

PLACING TRUE VALUE ON THE ETERNAL

There are many things we value or treasure in life. We value our family and friends, or health, our jobs etc. We even place value on smaller more insignificant things. But often, we do not treasure the very thing that will cause our lives to be enriched - the eternal. That which we cannot see is harder to place a value on. However, we must all learn to do so, because it is the unseen realm that has the power to change our circumstances - not just for a moment, but permanently. We must realise that the realm of the spirit is as real as the natural realm we can see with our physical eyes.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18, ***“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”*** What we perceive through our five senses must be measured against that which is eternal in nature. What we physically see can be seriously effected by what we cannot see. The natural is always impacted by the supernatural! That is why we must value the eternal.

There is no invention that allows us to see invisible spiritual realities. Imagine if we did... If I held something up to my eye right now that allowed me see angels. I wonder how many angels I would see? We may not have an innovative optical device that we can hold up to our physical eyes and see into the realm of the unseen yet, but God has given us tools to be able to know that these invisible realities are in fact real. He has given us the “eyes of faith” to use. And when we do, we come to “see” and believe many things.

Nearly all the best things about the Christian life are invisible. In fact the most treasured things we believe are invisible. I can't see heaven, but I value it. I can't see Jesus, but I believe in Him and put my life in His hands. I know that I have a soul, yet I can't see it. All of these invisible things, I believe and value. In fact, if you were to ask me which I value more, the seen or the unseen, I would have to say, "I value the invisible realities more than the visible realities." I believe that everything I can see with my physical eyes is temporary, but there are permanent and eternal things that I cannot see with my eyes. And that is what I value most - that is where my treasure is!

Like love, I can't see life, yet I can see its effects. Science describes life, but it can't create life. It created clones which is life from life. Life itself is from God. We describe it, we break it down into its essential components, but what is it. Why can't we see it? Where does it come from? We are all tri-part beings - spirit, soul and body! What about thoughts? I can't see your thoughts, but I know you think. I learn about your thoughts and that they exist only when you choose to reveal them to me. I don't know everything you believe, but I'd be surprised if any of you here today only believe what you can see with your own eyes. I'm sure you believe that there are stars you can't see without a massive telescope. Likewise, there are also mysteries to life that are understood only with the help of the "scope" of faith.

Today we are going to focus on some of the invisible realities that have been already revealed, not through physical devices, but through supernatural vision (revelation). The Bible is the best tool given to man, in order to understand spiritual invisible realities. I am totally convinced of these invisible realities - atheists aren't. An Atheist is a man without any invisible means of support. How pitiful is that?

When we develop the “eyes of faith” we get to know that what is of greatest value are those things we cannot see with our physical eyes. We treasure so many things. For instance, we value health, we value property, and we value relationships. Let’s consider health, which probably ranks high on our list. The truth is that everyone at sometime or other will struggle with health related issues. And especially as we get older. Yet, our opening verse tells us, ***“Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.”***

Verse 18 tells us to focus on what we can’t see! Implying that reality is not what can be seen, but rather, what is eternal. And we all know that God’s word is eternal (Luke 21:33). Therefore, when we fix our eyes on God’s infallible word, we are paying attention to what is **real**. No matter what the realities of life may be telling us, the real truth is only revealed in God’s word. For instance...

- When you feel weak, you can see yourself as strong! Micah 3:8 says, ***“But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the Lord.”***
- When you feel afraid, you can see yourself as courageous. Joshua 1:9 says, ***“Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”***
- When you need financial provision, you can see yourself as wealthy. Deuteronomy 8:18 reminds you to, ***“Remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms His covenant, which He swore to your forefathers.”***

- When you are under attack, you can see yourself as victorious. Duet. 28:7 states, ***“The Lord will grant that the enemies who rise up against you will be defeated before you. They will come at you from one direction but flee from you in seven.”***

All the above can only be achieved if we fix our eyes on the unseen realities contained in God’s word. But how do we train the “eyes of our heart” to see the invisible? This life is not all there is. We know that! There is an eternal reality that our five senses cannot tune into. There is clear evidence in the Bible that people have had momentary glimpses into the unseen realm of the spirit. During these times they have seen what is normally unseen. They have seen the invisible!

2 Kings 6:12-17; ***“None of us, my lord the king,” said one of his officers, “but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom.” “Go, find out where he is,” the king ordered, “so I can send men and capture him.” The report came back: “He is in Dothan.” Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city. When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. “Oh, my lord, what shall we do?” the servant asked. “Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” And Elisha prayed, “O Lord, open his eyes so he may see.” Then the Lord opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.”***

This is not an isolated case. Even today, we hear about cases where God opens people’s eyes momentarily to the presence of an angel. But this should not be our expectation in life. We should not seek visions.

However, even when we cannot see God's invisible means of support, we must fix our eyes ("by faith") on that **reality** which we cannot see (even though we may see its effects). Yes, we can train the "eyes of faith" to see. This comes by training our beliefs. The Bible tells us that faith comes by hearing the word of God. There is a correlation between our knowledge of scripture and our faith. The more we know about God, the easier it is for us to believe. The more we think like God, the easier it is for us to fix our eyes on that which is unseen - the realm of the spirit.

The question is, "*How much value do you place on the eternal?*" Is it more valuable to you than what you see right now? If it is, then your circumstances will not have the significance that you think they have. Your realities should always be measured against the unseen. Because what you see is temporary (subject to change), but what you cannot see, is eternal (unchanging). Many times when you've failed, you may feel like you should toss in the towel (give up). Secretly, you probably wish someone else would just assume your responsibilities, because you now believe that you were not doing a good enough job. In such moments, when you most need hope, satan sits on your shoulder and tells you that hope is all but gone: "There will never be any more hope. Not after what you've done! Things are hopeless!" But remember that the devil is a notorious liar. Jesus called him "the father of lies" (John 8:44).

If we foolishly believe the devil's falsifications, we certainly will give up. But if we resist him and lift up our eyes to where our help comes from, we will experience the life giving restoration that can only come from God - from the invisible realm. I believe that is a primary reason why Paul encourages us to "*fix our eyes not on what is seen (the natural), but on what is unseen (the supernatural). For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*"

God's desire is that through our struggles we will allow Him to make us into useful vessels that are ready for His service. But this doesn't mean we have to see ourselves as accepting second best for our lives. Our struggles don't warrant us to live by 'Plan B'. That's not how God thinks. What we are going through doesn't prohibit the Lord from doing what He wants to do in our lives. God remains forever able to fulfil every promise, and He has perfect plan for our lives. Remember that, "perfect plan" - the best plan, not the second best. God sees the end from the beginning and knows all things before we even enter the situation. And His perfect plan remains intact, despite our circumstances. Therefore, take your eyes off your struggles (the natural) and fix your eyes on that which reflects the motives of God's heart (the eternal). You need to see the way God sees! Through the eyes of God there is always victory!

Let's make an effort to understand this principle. Let's change our focus and place true value on that which can change every situation. Let's keep our eyes fixed upon Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Let's SEE Him high and lifted up - seated at the right hand of God in heavenly places! Let's treasure the eternal.

My prayer for you today is fully in line with Elisha's, "*Oh Lord, open their eyes that they may see.*"