, not by our circumstances. You look through the Bible, you see it right from the very beginning, right from Eve, right through the Bible, God's people in the wilderness. They looked at things from a human point of view.

It goes through the scriptures. I really believe it is a dangerous, dangerous stumbling block. You and I can never become spiritual.

We can never walk like Jesus. We can never help people if we don't let the Lord deal with this disease. You see it as a disease, as an addiction, like I said.

The ten spies, when they were sent to view the land of Canaan, eight of them saw things from a human point of view. They saw themselves as grasshoppers and they saw these giants. They brought back a bad report because they saw things from a human point of view.

And that's how it can be in our different situations. Something happens in the world, we see it from a human point of view, we get all upset into unrest and bring that report home and spread the unrest to our wife and our children and to others we are in touch with because we see things from a human point of view instead of seeing it from God's. And that's what these eight spies, they brought back a bad report.

They saw themselves as grasshoppers. Whereas two of them, Joshua and Caleb, how was it with them? They said, we'll eat them up. You know that? That is literally what they said.

You look at it in Numbers chapter 14. Numbers chapter 14, speaking there of, this is how they responded. Numbers chapter 14.

It says, we don't have time to read everything there, but it says all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried and the people wept that night. See what happens. You see the unrest we can spread.

You see the terrible danger. That's why Jesus said to Peter, you're a dangerous trap to me. All the sons of Israel grumbled, verse two, against Moses and Aaron.

And the whole congregation said to them, would that we had died in the land of Egypt instead of dying in this wilderness. Why is the Lord bringing us into this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become plunder. Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt? You see how terrible it is, my brothers and sisters.

You see what it does? Nearsightedness. So they said to one another, let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt. We don't want this Moses.

And Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before God. That's a good, that's always, that's the place we should fall on our faces before God. If we are spread, if there's unrest in the home, in the family, the only one thing I can do to handle that situation, fall on my face before God.

And I look back at the situations we face in our home. Yeah, we did that many times, but many other times we acted according, I acted according to what my eyes saw and what my ears heard. Listen, it says, Joshua, the son of Nun and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes and they spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel saying, the land which we pass through to spy out is an exceedingly good land.

If the Lord is pleased with us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land which flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Lord and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be, if you have a margin, our food. They will be our prey, literally, our food.

We'll eat them up. Amazing, isn't it? What the spirit of faith can do when we face situations. Because, he says, their protection has been removed from them and the Lord is with us.

Do not fear them. We need to have that spirit, my brothers and sisters, in these last days. Whatever situation, whatever circumstances, whatever the days ahead, and the days ahead are going to be difficult.

We are going to face persecution. We are going to face situations. But if we're going to get scared of these giants and bring back a bad report and spread unrest in our homes and families and in the church, it is sad.

That's in verse 10. Even with such, you know, even with what Joshua and Caleb said, this is all the congregation said, to stone them with stones. That's how bad it is today.

Unbelief. And like I said, our city is no better than Bethsaida. But God wants to do a work through us and through us as a church and through us as individuals.

God wants to lay, he has laid hold of your life and mine. And he wants to baptize us and fill us with the Holy Spirit so that we get cured. That whatever situation you face, whatever it be, however bad, however discouraging and despairing it may be, that if you see God, you look at it from God's point of view, this situation, the Lord will handle it.

God is with me. God has removed, whether it's your boss in the office, whether it's some troublesome neighbor with some problem in the home, their protection has been removed for them. This will be my food.

I'll eat them up. That's how we should, that's how it should be when we see, when Satan, you know, people talk about being oppressed by the devil and, you know, all kinds of things. That's how it must be.

That's the spirit that we are to have, my brothers and sisters. Remember what I said, it's in our minds that we are led astray. Paul feared for the church in Corinth that in their minds they would be led astray from simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

Jacob, you remember Jacob, when he encountered a difficult situation, they had taken Simeon and now they wanted Benjamin. In Genesis 42, 36, what was his reaction to that? You know, when he heard the report they brought back, Joseph is no more. He said, Simeon is no more and you would take Benjamin.

All these things are against me. Have you felt like that? God is punishing me. All these things are against me.

Really? But when we let the spirit of faith come upon us to correct this nearsightedness and ask the Lord to help us, whatever situation we face, change our perspective and the way we view everything that happens to us, we will be free from this disease, from this addiction. This alone is the cure, my brothers and sisters, for nearsightedness. Look at 2nd Corinthians in chapter 4. 2nd Corinthians chapter 4, verse 13.

Paul says there, 13, but having the same spirit of faith according to what is written, I believed, therefore, I spoke. I believed, therefore, I spoke. And I've said this many times, if you do not believe, don't speak.

Simple. If you do not believe, just shut your mouth. In the home or whatever situation you face, I believe, Paul says, we also believe, therefore, we also speak.

Knowing that he will raise, the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you. And now listen to this. For all things are for your sakes, so that the graces which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God.

This is what will spread, not grumbling and discontent and all the situation that they face there with the children of Israel, Joshua and Caleb, but we will spread thanksgiving. The grace which spreads to more and more people, to my wife and to my children, will cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God. That is God's will for you and me, my brothers and sisters.

And we know Romans 8, 28, that God causes all things to work together for our good, because we love God. Not for all people. If you love God, you are called according to His purpose and that is to be conformed to the image of Jesus.

All things will work together for your good. And I thank God for working in my life and bringing me, putting me on this path. I have not arrived yet, but I am on the right path.

I am in the right direction. I have begun to see this and I tell you, it has caused the giving of thanks abound to the glory of God in my home and my family, with my wife, that we can give thanks to God. We have refused to judge by what our eyes see.

If we refuse to look at things from a human point of view, whatever it is, whether somebody is suffering, some problem, our children going through some situation, I will not look at it from a human point of view. I look at it from God's point of view and remind myself that God will cause this, whatever it may be, even an impossible situation, to work together for my good, because I love God. And so the second thing that we learn is that we must not judge by appearance.

Jesus said to the religious leaders of His day in John chapter 8, verse 15, He says, you decide by what you can see and touch. I don't make judgments like that. You decide by what you can see and touch.

I don't make judgments like that. We fail in this area, all of us. And that's why we lack clear spiritual vision.

We lack discernment. We don't know how to handle situations. We handle them according to our own reason and wisdom, rather than the wisdom that comes from above.

You read about that in James chapter 3, verses 23 to 18. When you have time, you can read it. The wisdom that comes from above, the earthly wisdom is natural, soulish, and demonic.

The wisdom from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, so many things, full of good fruits, willing to yield. We will get that wisdom. And Isaiah prophesied about Jesus in Isaiah 11.3, he will delight in the fear of the Lord.

He will not judge by what his eyes see or make a decision by what his ears hear. And Paul said to the Corinthians, he says, you're looking at things outwardly. But he says, as for us, we destroy speculations.

Second Corinthians chapter 10, verse 5, destroying speculations, every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. Destroy speculations. We are to see clearly, my brothers and sisters, that is God's will for every last one of us.

If you're part of the family of God, if you're born again, and you're part of God's kingdom, we are to see all things clearly, particularly in these last days. You know the story of Elisha, the incident that Elisha faced in second Kings, in chapter 6, verses 15 to 17. In Elisha, the king was after him.

There was a whole army surrounded the city and surrounded his house. And his servant got all panicky. And he said, master, master, they're around us.

They're come to get us. And he told him, go out and see. And while he went, he said, Lord, open his eyes.

Open his eyes. And he came back and said, I see all around us, around this enemy. I see angelic horse.

I see the Lord's army around our enemies. How did he see that? Because Elisha prayed, Lord, open his eyes. And we need our eyes open.

We need to pray for each other. We need to pray for ourselves. Lord, open my eyes.

Not go by what we see and hear. So may the Lord help us correct this nearsightedness that we all have. Many times Jesus had to rebuke his disciples.

You men of little faith. You who are slow of heart. In the same chapter, Matthew chapter 16, you read it there, that when they forgot to take bread, Mark says they had only one loaf in the boat.

And he spoke to them with 11 of the Pharisees and Sadducees. They were just occupied with what they had forgotten. They forgot to take bread.

And that really encouraged me that even when I forget things, God is in control. I hope that encourages you. You forget your keys.

You're in a situation. Your car gets locked. You're out somewhere.

How to open it? God is in control. And that has really encouraged me. And that's why Jesus said, do you not understand? Do you not remember? They not only suffer from spiritual myopia, spiritual nearsightedness.

They suffer from spiritual amnesia. He says, don't you remember when I broke the five laws? How many baskets were left? They had the right answers. When I broke the seven laws, how many baskets were left? They had the right answer.

Don't you not yet understand? They see the grief there. Don't you understand? Why are you always looking at things from a human point of view? And the other thing that we need to do is to keep company with those who have clear vision. Then we will be helped.

That's how it was with Joshua and Caleb. We see there in Hebrews chapter 4 verse 2. I'd like you to look at this. It says, indeed we have had good news preached to us just as they also.

But the word they heard did not profit them because it was not united by faith. And actually that word is with those who heard. It's speaking about Joshua and Caleb.

They were not united by faith with those who heard. We are to keep company with those who have clear vision so that we would also be able to see all things clearly. That's what Paul told young Timothy.

He says, flee from youthful lust. Second Timothy chapter 2 verse 22. And pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

Not everybody. So keep company with those who have clear vision. And one last thing and the most important thing.

Only the baptism in the Holy Spirit and a daily filling of the Holy Spirit will cure our spiritual nearsightedness. Would help us to see things clearly. We'll get cured permanently.

When the Spirit of God comes upon us, changes us, makes us into another man, makes you into another woman, you'll be able to see things clearly. And we have to go to Jesus for that. One last word in Acts

chapter 9 verse 17 to 18 which speaks of Saul.

So Ananias departed and entered the house and after laying his hands on Saul said, brother Saul the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And this is what I want you to say. And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales and he regained his sight and he got up and was baptized.

When the Holy Spirit came upon him something fell from his eyes like scales. I pray to God this morning that many scales will fall from our eyes. If we have years to hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

Now what you need and what we need for those of us who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, we need to seek God, seek God like we sought him in the beginning for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We need to seek him to be filled with the Holy Spirit every day. So that I can handle situation, so that I can view all things from God's point of view not from a human point of view.

And for those of you who have been coming here but you've never really taken it seriously. I want to say to you my brothers and sisters it's fatal. It's fatal because the things that you hear in this church will make you religious and you will go about with partial vision or you know even with no vision.

If you don't take seriously what we have preached all these 40 plus years. Be baptized in the Holy Spirit. Take it seriously.

Cry out to God. Cry out to him like you would never cry out before and say Lord help me. Get help.

I pray that every one of us who are listening would really seek the Lord. Lord we need the Holy Spirit. We need power.

Send your Spirit upon me. Baptize me. Those of you who have not been baptized in the Holy Spirit.

You will end up in spiritual death. Pray to God. Lord it's not enough to be born again.

You need to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. And if you right this moment you don't have to qualify. See there's no sin in your life.

No unconfessed sin. And say Lord baptize me right now. Baptize me in the Holy Spirit.

The scales will drop from your eyes. We will see all things clearly. Amen.

This year when sometime in the month of Jan or Feb weather forecasters predicted that this time the summer is going to be very severe. And we saw that happen. And they have also predicted already that this time the monsoon will set in earlier.

And this time we are going to have excess rain. And I hope that will also happen. You see people have discernment.

They realize the times in which they live. And Jesus spoke about that. About these weather forecasters in Matthew 16 2 and 3. Matthew 16 2 and 3. Jesus said he answered and said to them when it is evening you say it will be fair weather for the sky is red.

And in the morning there will be a storm today for the sky is red and threatening. Do you know how to you know how to discern the appearance of the day but cannot discern the signs of the times. He said you see

when you see these things you predict what is going to happen tomorrow.

But don't you know the seriousness or the appearance of the sky you see but you don't discern the signs of the times. There is a verse in Esther 1 13 when Queen Vashti she refused to come to the king's command. There is a verse in Esther 1 13 it says the king said to the wise men who understood the times.

There were a bunch of wise people there in Iran those days, Persia. This king when the queen refused to come when the king commanded and the king got so furious then he shared that with some wise men who about whom it says who understood the times and then they gave him some advice and because of that advice Esther became the queen and the land of Israel was saved. You see it is so easy for us to look around and you know we can say what's going to happen this and that.

Jesus already forewarned his disciples in Matthew 24. He told them about the signs of his coming. He told them very clearly what's going to happen.

I think three times he says be on your guard that you are not deceived. Many false prophets will come and deceive many sometimes he said even the elect can be deceived. And he gave so many examples in spite of that we live as if nothing is going to happen.

Peter warns about such people in his epistle. He says in the last times mockers will come. They'll come and say what happened to the Lord's coming.

Two thousand years ago they said he will come. It was written and nothing has changed. Everything is as it is.

They said the same thing during Noah's time too. They said nothing will happen. No rain will come.

They probably hadn't heard that there was a thing called rain. Those days the mist from the sky used to come and the ground also used to you know produce some kind of dampness and that's how they used to irrigate the land. And when he spoke about you just imagine 120 years Noah was building the ark and people every day morning going this way that way they used to mock him and his children.

Look at these crazy guys what are they doing. They're building a ship and we are so far away from the sea. How will this old man take this ship and go to the sea? And he says something like rain is going to come it seems which they had never heard.

And lo and behold one day it happened and they come knocking at the door of the ark. You know who shut the door. Jesus said I when I shut the door nobody can open it and when I open nobody can close it and he is the one who shut that door and when they came and knocked at the door Noah could not open it even if he wanted to because it was locked probably from outside by the Lord and it was locked and sealed probably nobody could break that seal.

It says in revelations my dear brothers and sisters it is time that we woke up. It says in the book of Proverbs 22 Proverbs 22 verse 3 it says about a prudent man. It says the prudent man sees the evil and he runs away.

See he has foresight he looks ahead he sees the evil coming and he turns around and he avoids it and there's another verse in Proverbs 14 16. It says a wise man is cautious. A wise man is cautious.

He is not anxious but he is cautious. He knows that something is going to happen some evil is going to befall some trouble is going to come I am not going to I am not prepared for that so what does he do? He turns around he runs just like Joseph did. You see we have been called to fight with principalities and powers in Ephesians 6. We wrestle we are called to wrestle and fight against principalities and powers and rulers of this universe in the heavenly places that is demonic spirits and things like that but when it comes to you know physical temptations especially young people have in the area of sex.

When it comes to that area the Bible never says wrestle. The Bible never says fight. The Bible says run away from youthful lusts.

That's what even before the Bible was written Joseph did that. He had the Holy Spirit in him. He ran away from Potiphar's wife and he saved himself.

It's a tremendous example for me for us even when the Bible was not written this man had the sense to run away from evil and today how many people sit there blindly before the computer clicking this and that and watching this and that and defiling their minds and spirit not discerning the times in which we live. There is another verse in Proverbs 24 verse 27 it says prepare your work outside that means prepare your work in the field and then you build your home means study your take your studies seriously study well get a proper job when you are earning sufficient to maintain a family then you think of marriage and build a home. See it's common sense the Bible is very clear and practical.

Study first and students in their schools and colleges they're already thinking about this one that one and they're so distracted you know when your mind is clouded with all these things you think you can study properly much less the scriptures. You have no time for the scriptures but you have time for everything like the other day I told every day we look into our face in the mirror and say probably young fellows how great thou art and maybe sisters you're beautiful beyond description.

You see we have time for so many times to look our face in the mirror you don't have time to look at this mirror the word of God which is so clearly given to us for our instruction and correction and rebuke to equip us for the days ahead we don't take these things seriously we just say oh I don't have time brother I'm too busy really yeah Jesus said walk while it is still day night comes when nobody can walk I am the light of the world Jesus said if you walk with me you will not stumble you see in the night you cannot walk in the dark you cannot walk when there is no light it is as good as you're blindfolded if you are blindfolded and you try to grope in the dark you don't know where you are going you will go and hit something and you know you can damage yourself hurt yourself but Jesus

said I'm the light of the world walk with me then you will not stumble the psalmist said thy word is a light unto my path and lamp unto my feet when I carry the word of God which is which is true light when I have that in my heart or when I put my hand in the hand of the one who called himself the light of the world then I will not stumble I will reach my goal he will not leave me nor forsake me he said I will never never leave you to whom to those who have put their hand in his hands and walk with him along with him he says I'll never leave you not forsake you if you leave his hand then you'll be you'll be forsaken in the sense you'll get lost may God give us grace and sense enough to discern the times in which we live so that we don't waste our time on this earth I noticed yeah the word

short sight is actually used in the bible it's used in 2nd Peter chapter 1 verse 9 it talks about those who are not growing in their spiritual life and talks about growth how we can add to our diligence applying all diligence add to our faith moral excellence knowledge self control and it says godliness brotherly kindness

love you know brotherly kindness and love is how we know that we are growing you know a spiritual life and if we don't do this we are blind and short-sighted having forgotten my purifications from my former sins that I've forgotten you know where I was and that god called me and lifted me up and cleansed me and showed his great mercy on me and I'm not seeing things from god's point of view you know I feel like now I'm comfortable I've arrived and you know the blindness

the short-sightedness of that and it says yeah make make certain about his calling and choosing you why has he called you just you know just I was just thinking for young people that if we think about you know why we are here in this church and think about god's great mercy that he's showing us to speak these truths to us to reveal these truths to us that you know we can be saved from the blindness that we know we just go out into this world there's a huge darkness that's that that covers the earth but in this church we hear the words of god that can that are light and life and we can follow them and I was I was thinking about that blind man you know the man whose eyes were open in john chapter 9 and that's where jesus speaks these words where he says we must work the works of him who

sent me as long as it is john chapter 9 and uh you know when we hear the voice of god in our hearts when we know that these words it is not possible that this truth can you know just come from man's bright ideas it is this is the voice of god what am I going to do about it am I going to take it seriously am I going to step forward in the light am I going to lay hold of that for which god has laid out of me am I going to remember the mercies of god remember what he called me out of and and press on uh you know or and am I going to look around at those around me and and you know and not follow him and we we know that you know in this story there was there was a blind man and there's a contrast between the blind man and his parents and uh you know jesus came he he sent the blind man the

blind man obeyed and his eyes were open and then he just clung to this i said i know what god has done for me i was blind but now i see and nobody can take that away from me and nobody can take away what god has done in my life for me and as i meditate on what god has done in my life i realize his plan for my life is not you know is not just for me to you know find a good church and be comfortable but he has a glorious calling for me and i want to follow it right to the end and and we see that uh this blind man's parents were not like that you know even though they had a son who was born blind uh they said you ask him he's of age we don't know anything about it right because they were scared of the jews it says and brothers and sisters i mean especially the young people this is this is my

you may have come here because your parents are here because your uncle is here because your cousin is here i came here because my elder brother was in the church he used to feed me on weekends that's why i came but i saw that the words that were being spoken in this world were from god and just like this blind man blind man said this man is a prophet this man is sent from god nobody can deny it and i was blind and now i see and you can throw me out you can do anything you want because nobody can take that away from you and just even right even just because you've come to this church you may not have victory over sin but if god has put a conviction of sin in your heart you suddenly realize that man what i'm doing is wrong i cannot go on like this there must be some way out i don't know

what the way out is believe that you know jesus will help you find the end and the wonderful truth about the story not about his parents but this man himself jesus came back and he found jesus and he worshipped jesus it says and god wants to lead us to be worshippers where you know jesus is everything and he's all that we need and we can fulfill his plan for our life so brothers and sisters that's that's the hope and that to keep our eyes on god's mercy and keep our eyes on god's calling and to know that that the

good work that he's beginning in us he's able he's mighty to complete it and to press on for that amen

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