

Text: Acts 17:10-12  
Topic: Discernment. Teachability.  
Series: Growing Up (part 4 of 4)

**Pacific Coast Church**  
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Pastor Mike



98-39

# The Berean Balance

## *How to Be Discerning Without Being Paranoid*

17:10 As soon as it was night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. 11 Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. 12 Many of the Jews believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men. (NIV)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ (vv.10-11)

2. Don't Let Your \_\_\_\_\_ (v.11)

3. Let The \_\_\_\_\_ (v.12)

# Application Questions

*These questions are provided for your further study and application of today's message. It is recommended that you take time this week to write out your response to each of these questions. This will help to drive home the point of today's message and will help you apply the principles to your life situation. These questions are also used as the basis of discussion for many of our small group studies that meet throughout the week. For times and locations of PCC's small group gatherings that are meeting this week call the church office (949-489-2600).*

1. Even the word "judge" seems to carry such negative connotations in a pluralistic society like ours, but both inside and outside the church "judging" is not only important, in some cases it is an absolute necessity! The Bible affirms this and calls Christians to be discerning. What are some of the consequences of refusing to be discerning in the Christian life?

What are some of the cautions that the Bible gives us when it comes to *how* we judge? (See Mt.7:1-5; Jn.7:24; 1Sam.16:7; Rom.14:1; et.al.)

2. Though our passage is clear about the criterion for testing sermons many people judge what they hear the pastor say by a variety of subjective factors. What are some of these erroneous standards by which Christians judge a sermon?

How faithful have you been at really digging in God's word to confirm and drive home the point of the sermons that you have heard? What would you say is an appropriate "Berean style" response? What can be done in your schedule to be more faithful at this?

3. The Berean balance is not easy. Those who quickly embrace their responsibility to test what they hear from the pulpit are often those who tend to be hypercritical. A critical spirit is a far cry from what is praised in Acts 17:11. What do we forfeit as Christians when our discernment turns into cynicism? What are some of the practical dangers of being hypercritical?

How well do you keep this balance? On which side do you tend to fall (blindly open or hypercritical?)

4. How do you know if you have really let a "tested sermon" have full reign in your life? Give examples of recent sermons that have been given the freedom to truly "judge" you.