

# **Pastor Mark Mikels - January 5, 2020**

## **"TWENTY-TWENTY VISION"**

- Seeing the World through the Lens of Scripture -  
(Proverbs 14:12; 1 John 4:1; Philippians 2:14-15)

**Intro ...** Today on this first Sunday of this new year 2020, we launch a brand-new series of messages I've entitled:

### **TWENTY/TWENTY VISION"**

- Seeing the World through the Lens of Scripture -

That's how God would have all men 'See the World' ...  
It's the only correct and God-Pleasing Way.  
It's also the only 'Heart-Satisfying' way.

But sadly, the vast majority of the world (including even many professing Christians) see the world with:

### **TWENTY/FOUR HUNDRED VISION**

- Through the lens of **SATANIC DECEPTION** -

We could say that Satan changed Adam and Eve's vision prescription that fateful day in the Garden of Eden ... Their **20/20 Vision** was lost forever - things began to blur and mankind has been afflicted with 'blurry vision' ever since. Mankind has become '**Spiritually Blind**.'

Only by the '**Corrective Lens of Scripture**' can **20/20 Vision** be restored.

And that reality leads to what I am calling this morning:

### **OUR 2020 SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE**

- To **SEE** things around us with **CLEAR 20/20 VISION** -

"To accurately **RECOGNIZE** and **TEST**  
and **CONFRONT** the **SPIRIT** of the **AGE**."

Throughout this series of messages, we will be following ...  
**A THREE STEP PROCESS ...**

**STEP ONE: "RECOGNIZE the Spirit of the Age"**

- Identify the perspectives and motivations and actions that characterize the fallen society around us -

As we do so, we must sensitize ourselves to this reality:

*"There is a way that appears to be right,  
but in the end, it leads to death."*

(Proverbs 14:12)

We will be identifying quite a few of them ...

We will discover that '**Satanic Deception**' has indeed spawned many perspectives and taken on many faces.

All of them will fall into one or another of the '**Four Stages of Depravity**' that the Apostle Paul identified in Romans 1:31:

Paul reported to the Romans that the depraved world of the past that God had finally '*Given over to a reprobate mind*' had become:

**'Senseless - Faithless - Heartless and Ruthless.'**

All the '**Stuff**' that arises from Satan's Deception and Manipulation of the Human Race falls into one of these '**Stages of Depravity**' ...

All the '**Spirits of the Age**' that we will discuss in the next few weeks do as well.

Allow me to just '*amplify*' them a bit this morning:

**'SENSELESS'** - (this is) irrational, nonsensical stuff ...  
**'Stuff'** believed that has no basis in fact - has no credibility.

**'FAITHLESS'** - (this is) independent, self-absorbed stuff ...  
**'Stuff'** that comes from one who is committed to nothing and no one other than '**Self**' -

**'HEARTLESS'** - (this is) insensitive, non-caring stuff ...  
**'Stuff'** that's devoid of caring or compassion; **'Stuff'** that is unaffected by all normal and natural human connections.

**'RUTHLESS'** - (this is) incomprehensible, brutal stuff ...  
**'Stuff'** that puts no moral or ethical limits on itself;  
**'Stuff'** that completely embodies the phrase '*Dog eat Dog.*'

Seeing the direction that a '**depraved**' - '**given over**' society heads should be enough to convince us that this is indeed '**Serious Stuff.**'

**So ... Recognizing** and Naming the various '*Spirits of a Fallen Age*' is certainly an essential **First Step.**

Give it a try this week.

See how many '*Spirits of this Age*' you can '*Recognize*' and '*Put a name to.*'

Keep in mind that all these '*Spirits of the Age*' are embraced and promoted by the people of this age.

They are positions that are held up and revered as being the '*enlightened*' way to live.

They are taught in our universities and increasingly codified in our laws and demonstrated in our society.

That's why we can call them the '*Spirits of the Age*' ...

They characterize our current world and define life for our people ... They are held up as being '*Universally True*' by the '*Powers that Be.*'

The first step in dealing with them is to '**Recognize**' them!

**Here now is ...**

**STEP TWO: "TEST the Spirit of the Age"**

- Hold every single one of those '*Spirits*' up to the Truth of Scripture and see if they have any Biblical merit -

This is what the **Apostle John** instructed:

*"Dear friends, do not believe (accept/go along with) every spirit (teaching or stated position of men) but test the spirits to see if they are from (consistent with and pleasing to) God ..."*  
(1 John 4:1)

Sad to say, Born-Again Believers can be caught up in the '*Spirit of the Age*' just like anyone else can ...

We must be continually asking ourselves:

*"Is this Biblical - Is this consistent with the Apostolic Way?"*

And when the answer is "**NO**" we must take ...

**STEP THREE: "CONFRONT the Spirit of the Age"**  
- Stand against every '*Spirit of the Age*' that possesses no Biblical merit - do so with courage and compassion -

Here's a most relevant directive from the **Apostle Paul**:

*"Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a **crooked and depraved generation**, in which you shine like stars in the universe **as you hold out the 'Word of Life'** ..."*  
(Philippians 2:14-15)

That is what we will be calling upon ourselves to do!

**Final Thot ...**

20/20 **VISION** always precedes 20/20 **LIVING**.  
What **LINE** on God's eyechart are you able to **READ**?