

Believing is Seeing

A couple of months ago I went in for an eye exam to get a new prescription for eyeglasses. In aging, you can really appreciate just how precious our eyesight is. I cannot begin to imagine what it would be like to be blind, but there are things worse than being visually impaired *physically* (Jer. 5:21). Much like a car with high miles, our parts start to wear out and a trip to the “mechanic” is needed. After sitting through the eye exam, my eye doctor came in and did his own follow up. He informed me I had cataracts. A cataract is a clouding of the natural lens of your eye that causes your vision to appear hazy and cloudy. Mine was definitely hazy *and* cloudy to a point. Other symptoms of cataracts include; blurred or dim vision, double vision, difficulty reading, and light sensitivity just to name a few.

Cataracts are quite common and happen gradually as your eyes get older. The natural lens will eventually need to be removed and replaced with an artificial intraocular lens in order for you to see clearly. The new lens implants generally last a lifetime so new glasses would be ineffective. As I’m not yet ready for a white cane or seeing eye dog(s), I elected for the surgery with new lens implants. I’m sure Rusty and Bear would volunteer to be my seeing eye dogs, at least until they see a rabbit or turkey...

This past Thursday I had my first cataract surgery on my right eye. The surgery was painless and only took about 15 minutes. Wow! It was like going from an old black and white TV to a 4K QLED TV. The brightness and clarity were remarkable. My vision was no longer cloudy or blurry but crystal clear. My focus was sharper than ever. I had my follow up exam Friday and my vision was 20/25 after 24 hours and the doctor said it will be 20/20 in a few days. Incredible.

Now that you've had a mini-lesson in cataracts, you probably know where I'm headed with all this. We know the scripture of "if anyone has an ear, let him hear" from **Rev. 13:9**, but what about our eyes? You don't need poor vision to be blind.

Over these past few years, it has been becoming more difficult to stay focused on our destination than ever before. It is so very easy to take our eyes off the goal and our reaching the Kingdom of God. All too often we take our eyes off the prize and concentrate on the chaos surrounding us. The world, especially our own nation seems to be locked into a rapidly accelerating downward spiral with no apparent recovery in sight, except the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We have a tendency to emphasize the problems making them bigger than our God. We can lose the ability to see something as clearly as we should.

But we have been given the gift and insight to see into the future as God reveals it to us in His Word (**Isa. 5:20-21, Matt. 24:5-8, 11-13, 15, Luke 21:7, 9, 28, John 16:4, Acts 2:17-21**).

Poor Spiritual Sight

If we allow our spiritual sight to become blurred or cloudy, we may lose our desire or unable to see things in the Biblical perspectives of events as they unfold. We must not slip into a fog and become unaware of the times we live in. This does not mean to become involved in the world again or its ways but to keep things in a Biblical focus.

Another side of poor spiritual sight is we may lose our ability to see ourselves as God and others see us. This predicament of impaired vision can result in a disregard for overcoming problems as they affect others and ourselves. When this happens, our spiritual growth stagnates. It will eventually backslide into a “woe is me” or complacent attitude. We forget who we are in Christ Jesus. We are the apple of His Eye (**Zech. 2:8**). “But the *pronouncement found* in the true proverb has happened to them: The dog has returned to *eat* his own vomit; and *the sow that was washed has returned* to her wallowing place in *the filthy mire*” Remember from last week? “Suck it up.” No problem will ever be bigger than our God.

Jesus speaks of our spiritual vision or poor use of it in **Luke 11:33-36**- “Now no one who lights a lamp sets it in a secret place or under a bushel basket, but on a lampstand, so that those who are entering may see the light. The light of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is without guile, your whole body is light; but when your eye is evil, your body also is dark. Therefore, beware that the light that is in you is not darkness. Now then, if your whole body is light, not having any part dark, it shall be full of light, as when a lamp shining brightly gives you light.”

Also, in **Matthew 5:15-16** “Neither do they light a lamp and put it under a bushel basket, but on the lampstand; and it shines for all who *are* in the house. In the same way also, you are to *let your light shine before men*, so that they may see your good works, and may glorify your Father Who *is* in heaven.”

“Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world; the one who follows Me shall *never* walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”- **John 8:12**. We have God’s Light in us.

With our cloudy vision, we sometimes see only what we want to see. Not with the clarity that is necessary. We can become judgmental or critical of others, even in our own family. Remember we haven’t been issued our black robes yet. The only

standard we should have for any comparison is Our Lord Jesus and God's Word. We lose sight of who God really is.

Everyone's vision is developed over time through their life. Our upbringing and experiences can influence and affect our views of who and what God is like as well as our views on the world. Cloudy vision can distort a believer's view of God. It can even limit the understanding of what God is doing and what God expects of us. As we grow older, we continue to sharpen and develop our "lenses" on how we view life. What throws a wrench into the gears is a carnal set of eyes for viewing spiritual things. I can tell you from experience that a distorted lens can really mess with your vision. It would seem that the entire Protestant and Catholic churches suffer from cataracts! They distort and pervert God's entire Word.

This deficiency of sight and focus is even in the Churches of God today. Nowhere is immune. The lack of unity and focus on trivial matters outside of the church rather than on truly godly issues creates a sense of blindness within the body. People get caught up on titles and procedures and such things, overlooking the brethren and the needs within the church. We cannot pretend or play church as we so often mention.

Jesus Himself rebukes the Laodicean Church in **Rev. 3:17**- "For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'; and you do not

understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Their cloudy spiritual vision led them to believe they were “all that and a bag of chips.” The members of God’s true church have access to His perspective, His mind and heart through His Holy Spirit. Provided we do not allow our vision to become dull or distorted. “I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire so that you may be rich; and white garments so that you may be clothed, and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and to anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see.”- **Rev. 3:18**. We have the means to see more clearly. Once We receive God's Spirit, *the responsibility is on us*, “the blind” to improve our own spiritual sight.

We must remain vigilant in this pursuit of improving our spiritual sight. We cannot allow ourselves to become “puffed up” or too full of pride in a gain of knowledge or self-elevation. We’ve witnessed firsthand how this can occur. These deceptions can spring from not seeing ourselves clearly, directly related to not keeping God in His true perspective. As we see God more clearly, our perception of all other spiritual matters will develop.

“Blessed *are* the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”- **Matt. 5:8**. We cannot expect to see God if we are haughty or high minded or bursting with self-pride.

Hebrews 12:14- “Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.” Holiness too is required for us to *see* God. The clarity of our vision will only be as good as our conduct and purity of mind. Deficiencies in these requirements will affect our spiritual sight and make it extremely difficult to see things in God’s perspective.

Along with the gifts of God’s insights, we also have His instructions and reassurances for the future. “Watch therefore, and pray at all times that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”- **Luke 21:36.**

John 16:13- “However, when that one has come, even the Spirit of the truth, it will lead you into all truth because it shall not speak from itself, but whatever it shall hear, it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come.”

Romans 8:38-39- “For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which *is* in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

1 Cor. 3:22-23- “Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or *the* world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come—all are yours; And you *are* Christ’s, and Christ *is* God’s.”

Heb. 6:5- “And who have tasted *the* good Word of God, and *the* powers of *the* world to come,” (1 Tim. 2:3-4, Rev. 1:1, 22:12).

We know what’s coming. We know Who is coming back. We cannot lose sight or allow our vision to become distorted, cloudy or caught back up in the world. Or even worse, to become spiritually blind; to who God is, who we are in Him and our duty, purpose and focus on His coming Kingdom. We may need surgery to correct our eyesight, but if we devote our efforts to His vision for us, we will see things from a perspective that reflects God’s own.