



April 10-16, 2016
Texts: Luke 3:7-14
SPRING 2016 SERIES:
The Christian and Spiritual Gifts

SUMMARY OF SERMON: John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus. John's primary function was to call people to repentance through baptism so that their hearts would be ready to trust in Jesus as the Christ. John didn't mince words. He was a "perceiver", one who clearly sees right and wrong in accordance to God's revealed truth and boldly proclaims it. Like John, perceivers in the body of Christ function as the "eye" of the body.

RELATED BIBLE PASSAGES FOR THE COMING WEEK [The Bible readings this week highlight the characteristics of perceivers.]

*Monday, April 11 – **Amos 4*** [Amos, as with many OT prophets, was a classic perceiver. Note here not only the blunt language he uses but also the repeated calls to repentance in the refrain, "yet you have not returned to me." Apart from that repentance Amos announces the judgment of God.]

*Tuesday, April 12 – **Mark 6:14-29*** [This sad account shows that to the end John was a perceiver. He didn't have to speak up about Herod's immorality (v.18) but he was compelled to do so. John knew brokenness in his life; but he also knew that his life was secure in God.]

*Wednesday, April 13 – **Matthew 23*** [More than anywhere else in the gospels this chapter shows Jesus exercising the motivational gift of perceiver. He speaks bluntly and boldly to the rebellious, unbelieving group of Jewish religious leaders who by their unbelief in Jesus as Messiah were hindering people from coming to Jesus.]

*Thursday, April 14 – **Jeremiah 15*** [Jeremiah surely showed the traits of a perceiver. Among other things, as he prophesied God's judgment on rebellious Israel leading to the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon, he experienced rejection by the people who refused to repent. But even in his brokenness Jeremiah receives assurance from God.]

*Friday, April 15 – **Luke 7:18-23*** [John the Baptist was languishing in prison (cf. Tuesday's reading) when a doubt crept in about Jesus as Messiah. Perceivers see things as black and white and perhaps John expected Jesus to show His power against the Roman oppressors, which Jesus wasn't doing. But Jesus points to other OT works of the Messiah that He *is* doing to help John see Truth in a larger context.]

*Saturday, April 16 – **Joel 2:1-17*** [Joel was another prophet who was a perceiver. During a severe locust plague Joel saw the judgment of God and called the nation to repentance. Perceivers often are led to verbalize and dramatize what they spiritually discern as Joel does here in describing the locusts.]



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