

## Battling Shortsightedness

### 2 Peter 1:9

#### Introduction

1. Peter exhorts his audience to grow in their faith, adding the virtues of the Divine Nature, and thus becoming more like the Divine Nature – **2 Peter 1:2-8**
  - a. **(v. 7)** – the climax of the ascending list is “love” – we know that God is love (**cf. 1 John 4:8**)
  - b. **(v. 8)** – the one who grows in these virtues is one growing in the participant knowledge of Christ. (*epignosis*) (Christ is the Divine Nature – **Colossians 2:9**)
  - c. **(vv. 10-11)** – the ultimate goal to which this diligence reaches is entrance into heaven.
2. **(v. 9)** – the one that has not been diligent to grow in the knowledge of Christ by adding such virtues is described as being shortsighted.
  - a. *muopazo* (μωπαάζω, 3467), “to be short-sighted” (*muo*, “to shut,” *ops*, “the eye”; cf. Eng., “myopy,” “myopic” (VINE)
    - i. **“even to blindness”** – i.e. his vision is so limited to what is immediately in front of him (physical) he cannot see far (spiritual, at all).
    - ii. He operates in the dark concerning spiritual matters.
  - b. He can only see what is right before him – those matters which are close, and in the present.
  - c. He does not see far, into the future, or at matters that exceed this present physical environment. (carnal, shallow)
  - d. This is why he does not grow, which has greater negative effects.
3. This spiritual shortsightedness must be understood in order to be avoided.
  - I. The Cause
    - A. Forgetfulness
      - a. **2 Peter 1:9** – and has forgotten his sins were cleansed.
        - i. **“having forgotten” (NASB)** – a past occurrence leading to the current circumstance.
          1. *lēthē* (forgetfulness) *lambanō* (to take) – “is in the Greek text literally, ‘having taken forgetfulness.’” (Wuest)
          2. **I.e. this amnesia was not an innocent accident, but something pursued and taken by personal action.**
          3. **“that he was cleansed...”** – not in every sense (intellectually), but in the most important sense (spiritually, in regard to **“diligence” v. 5**, amnesia of the heart – will and emotion)
        - ii. Cleaned to have active fellowship with God – **(v. 4)** – spiritual growth.
      - b. What the cleansing of sins did for us:
        - i. Freed us from bondage – **Romans 6:15-23** – now that sin is not our master, we are free to do Christ’s bidding.

**1. NOTE: Spiritual shortsightedness is a symptom of misunderstood grace.**

- ii. Cleansed from dead works – **Hebrews 9:14** – in order to serve God.
  - iii. Our sins are not taken away so that we can relax, BUT SO WE CAN GET TO WORK!
  - c. When one forgets this, they forget that they are a new creature that was created to do God's work – **Ephesians 2:10** – so they don't grow, not being able to see their work ahead of them.
- B. Shifted Focus
- a. My literal shortsightedness – developed in part by looking at screens that are close to me.
  - b. When we are forgetful about our forgiveness, and the work to which that leads we tend to shift our focus on less important, temporal matters that are right in front of us, instead of looking beyond.
  - c. Love for the Present World – **2 Timothy 4:10; James 4:3-4** (**v. 3** – *even resulting in using a spiritual tool with carnal purpose*)
  - d. Worry – **Matthew 6:19-25, 31-34** (heart on earth, divided vision, two masters, *"Therefore..."* all in context of worry)
  - e. Sorrow – **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**
  - f. Suffering – **2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Romans 8:18**
  - g. Persecution – **1 Peter 4:12-16**
  - h. Trials – **James 1:2-4** (*"various"* – not only suffering)

II. The Effects

A. Spiritual Decline

- a. If we are not progressing due to shortsightedness the only logical expectation is that we regress.
- b. **Hebrews 5:11-14** – they had fallen back due to a lack of diligence in study, and exercise of spiritual knowledge.
  - i. **"dull"** – *nōthros*; sluggish, i.e. (literally) lazy, or (figuratively) stupid: — dull, slothful. (STRONG)
    - 1. **2 Peter 1:5, 9** – told to be diligent (opposite of sluggish) in adding to faith, when you don't you show yourself to be shortsighted.
    - 2. What came first? – You stopped looking at the spiritual, thus, stopped growing in it.
  - ii. They not only were unable to digest meat but needed to relearn the milk.
  - iii. **6:4-8** – decline in knowledge is symptomatic of something deeper and then exacerbates the problem.
    - 1. Don't fool self into thinking increase in knowledge is unimportant or optional.

2. What does it indicate in regard to your heart/spiritual man/love for God? – **(v. 6) – disinterest, and even hostility toward Christ.**

B. Stumbling

- a. The lack of growth in the knowledge of Christ is to be in the dark concerning spiritual truth.
- b. **John 12:35-36** – walking in darkness you don't know where you're going (**cf. Matthew 15:12-14** – after speaking against their traditions – they had rejected Divine revelation, and didn't know where they were going.).
  - i. **John 11:9-10** – when one walks in the darkness he stumbles. (After attempted discouragement to go to Judea for fear of Him being killed – Jesus is saying it is God's will to do this, and I am going to walk in the light, or I stumble [sin].)
- c. **2 Peter 1:10** – Peter said they'd never stumble if they avoided shortsightedness.
  - i. **Not stumbling in sense of "falling away"** – thought that is true.
  - ii. **Peter is saying they will never sin (as "stumble" is used in all other verses)** – sin comes when we lack one of "these things," and stop focusing on God's will.
- d. Darkness prevents one from seeing afar, which leads to stumbling – **2 Peter 1:19** – you do well to heed the word as light!

C. Unsure Call and Election

- a. When one is shortsighted, thus without the full light the knowledge of Christ has to offer, they cannot be sure about the prospect of heaven.
- b. **2 Peter 1:10** – the diligence in growth will make the call and election sure, thus, a lacking diligence in shortsightedness makes it unsure.
- c. Sure – *bebaios* – stable, fast, firm; metaphorically sure trusty. (Thayer)
  - i. Paul knew the Thessalonian's election – **1 Thessalonians 1:3-5** – due to their conviction, and activity.
- d. God wants us to have confidence in our salvation – **1 John 5:13**
- e. However, if we are not working out our own salvation by growing as He commands, we are shortsighted and cannot have confidence in salvation.

III. The Prescription

A. Seek Things Which are Above

- a. Shortsighted – as a negative, implies there is something more important beyond that we are to be focused upon.
- b. Seek things above – **Colossians 3:1-4**
  - i. **(v. 1a)** – concerning baptism. (**cf. 2 Peter 1:9** – cleansed from old sins.)
    1. **(v. 3)** – died to sin, and now are with God – fellowship.
    2. Hidden with Christ – **Galatians 2:20** – no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.

- ii. **(v. 4)** – ultimately in seeking things above the goal is to be found with Christ in glory – (**cf. 2 Peter 1:11** – entrance supplied into kingdom)
  - iii. **(v. 1b)** – where Christ is.
    - 1. **(v. 2)** – above, not on earth. (Sky? Outer Space?)
    - 2. Spiritual realm – **Ephesians 2:4-7** – made to sit in the heavenly places IN CHRIST.
  - c. Seek things above by seeking Christ in His word – **Colossians 2:6-10**
    - i. **(v. 6)** – walk in Him (Christ)
    - ii. **(v. 7)** – in the faith (gospel), as taught.
    - iii. **(v. 8)** – not philosophy, and wisdom of man.
    - iv. **(v. 8b-10)** – but according to Christ – Fullness of Godhead bodily. (Consider the person Jesus in the word.) (Word became flesh – **John 1:14** – beheld glory of Father.)
  - d. Practically – **Colossians 3:10-14, 17** – put on the new man renewed in knowledge, doing all things in the name of the Lord. (NOTE: progresses to relationships – not shortsighted, but spiritually focused)
  - e. Not worried about the things of the present world (Shortsightedness), but worried about pleasing God – **2 Timothy 2:1, 4, 15** – requires diligent study of His word.
- B. See Beyond the Physical Realm
- a. Walking by faith, not by sight – **2 Corinthians 5:6-8**
  - b. Seeing something by faith that cannot be seen by sight is easier said than done. It takes diligence, and trust in God. It requires our participation in the things He has given us.
  - c. See beyond the physical into the spiritual, and the future prospect of heaven by:
    - i. Studying God’s word – **1 Corinthians 2:13-16** (spiritual vs natural)
    - ii. Entering God’s presence in worship – **Hebrews 10:19-25**
    - iii. Entering God’s presence in prayer – **Hebrews 4:14-16**

### Conclusion

- 1. Considering the fact that we live in a physical realm, spiritual shortsightedness is going to be a constant battle.
- 2. We must make sure we are fighting that battle every day. It is only by doing this that we will grow in Christ, not stumble, have our call and election made sure, and be given an abundant entrance into heaven in the end.