

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE

SERMON OUTLINE

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FEBRUARY 4, 2018

“The Parable of the Signs of The Times”

Matthew 16:1-4

The Pharisees and Sadducees appear to have learned nothing from previous encounters with Jesus. Once again, they 'came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven' (*16:1*). Now we are told that they are not seeking spiritual information, but they are again trying to *TRAP* Jesus into saying something that they can attack.

The Pharisees, of course, were the **traditionalists** of their day, while the Sadducees were quite **liberal, and they issued a challenge**. The word translated *sign* means much more than simply a miracle or a demonstration of power. It means *“a wonder by which one may recognize a person or confirm who he is.”*

Jesus had mentioned the sign of Jonah before (*see Matthew 12:38-45*). This was the sign of death, burial, and resurrection. Now let's examine the four characteristics of those whose are in spiritual blindness as we see in these religious leaders of Jesus day.

I. THEY SEEK DARKNESS

The first characteristic is seen in the fact that **the Pharisees and Sadducees came up** to Jesus together. They were bound together by their love of spiritual darkness.

The second characteristics of those whose are in spiritual blindness.

II. THEY CURSE THE LIGHT

If a person's heart is set on darkness, when the light comes he curses it. Knowing that the true intent of the Pharisees' and Sadducees'

demand for a heavenly sign was to discredit Him.

The third characteristics of those whose are in spiritual blindness.

III. THEY REGRESS DEEPER INTO SIN

Jesus knew the true motive of the Pharisees and Sadducees was to entrap Him, not to be convinced of His messiahship. He would not capitulate to their hypocritical and wicked demand.

The fourth characteristics of those whose are in spiritual blindness.

IV. THEY ARE ABANDONED BY GOD

Because the unbelieving Pharisees and Sadducees would not have Him as Lord and Savior, Jesus **left them and went away V- 4**.

“Kataleipō” (left) means to leave behind, and it often carried the idea of forsaking or abandoning (*see 2 Peter 2:15*).

Now let me sum up this parable with some **practical applications**. Jesus was amazed that these religious do-gooders could look at the sky and read the signs to know what kind of weather was coming, but they couldn't read the sign of His presence among them as the Messiah.

What Jesus said to the **Religious Mafia 2,000 years ago** is true for us as well. We can read the signs of the weather, but we are often blind to the spiritual signs all around us. The Pharisees didn't read the clear signs of the first coming of Jesus, and many people are missing the clear signs that point to the second coming of Christ. **Let me share with you four spiritual signs that are too bold to miss.**

- ◆ **SIGN ONE: THE REGATHERING OF ISRAEL**
- ◆ **SIGN TWO: THE SPREAD OF MILITANT ISLAM**
- ◆ **SIGN THREE: THE STRUCTURE FOR A GLOBAL GOVERNMENT**
- ◆ **SIGN FOUR: THE GOSPEL IS BEING PREACHED ALL OVER THE WORLD! – Matthew 24:14**

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote: **“One of our illusions is that the present hour is not the crucial hour.”** In 1970 Gordon Jensen wrote a song the Gaithers recorded which was **“Redemption Draweth Nigh”**. It said. . .