

Eyes That Cannot See

“The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness” (Matthew 6:22–23)!

In our tabernacle, light is dispersed according to what the eye sees. In the above-quoted verse of scripture, a “single” eye means an unwillingness to do harm, to be without guile (deceit), benevolent, and generous. When the eye accomplishes its purpose of seeing things as they are, then it is singular. ¹Our heart is undivided because we have a singular vision. We know what we believe. The light filling our tabernacle continually guides our steps to preserve us from the snares of the devil. But if our eye follows the darkness, and our heart is exposed to things that are not as they appear (deception), our eyes will see another vision, and our hearts will become divided as they struggle to discern good from evil. Vision is blurred. We become double-minded, confused, and unstable (James 1:8). If we had eyes to see, and also ears to hear (to obey), we would have discerning hearts that understand.

What our eyes see in the midst of political and social upheaval is vitally important because it will dictate who and what we follow. Standing between light (single vision) and darkness (double vision) is “the world.” When we are mired in the messages of the world in which truth cannot be easily ascertained and we take the bait, our vision becomes blurred, and we start to see double, bouncing back and forth between the Kingdom of God and the kingdoms of the world (II Peter 2:2). So, I understand today more than ever why God admonished us in His Word not to love the world (I John 2:15-17). Given the times we are in, He wants us to be aware that we can be ensnared by its philosophies and promises if we give heed to them (Colossians 2:8). Like a picture on a computer, once these philosophies are locked in our minds, they will be hard to expunge from our memory, and we will not “hear” anything else.

So, you might ask, “How might the philosophies of the world spoil us?” It goes back to ground zero. The world with its political network is the realm that Satan controls and his eyes are on the righteous. Tossed about by contrary political currents and striving to stay on course, we assimilate to the political party that best represents our moral values, and at the same time, meet our economic, social, and physical expectations. Even with the best of intentions, God’s people can be blindsided and see only what they want to see, unable to distinguish a falsehood from the truth. In time, thinking we are doing God a favor, we can find ourselves willing participants in partisan warfare, becoming combative and contentious with each other in support of our spiritual and political views, sacrificing brotherly love, and losing unity. Once our “house” is divided against itself, corporate prayers are hindered, because we cannot agree (Matthew 12:25). Satan’s targets are God’s intercessors, prayer warriors, and prophets, because they wield the shield of faith on the front lines. Having a strong sense of righteousness and justice, they are God’s watchmen on the wall. To thwart their mission, Satan feeds them with misleading, and downright false, information so they will take a wrong turn, and not fulfill the high purpose to which they are called. How did we get to this place? Somewhere along the line, we believed a lie.

The Destructive Path of a Lie. Satan knows friendship with the world is enmity with God (James 4:4), so he weaves in a little truth with every deception so he can take us with a lie. Then he holds us through fear. Fear acknowledges the devil’s lies—fear of losing religious liberty or financial security, for example. Just one lie—if it metastasizes and gains strength—can destroy a friendship, family, church, or nation. Great swelling words, hate-filled rhetoric, and dire predictions inspiring fear should sound an alarm, for this “wisdom” descends not from above, and when hate is normalized, it creates evil (James 3:15–16).

To see how far a lie can take a nation and its people in the wrong direction, and how we can reverse course, we need to go back to the American Civil War. This war almost succeeded in overthrowing the moral foundation the founder fathers put in place. It started with a lie that slaves were inhuman, inferior, and a state's property. How could such a lie materialize, turn people away from the truth that all men are created equal, and inspire even Christians to go to war over it? Could it be they believed a lie because they did not have a love for the truth, and listened to men more than to God? President Lincoln, having strong convictions of this truth, saw through the lie, moved himself away from it, brought up the moral issue, and began to speak of the "monstrous injustice" it represented, passionately and persuasively.

Reversing Course. The Civil War illustrates the destructive path a lie takes to lead people of faith astray. How can we guard our mind so we are not lured into giving credence to an unjust and unrighteous cause? The answer is not to be drawn away from the simplicity of Christ with worldly counsel (plan, purpose, advice) that is shrouded in ambiguity, disinformation, and fear. It will corrupt our thinking and harden our heart (II Corinthians 11:3). Rather, feed on God's Word. It will lead us in the right direction. Hear the voice of the Spirit saying, *"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? ... Come out from among them and be separate... Do not touch [attach oneself to] what is unclean [immoral], and I will receive you"* (II Corinthians 6:14, 17 NKJV).

We cannot serve two kingdoms faithfully at the same time (Matthew 6:24). We must lay aside one or the other. The choice is clear. God's wisdom brings clarity and peace of mind, but the wisdom of the world brings confusion and discord. God wants us to be watchful and alert, but not thrown off course by ominous reports engulfed in fear. Instead, turn to God for the truth, and live by every word (Rhema) He speaks, because when it speaks, it is the "living" voice of God giving us direction and a way out (Psalm 1:1–2). Follow that. If we abide in it, we will not be taken captive by the spirit of the world, for He is faithful in every circumstance to remove the beam from our eyes (Matthew 7:1–5) and lead us into all truth (John 16:13). No longer blinded by a double vision, we will have greater discernment to distinguish good from evil because our eye is single and fixed on one Kingdom! Once our eyes were blurred by two competing visions, we now "see" the signs saying, "go this way."

Spiritual Awakening. Previous spiritual awakenings came during times of social, political, and religious upheaval. It is no different with today's national crisis, brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The world cries out for a spiritual awakening. It took time to respond to the gravity of the pandemic. Our first reaction may have been to downplay or ignore it, hoping it would pass away, but it did not. Then we turned to God, in prayer, with the hope that He would deliver us from it and restore normalcy, but He did no. He had a purpose in it. In times of crisis, it is hard to move beyond the noise and deception to hear God speak, but it is in the crisis that He draws our attention to our attitudes. This is so important to the Lord in the last days because He is preparing us for the next thing. Indifference toward the injustices and suffering of the masses blinds us to the condition of our hearts. We cannot see our own poverty and how far we have drifted from God's love for the weak and powerless.

This blindness comes when we put a misplaced dependence on the worldly political system and its agenda. In perilous times, we can easily become infected and led astray by its duplicity and find ourselves only seeing and speaking of the powers of darkness at work around us, rather than faith in the absolute power of God to deliver. In fact, as long as we "see" only evil, we may not recognize God's intervention when it comes. But when we pull away from the world's prognosticators and put our questions to an omniscient God, refusing to be aligned with secular philosophies or practices that violate our Christian values, something changes in us. Light filters in and the power of His presence clears away the oppressive spirits and the darkness of our thinking, that had been present. Our vision cleared, we now begin to "see" the inside of things, the great and mighty things that we knew not (Jeremiah 3:3), because God replaces the darkness

that had filled our tabernacle with light (Matthew 6:22). Confusion ends and our real identity as a follower of Jesus Christ begins to emerge as He overwrites the un-Christlike behaviors we exhibited previously. Where we once cast away His love and compassion for people as unapproachable or evil come to the surface, we must change how we think and act in the world. Then we can begin to understand God's purpose in the crisis.

Restoring Vision. Our eyes have not seen, our ears have not heard, nor has it entered our mind the things the Savior has prepared for us when we choose to follow Him and not the world (I Corinthians 2:9; Isaiah 64:4). Once we make the cut from the world's ruinous philosophies and turn to God's reasoning instead, God pulls back the curtain that had blurred our vision, and the things we did not understand suddenly become clear. No longer viewing everything through a dark lens, we see more of the operation of God as He cuts through the darkness and exposes injustice to put back into place moral authority. When we were blind, we could not see this; we only saw the darkness, but now we can see the goodness of God in the midst of it. As we praise God, a light begins to shine through our tabernacle. And because our light is no longer undercover (hidden in a bushel), we can be a light to the world (Matthew 5:14–16). And so...

Let Revival Come! *“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee...”* (Isaiah 60:1–3).

When the Spirit alights upon us, darkness shall not seize it (John 1:5). Remember, when the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle of Meeting in the Old Testament, no enemy could approach it. The word *alight* means “to descend; to come down from something; from the air and come to rest, like a bird” (Merriam Webster Dictionary). *Alight* also means to shine brightly, to be aglow, ablaze, and radiant.

In the Old Testament passages, when the Spirit of God came upon the people of God, they overcame obstacles and accomplished great victories in the name of the Lord. When the Spirit of the Lord came upon Othniel, he judged Israel, and through him, God delivered His people from their enemies (Judges 3:10). When the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, people followed him (Judges 6:34). When the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson, his bonds broke loose from his hands (Judges 15:14). When the Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul, the people revived and rallied behind him (I Samuel 11:6). When the Spirit of the Lord came upon Azariah, he prophesied to King Asa (II Chronicles 15:1). When the Spirit of the Lord came upon the heads of the fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin, they rose up to build the house of the LORD (Ezra 1:5). In the New Testament, when the Spirit alighted upon Jesus Christ, He came to the Temple (Lk. 2:27), was led into the wilderness (Luke 4:1), and preached deliverance to the captives (Luke 4:18). And so, we have this hope in broken vessels that, when the Spirit of God alights upon us, we too will emerge from our wilderness in the power of the Spirit and see the miraculous!

¹ *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, Edited by Spiros Zodhiates Th.D., (Strong's Concordance No. 573), p. 214

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