

Sermon Outline: Navigating Perilous Times – Part 2 – Tools of Illumination

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Tools of Illumination / Ephesians 5:11-13

In WW1 and WW2, the use of land mines was effective in slowing down or blocking the movement of armies. But those buried devices created a real issue even after the war. They were deceptively covered, destructive, and highly effective at rendering whole areas off limits. The first ones were devised by the Romans and were a small spike planted in the ground that would cause injury when stepped on. The first explosive landmines were used by the Chinese in 1277 and European landmines were developed in the 1500s. High-explosive landmines were developed in the 1800s in the United States and the British designed mines filled with poison gas in the First World War.

Mines have become more controversial as uncleared mines from previous wars have killed and maimed enormous numbers of civilians and children in poorer countries because they cannot afford large-scale mine clearance. It cost about US\$3 to lay a mine and between \$300 and \$1000 to clear one.

The enemy is highly effective in laying down spiritual land mines, things buried deep – in relationships, in media, in education, in entertainment. In almost every aspect of life, landmines have been used by the forces of darkness to maim, injure, or destroy lives.

To remove landmines, they must be identified and carefully extracted. To remove spiritual landmines required tools of illumination. To see the mines, you need a deeper vision. You need discernment.

What we see as light is only a small part of what God created as the energy or electromagnetic waves. We can discern what can be seen rather easily. But just below visible light is infrared light (heat). And we use infrared light to “see in the dark”. But if we go on the other side of visible light, we can expose what is within with X-rays. Remember the sci-fi of the 50’s X-ray vision? Many try to fight with just visible light, but can’t see into the darkness. Nor can we see past the surface to expose the intent and hidden things.

We need spiritual discernment to see into the darkness, underneath the surface, and to expose all that is there.

Spiritual Mine Fields

Deceivers – (they set mine fields) The goal is to cover or dilute the truth. By challenging the authenticity and or the authority of the truth. The expected result is destruction. Who would do such a thing? The fallen angels, demons, rebellious men, unwilling accomplices in the Church!

Discerners (they uncover mine fields) Goal to discover truth and expose darkness. By seeking to know truth, understand truth, and use wisdom. They also seek to understand intent, the truth of the heart (motivation). The expected result is deliverance. Who would do such a thing? Mature ones in the Church (especially those that have been injured) and those seeking truth.

What determines which track you are on? What’s your desire? A relationship with God ---- on track to be a discerner, a child of the light. For satisfaction outside of God ---- on track to be a deceiver, a child of the dark.

How to Grow in Discernment / Seek and grow a relationship with God. Seek to obtain truth. Seek to obtain understanding.

2 Timothy 3:1-7

How can you learn but not obtain knowledge? It is information without understanding. They are souls with holes!

When you examine these items listed, they can be placed in general categories of darkness. These expressions are of the deception and darkness of the last days: Selfish – Prideful - Lust-filled – Rebellious - Foolish, void of wisdom - Liars, void of honor - Hate-filled, void of love

This is the darkness discerners are seeking out to expose.

Discerners first seek to expose this in themselves.

Discerners also seek to expose it in the relationships they have with others. Why? Relationships are connections that can allow in darkness if not monitored.

People can unknowingly or through their immaturity be used by the enemy to plant land mines in the soul. We're not to be paranoid looking for a land mine everywhere we step. But we are to be mindful of those seven demonic spiritual powers and have our detectors set to ring if we identify either in us or others: Selfishness, Prideful thoughts or actions, Lust-filled desires, Rebellious attitudes and words, Foolish talk, thoughts, and actions that are void of wisdom, dishonor and disrespect, lies and deceptions, or thoughts, feelings, or actions of hate that are void of love

2 Timothy 3:5 Why turn away? Shouldn't we be loving towards them?

2 Timothy 3:8-9

True discernment leads to wise actions!

What good is it to turn on the lights, see the roaches scatter then sit down and have a meal with them!

In these perilous times, you must learn to discern so you can illuminate past the surface to understand what is really going on.

There are land mines out there and you need to know where to and where not to step!