

SPIRITUAL DEFECTS #3 “Flat Noses”

Series: Lev 21:16-24 Those who are not to minister in the temple - list of physical defects. Physical of the OT is the spiritual of the NT. Learning lessons about the things that will hinder us from ministering as men of God. Today: Flat Noses-Those who lack discernment.

I. THE NEED FOR DISCERNMENT

A. Our scripture is speaking about flat noses: Ability to smell

1. A sense of smell is important to distinguish or recognize danger
 - a. *Gas in the kitchen: I smelled it! Danger! Don't turn on the electrical fan/lights*

B. But ministry is all about people: Some people completely lack a sense of smell in relationships

1. The issue is discernment: To distinguish or decide between

a. Hebrews 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

2. Many people are naïve: Innocent/simplistic; Not factoring in the full information

a. Take people at face value: Believe whatever people say – that's the truth

1. I love your church/I'm behind you/I would never do that...

3. Not naïve: You factor in the full information; There may be other reasons why people speak/act

a. Trying to gain something b. Trying to avoid trouble

C. So in ministry – those who lack discernment consistently make bad choices

1. They allow completely destructive people free access in the church

2. They choose the wrong people for ministry

a. So many times the question is: How could you not see that coming? No discernment!

II. 4 AREAS WHERE YOU NEED DISCERNMENT

A. **Doctrine**: What we believe/teach or allow in our churches

1. There are waves of false doctrine that float through the church

a. Eph 4:14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine...

1. Pastor Mitchell 'smelled' that Brownsville was destructive – before he knew the facts

B. **Religious people**: The devil sends religious people to try and attach themselves to churches (esp. pioneers)

1. Young pastors see bodies/together people/smile/give \$/say how much they loooove the church!

a. They gain attention/ministry/credibility: Then influence your people or split your church

2. Some basic wisdom with religious people

a. Caution: They are the most likely to be trouble b. You don't rush them into ministry or credibility

C. **Damaging people**: There are people who simply are trouble in churches

1. Contentious personalities/convert killers/Money mooches/rebels/shifty thieves/perverts

a. Allow good people to be offended/-dominated or ripped off by these types

1. Overhead guy was a totally effeminate queer: How can you not see that!

2. Have to be able to 'spot' trouble before it happens *Prov 27:23 be diligent to know the state of your flocks*

a. Proverbs 22:3 A prudent man sees danger and takes refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it.

3. You have to deal with these people (*Many various ways...*)

D. **The truth**: Unfortunately you have to investigate stuff; Did you do that/say this

1. Sometimes you don't have full evidence – but you have to be able to smell/sense the truth!

a. Being able to sniff it out can save people – save the church!

III. GAINING DISCERNMENT

A. Discernment is a gift from God – a supernatural dimension

1. You get it by crying out/asking God for it!

a. 1 Kings 3:9 So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong.

For who is able to govern this great people of yours?"

2. You get it by asking for advice from those who have it!

a. Proverbs 20:5 Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water, But a man of understanding will draw it out.

B. There is a balance here: You can't allow yourself to get cynical

1. Looking for the worst in everyone – or never allowing people who have made mistakes to change

a. Red flags, Mom! b. Keeping people at arm's length/suspicious of everyone

2. The balance of ministry: Aware of the worst – but looking for the best