



## MESSAGE/SERIES:

### The Disappearance of Discernment *\_Mini Series*

(Part 2) Discernment Is Lived Out in Antithesis

**DATE: September 8, 2019**

## SCRIPTURE FOR THIS WEEK:

(These verses will help you understand themes within as you read our core text as scripture proves scripture)

**1 Corinthians 1:25-28, Ephesians 2:1-10, Hebrews 5:14, 1 Corinthians 2:14-16, 1 John 4:1-6, Acts 17:11-12, Romans 2:18, 12:2, Hebrews 6:12, Proverbs 22:29, Hebrews 2:1-4, 5:10, 11-14, 10:24-25, 1 Kings 3:9-12, Psalms 1:1-2, 7, Matthew 7:15, 26:41 Acts 20:20-30, Revelations 2:2, Ephesians 4:11-12, Deuteronomy 6:6, Philippians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 5:15-26, Colossians 3:16**

## OPENING SCRIPTURE:

[EPHESIANS 2:1-10]

*“And you were **dead** in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— <sup>3</sup> among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. <sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were **dead in our trespasses**, made us **alive together with Christ**—by grace you have been saved— <sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*

*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Eph 2:1–11.*

## [1 CORINTHIANS 1:25-28]

*“<sup>25</sup> For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. <sup>26</sup> For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup> But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup> God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are...”*

*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 1 Co 1:25–28.*

---

Discernment- “The divinely given ability to distinguish God’s thoughts and ways from all others...”

---

## BACKGROUND & OTHER STUDY HELPS:

**Thesis:** A statement or theory that is put forward as a central premise to be maintained or proved.

**Antithesis:** Person or thing that is the direct opposite. a contrast or opposition between two things.

**Background:** “During the Middle Ages the Augustinian **antithesis of *sin and grace* gave way to that of *nature and grace***. This was based on another antithesis which played an important part in Roman Catholic theology, namely, that of the natural and the supernatural. In the state of integrity man was endowed with the supernatural gift of original righteousness, which served as a bridle to hold the lower nature in check. As the result of the fall, man lost this supernatural gift, but his real nature remained or was but slightly affected.”

L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans publishing co., 1938), 433.

**Genesis 3:15** presents “The antithesis between followers of God and followers of Satan is sovereignly inflicted as **God’s judicial curse**. This enmity is not only social but also intellectual in nature, and, therefore, to ignore it in our apologetic is to compromise the

gospel. Without the ingredient of antithesis, Christianity is not simply anemic, it has altogether forfeited its challenge to all other worldviews” (Bahnsen, 1987).

**Examples of Antithesis:** “The covenant of Sinai was *essentially* the same as that The established with Abraham...The reason why it is sometimes regarded as an entirely new covenant is that Paul repeatedly refers to the law and the promise as **forming an Antithesis**, Rom. 4:13 ff.; Gal. 3:17. But it should be noted that the apostle does not contrast with the covenant of Abraham the Sinaitic covenant as a whole, but only the law as it functioned in this covenant, and this function only as it was misunderstood by the Jews.”

L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans publishing co., 1938), 297.

**Gift of Discernment:** “Discerning spirits is a gift given by the Holy Spirit, enabling a person to instantly discern between the Spirit of God and evil spirits. It is not human intelligence, experience, or ability. It is directly from God. It is not fortune-telling.”

Croft M. Pentz, *Outlines on the Holy Spirit*, Sermon Outline Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1978), 61–62.

**Warren Wiersbe on Maturity:**

“I once heard a preacher say, “Most Christians are ‘betweeners.’ ”

“What do you mean by that?” I asked.

“They are between Egypt and Canaan—out of the place of danger, but not yet into the place of rest and rich inheritance,” he replied.

“They are between Good Friday and Easter Sunday—saved by the blood but not yet enjoying newness of resurrection life.”

Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 295.

**Sinclair Ferguson on Discernment:** “Thus, discernment is like the physical senses; to some it is given in unusual measure as a special grace gift (1 Cor. 12:10), but some measure of it is essential for us all and must be constantly nourished. The Christian must take care to develop his “sixth sense” of spiritual discernment. This is why the psalmist prays, “Teach me good judgment and knowledge” (Ps. 119:66)”

---

THE CHURCH HAS LOST THE ANTITHESIS  
of the story of redemption...

---

## OUTLINE:

---

*The antithesis provides the contrast between the world and the lost, the man and God, and regenerate and unregenerate man. Without the backdrop of Antithesis truth is lost...*

- **WE HAVE FORGOTTEN WE WERE DEAD (Ephesians 2:1-3)**

*The church has lost the Antithesis and has forgotten "we were dead"*

- Dead men do not hear the voice of God
- Dead men do not obey the voice of God
- Dead men are not disciples of Christ and look like Christ

**Misapplication:** we treat the world as if they are alive and able to understand or we teach religion or moralism or legalism in our counsel...

If we do get the fact that they cannot understand the word or live the word we lower the standards of the church to not offend the world...

- *We don't want to be bigots*
- *We don't want to be holy rollers*
- *We don't want to be different... so we blend in and fade out in relevance in this world... **the Church becomes irrelevant and no longer a beacon of light***

**Misapplication:** We treat truth as an obstacle in our ministry to the world... yet what is our ministry to the world? Are we here to present the Jesus of their own making or the Jesus who is the great I AM and unchanging? We compromise everything about the Gospel in order not to offend.

**(v2) “*in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air... the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—”***

- *If you are walking in darkness you are following the devil (prince and power of the air)*
- *If you are walking in darkness the spirit of Satan is at work in your life right now...*

**Application:**

=Dead men cannot respond to the Call of God lest God awakens the heart and opens the eyes of the dead man to see the truth...

=Dead men cannot follow God's commands until He knows the Lord as personal savior and friend...

=So we preach the Gospel without fail to everyone... to the Glory of Christ because His word is light and truth

**(v3) “... were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of Mankind.”**

**The the antithesis...** is the redeemed have a peace treaty with God and the lost man or woman who has not put faith in Jesus as Lord is still under the wrath of God

- *We cannot candy coat this point (Jesus is the peace treaty/God's wrath is satisfied in Christ alone)*
- *If we do not know the Lord we will spend eternity in hell*
- *Its not popular but is the truth*
- *We don't scare people out of hell or talk them into heaven but we present the Gospel truth*

- **WE HAVE FORGOTTEN WE ARE ALIVE (Ephesians 2:4-7)**

*(v4-5) “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—”*

The Antithesis to Satan’s plan of destruction is **The “BUT GOD”** part of this verse...

- **God broke into time to pursue his people** not because we were good or had great potential, but because of His great love, His great mercy *while we’re hopeless and helpless to make us alive*
- Isn’t it beautiful that the Regenerate are immediately made alive together with Christ. (Because He is alive we live)
- The language here aligns with the fact that
- *We have been transformed and given light/understanding that they may know the Lord more everyday and follow Him...*
- The redeemed once walked in patterns of darkness and those who have been transformed have the light and cannot walk in darkness without misery... **this is the Antithesis**
  1. *(Dark or Light)*
  2. *(Transformed by truth or Conformed to the world)*

**Application:** *There is no grey area Church and we need to hold the line of truth because we love...*

*(v6) “and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*

- If we are alive... our position in Christ is set for eternity... we have been made righteous because of the **imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ** on our lives...
- When we speak of our lives positionally we are speaking of His payment and our justification is permanent...Alive forever more in Christ
- The Antithesis is without Christ we are Dead and belong to the realm of darkness

**Application:**

=If you are alive...live as though you know heaven is your home

=live as though you know you are forever forgiven because of Jesus

=That you are his heir and His representative of life (one who has been given a heart transplant)

(v7) “ ***so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.***”

The Antithesis is **God did not send His Son to condemn the world, but that His grace may be revealed through all eternity bestowed on His people.**

- **God would be shown immeasurably gracious if one person was saved** because He owes us nothing... *if you know Jesus you know the immeasurable grace of our eternal God because you are alive in Christ!*

- **WE HAVE FORGOTTEN TO SHINE to Glorify God (Ephesians 2:8-10)**

(v8-9) ***“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”***

- *Here in these verses we see the Antithesis of Grace vs Works*
- *Without the Antithesis of Grace people would think they could earn their way to heaven... (reformers gave their lives for the truth that we are Justified through faith alone)*
- *Without the Antithesis of Grace and Works set against one another the church would not rest in grace alone...*
- *It would be a message of grace plus... and we all know it is grace plus nothing---salvation is 100% God*
- *Let me remind you that here we are assured that Grace comes before Faith... and faith ultimately will produce the works as evidence of life that James talks about.*
- *If you have been given life and sight you will live life by grace (God’s unmerited favor)*

(v10) ***“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”***

If we are His we will look like His craftsmanship, His workmanship, His masterpiece (NLT)... His signature will be on the masterpiece somewhere...

- *I understand we live in this already and not yet world where we are still dealing with the fallen nature that is still part of this life and yet we have a new desire to please God*

**Application:**

=If you don't see any markings that Jesus and His spirit is at work then the answer to the question today is black and white... Light & Darkness... Heaven & Hell... there is no grey areas.

Has He called you into the light?

If you have been given life and light you will shine in this world as you were "created in Christ for good works"--- He determined before the foundations of the earth and this is the Antithesis... That Grace applied to our lives produces evidence and we become representatives and His light will shine through us!

-----Message from Pastor Michael-----  
Church,

Discernment come as we call things what God's word does and we do not over contextualize our society. Yes we need to meet the world were they are and we need to have compassion, but not at the expense of truth. The Church will be held responsible for how we handled His word. I trust you will strive to live in the light and not in the Grey as He will bless you in this. We can see the truth better when the church stands on it because of a great love and desire to glorify His name. Have a great week in your studies!

Love in Christ,  
Pastor Michael



