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# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

*Hebrews 1:1-2*  
**Lesson #1**  
*Ears to Hear*  
*01/7/2024*

1

## The majesty of Christ

# HEBREWS

**1:1-2**  
*Ears to hear*  
**(Berean's hearing aids)**

2

*Hebrews 1*

“1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in **many portions and in many ways,**”  
2 in these last days has spoken to us in His son,”

*“many portions and ways”*

**The Image of God in us**  
**The Wrath of God upon us**  
The **Son of God** before us

3

## “Image of God”

**- IN US enables us to hear God**

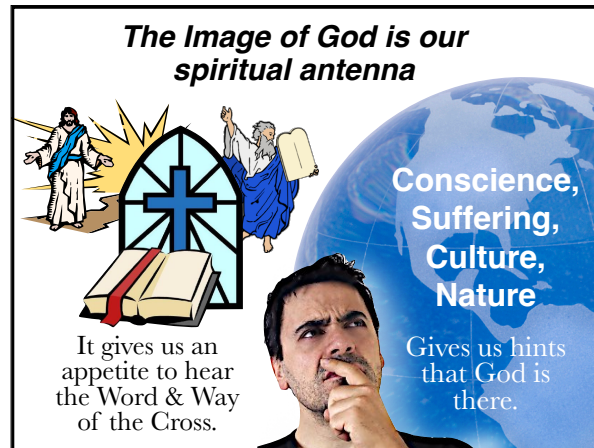
*Genesis 1:27*  
“God created man in His own image, **in the image of God He created him**; male and female He created them.”

**- IN JESUS gives us the full MESSAGE**

*Colossians 1:15*  
“He (Jesus) is **the image of the invisible God**, the firstborn of all creation.”

4

### The Image of God is our spiritual antenna



**Conscience,  
Suffering,  
Culture,  
Nature**

It gives us an appetite to hear the Word & Way of the Cross.

Gives us hints that God is there.

5

## “Image of God”

- **Humans have two sources of DATA in this life.**

*Matthew 4:4*  
“Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.”

<b>Sensual</b>	<b>Spiritual</b>
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- **Humans have two tools to make sense of it.**  
**faith and reason**

*Genesis 3*  
“5 Satan said, “For God knows that on the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will become like God, knowing good and evil.” 6 When the woman **saw** ..., and that it was a delight ..., and that the tree was **desirable** ..., she took some of its fruit and **ate**.”

6

**Secular Humanism**  
 Defining reality and making decisions **BELIEVING** that **God does not exist or matter.**

- Total Temporality
- Radical Relativity
- Absolute Autonomy
- Egocentric Entitlement
- **Metaphysical Materialism**
- **Comprehensive Contingency**

Everything boils down to **chemistry** and **environment.**

Adam & Eve are a picture of fallen humanity.

**“A.I.” Are humans bio tech machines?**




7

“The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind pitiless indifference.”

**This offers nothing to explain the human soul’s pain, imagination, and longings for life.**

Richard Dawkins




8

*Hebrews 11:6*  
 “Without faith it is impossible to please God”  
**or to really be certain of anything.**

**F  
A  
I  
T  
H**

*The breadth of our FAITH assumptions determines where we apply our REASON.*



9

Science raises questions it can’t easily answer and it often leaves clues that direct us to look beyond the material world.

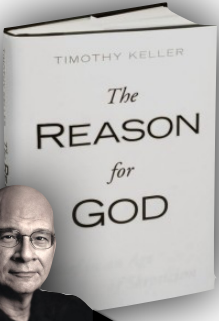

The difference between Science and Christianity is not **reason and faith.**

It is the **breadth of data and faith assumptions.**

We have **Clues & Theories (not Proofs)**

**Proof is a function of a Faith Commitment.**


*The REASON for GOD*

10

Like Eve, many people who say they have lost their faith fail to realize that they have **just RESTRICTED** their faith to material data only.


The question then becomes, how is that working for you in your search for **hope** and an **answer** to big questions?



11

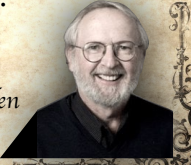
**Clues to God? †**

- ✓ Why is religious impulse so strong?
- ✓ Why are humans so unique?
- ✓ Why do we long for more?
- ✓ Why do we struggle?
- ✓ Why do we do good?
- ✓ What do we live for?
- ✓ Why do we die?



12

“Nonbelievers may hear all the notes of science, but without a theistic context and perspective they will not hear the song.”




George Marsden  
(historian)

13

“Love is moving toward another person’s soul with a commitment to help them reach the deepest desire of their heart.”

**which is to be fully human - bearing the image of God (at peace with God, ourselves, and others).**



Bell Hooks

14

Our material senses raise questions that it has a hard time answering.

Why do we die?  
Why do we live?




Abraham Maslow

Transcendence	Spirituallly oriented	
Self actualization - Cognitive / Aesthetic		
Esteem needs - respect from others		Socially oriented
Belonging needs - social security		
Safety needs - material security for the future		Self-oriented
Biological needs - food & shelter		

15

“Christianity does not simply make sense to us; it also makes sense of us.”



Alister McGrath  
*Surprised by Meaning*

16

“The image of God” in every human, is a spiritual antennae and appetite that separates us from other mammals.

*Acts 17*

“23 For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ . . .”

26 and He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation, 27 that they should seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His offspring.’”

17

**Two Berean hearing aids**

**Creation**  
*Psalm 8*

“1 O lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens! ... 3 When I consider Your heavens, the world of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained; . . .”

**Conscience**  
*Romans 1*

“19 . . . that which is known about God is evident within them; ... 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, . . .”

18

**“Wrath of God”**  
**- UPON a broken world**

*Romans 8*

“18 For the **wrath of God is revealed** from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.”

*creates an appetite for its being poured out*

**- UPON a Redeemer Son**

*2 Corinthians 5:21*

“He made him who knew no sin **to be sin on our behalf**, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.”

19

**Shame and suffering are appetizers,**  
**(hearing aids for the Word of the Cross).**


*Matthew 11*

“28 Come to Me, **all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.** 29 Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and *you shall find rest for your souls.*”

**Listen to the pain of a fallen world.**  
**Lament with the broken hearted.**  
**Long for peace and justice.**


20

“Pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our consciences, **but shouts in our pains.** It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”

C.S. Lewis 

21

“I remembered this basic religious principle that God isn’t there to take away our suffering or our pain but to **fill it with his presence.**”

Anne Lamott 

22

**Note the people that Jesus came for / to.**

*Luke 19:10*

“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save **that which was lost**”

*1 Timothy 1:15*

“It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ **Jesus came into the world to save sinners**, among whom I am foremost of all.”

*Matthew 5*

“3 Blessed are the **poor in spirit**, . . . 6 Blessed are those who **hunger and thirst for righteousness**, for they shall be satisfied.”


*Galatians 3:24*

“Therefore **the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ**, that we may be justified by faith.”

23

“So we can say, reverently, that God never gave us the Law to keep: **He gave us the Law to break! (to be broken by it).**”

**This develops an eager ear to hear the message of the Cross.**

Watchman Nee   
*“The Normal Christian Life” Page 158*

24

Would God rather see a struggling believer than a disciplined & proud Pharisee?

**Ask the Apostle Paul.**

**God can work with the first but not with the second.**

25

**Another hearing aid for the Word of the Cross**

*Romans 7*

“9 And I was once alive apart from the Law; but **when the commandment came, sin became alive, and I died**; . . . 13 Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might . . . become utterly sinful.”

*Romans 8*

“22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. 23 And not only this, but also **we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons**, the redemption of our body.”

26

**Shame & Suffering can be Berean hearing aids**

**creating an appetite for hope and freedom**

**that this broken world cannot satisfy.**



27

**Note the way the Apostles viewed hardship.**

*1 Peter 4:12*

“Beloved, do not be **surprised** at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your **testing**, as though *something strange* were happening to you;”

*Philippians 3-4*

“3:10 that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and **the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death**; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

“4:5 Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. 6 Be anxious for nothing, but **in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving** let your requests be made known to God.”

28

**Note the way the Apostles viewed hardship.**

*Romans 8*

“19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation **was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope** . . . 24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.”

“28 And we know that God **causes all things to work together for good** to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”

29

*Hebrews 1*

“1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 **in these last days has spoken to us in His Son,**”

**“many portions and ways”**

The Image of God in us  
The Wrath of God upon us  
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30