



# Blackfoot

## Church of Christ

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### Chasing the Wind

By Jeff Asher

When the Preacher says, "There is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9); he does not have in mind automobiles, the television, a man on the moon. Rather, he is contemplating human experience, the human condition, that which humans need and for which they yearn. With all the innovations, upgrades and discoveries, man has not changed; he is what he has always been and needs what he has always needed.

The sun still rises in the east and sets in the west. The rivers still flow from the mountains to the sea and the cycle is completed in evaporation (Ecclesiastes 1:5-7). Even so, man is born, he lives and he dies (Ecclesiastes 3:18-20). And, the sad reality is that the overwhelming majority do so forgotten. Life is an endless, changeless cycle.

If one looks at it just from this perspective, no wonder the Preacher said, "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity."

Like any rational, optimistic human being, the Preacher sought to know more (Ecclesiastes 1:13). So, he applied himself to know as much as he could (Ecclesiastes 12:12), and he learned all that study led him no closer to an answer (2:23), an end to the folly of the human experience (1:18). He was worn out and depressed seeing that the accumulated wisdom of the ages led him nowhere.

Then, the preacher turned to every form of pleasure (Ecclesiastes 2:2). He pursued profligate sexuality (Ecclesiastes 7:26) and found it a bitter

disappointment (7:26-28). As Solomon said, her lips are as “wormwood,” a “sharp two-edged sword” and “ a deep pit” (Proverbs 5:3-4; 22:14). Next, he experimented with alcohol hoping to expand his knowledge through an altered perception of the world (Ecclesiastes 2:3, Proverbs 23:29-35; Isaiah 5:11). Yet, the experiment was to no avail (cf. Proverbs 20:1). He looked for joy and contentment in accomplishment and acquisition (Ecclesiastes 2:4-10). In the end the Preacher said, “All was vanity and vexation of spirit.” In all these pursuits he was chasing the wind (2:11).

The sad reality for the Preacher came when he understood that his pursuits accomplished nothing. He was no wiser or greater than the kings that came before him or the fools that lived about him (Ecclesiastes 2:12-16). They all died, unremembered and without acclaim or personal satisfaction. In this reality, the Preacher despaired (2:17-23).

However, after all this labor, toil and anxiety in searching, studying and working, a reality dawned upon the Preacher. That which guarantees satisfaction, well-being and hope in living under the sun is righteous living (Ecclesiastes 2:24-26; 3:12-13). The righteous man who can find enjoyment in working, living, enduring and ultimately dying because he knows he pleases God.

## **Spiritual Discernment**

by Joe R. Price

To discern means "to test, examine, prove, scrutinize (to see whether a thing be genuine or not) ...to recognize as genuine after examination, to approve, deem worthy" (Thayer, 154). Jesus used this word of examining weather signs to explain discerning the time of the Messiah's presence, Lk 12:56, "Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?" He drove the point home by saying, "Yes, and why even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right?" Lk. 12:57

Solomon urged his son to "cry out for discernment," advising that if he would "seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures" that he would "understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God", Prov 2:3-5. The benefit of discernment is succinctly stated in Proverbs 15:21, "Folly is joy to him who is destitute of discernment, but a man of understanding walks

uprightly." Without discernment we lack a necessary tool to make wise, godly choices for living righteously.

So, Christians are taught to be "finding out (discerning) what is acceptable to the Lord" while we "walk as children of light" and bear the "fruit of the Spirit" (Eph. 5:10, 8-9; Rom. 12:2). Here are some things requiring spiritual discernment to help us walk uprightly.

1) Discernment is needed to test all things. "Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thess 5:21-22). Divine revelation, God's word, is the measuring stick by which to test the worthiness of "all we do in word or deed" (Col 3:17).

2) Discernment is needed to approve excellent things. "And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God" (Phil 1:9-11). We need the ability to distinguish between behavior that advances righteousness and that which destroys it. Then, we must make the choice that pleases God, maintains our spiritual integrity and produces righteous fruit.

3) Discernment is needed to test the spirits that claim to be true and from God. "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 Jn 4:1). One of the miraculous spiritual gifts was the "discerning of spirits" (1 Cor 12:10). Now, we have the recorded teachings of the apostles to know truth from error (1 Jn 4:6).

Let us mature in spiritual discernment by fearing of the Lord, knowing the will of God, and fervently seeking it and using it in all our decisions.

## Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Palmers will be traveling home this week
- Angie Woodside is recovering from surgery last week
- Tom is recovering from back surgery
- Tammy Woodward is suffering from the effects of cancerous brain tumor.
- Scott Boucher (Sparks NV) is undergoing cancer treatment
- Stacey Whittington, Brinda's cousin, is being treated for stage 4 cancer
- The Christians in the Philippines.
- Men's meeting re-scheduled for next Sunday

**For prayer requests, call or text**

Chad @ (208) 221-2587 or Ross @ (208) 680-6590

## Assignments

<b><u>Today</u></b> <b>Bible Study</b> – Ross Ward <b>Song Leader</b> – Chad Mitchell <b>Lord's Table</b> – David Porter <b>Sermon</b> – Ross Ward	<b><u>Wednesday</u></b> <b>Bible Study</b> – Chad Mitchell <b>Song Leader</b> – Chad Mitchell <b>Invitation</b> – Ross Ward
<b><u>Next Sunday</u></b> <b>Bible Study</b> – Ross Ward <b>Song Leader</b> – David Porter <b>Lord's Table</b> – Ben Palmer <b>Sermon</b> – Ross Ward	<b><u>Next Wednesday</u></b> <b>Bible Study</b> – Chad Mitchell <b>Song Leader</b> – David Porter <b>Invitation</b> – Ross Ward

Blackfoot Church of Christ  
370 North Shilling Ave.  
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

### **Meeting Times:**

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM  
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM  
Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



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