

Opening Our Eyes

(Seeing Evangelism through God's Eyes)

INTRODUCTION:

1. There can be a lot of situations when we are very much awake but have our eyes closed.
 - A. If we are afraid, or if we do not like what we are seeing, or water, etc., is being splashed in our face, we will likely **close our eyes for a moment** without thought!
 - B. And no one can reasonably fault us for that.
2. But if I keep my eyes closed indefinitely for whatever reason(s), that is a real problem.
 - A. Doing so keeps me from functioning at full capacity and likely puts myself and others in danger.
 - B. Closing my eyes for a moment, or for needed sleep, is one thing. But refusing to open them to the light is another.
3. This becomes especially true in the spiritual realm.
 - A. Jesus rebuked the Jews' refusal to "open their eyes" to the truth He offered (Matt. 13:14-15 – "In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, 'You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; you will keep on seeing, but will not perceive; ¹⁵ for the heart of this people has become dull, with their ears they scarcely hear, and **they have closed their eyes**, otherwise they would see with their eyes, hear with their ears, and understand with their heart and return, and I would heal them.'").
 - B. Like the Jews, it is very important for us to open our eyes to the light of **God's truth** (Eph. 1:18-19 – "**I pray** that the **eyes of your heart** may be **enlightened**, so that **you will know** what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe...").
4. And that is what I want us to consider today.
 - A. I want to talk about "opening our eyes" to see the *divine* reality of things.
 - B. For, how God sees things:
 - i. Is the only way to truly see this world.
 - ii. Is what is needed to motivate us to make the sacrifices necessary to please the Lord and to take the gospel to our friends, neighbors, coworkers, etc.
 - C. To do this I want to focus on three areas where the Christian must **open their eyes**.

BODY:

I. Open our eyes to the world's condition

- A. We must open our eyes to see the world as God sees it—a world **destroying itself in sin**.
 1. **Adam** and **Eve's** rebellion against God:
 - a. Brought **sin** and a curse upon this earth of which we still feel the sting (Gen. 3:1-19).
 - b. Began a **cycle of sin** and **spiritual death** which remains in full swing even today (Rom. 5:12 – "Therefore, just as through one man **sin entered into the world**, and **death through sin**, and so death spread to all men, because **all sinned**").
 2. **The great flood** of **Noah's** day:
 - a. Here we see how Adam's sin opened the door for the **downward spiral of sin** that culminated in such **worldwide depravity** that God grieved creation (Gen. 6:5-6 – "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶ The LORD was **sorry** that He had made man on the earth, and He was **grieved** in His heart.>").
 - b. Though the flood also teaches God's grace, it clearly warns us that a world that **rejects God** is a world that **dies**.
 - i. Gen. 6:7-8 – "The LORD said, "I will **blot out man** whom I have created **from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds** of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them."
 - ii. Gen. 7:17, 20-21 – "Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days, and the water increased and lifted up the ark, so that it rose above the earth...²⁰ The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher, and the mountains were covered. ²¹ **All flesh that moved on the**

earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and **all mankind**”).

3. **Sodom and Gomorrah:**

- a. These were two cities filled with **wickedness** (**Gen. 13:13** – “Now the men of Sodom were **wicked exceedingly** and **sinner**s against the LORD.”).
- b. Because of their **immorality** and **perversion** God’s wrathful judgement came upon them.
 - i. Gen. 19:24-25 – “Then the LORD **rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven**,²⁵ and He overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.”
 - ii. Jude 7 – “just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in **gross immorality** and went after **strange flesh**, are exhibited as an example in **undergoing the punishment of eternal fire**.”

4. Sin brings death and condemnation!

B. Our world has filled itself with sin.

1. The guilt of sin applies to all.

- a. For, all to be under sin (Rom. 3:9, 23 – “What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin...²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”).
- b. That sin leaves my neighbor, friends, co-workers, and that nice little old lady down the street **condemned** to face God’s wrath **with no excuse** (Rom. 1:18-20 – “For the **wrath of God** is revealed from heaven **against all ungodliness and unrighteousness** of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,¹⁹ because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that **they are without excuse**.”).
- c. I suspect if we could see the spiritual reality of sin in physical depictions, our world would likely look like that—burning down, people bleeding out in the streets, etc.

2. As we observe our society’s rejection of God along with its growing wickedness and perversion, do we think that God will react differently? No!

- a. For, Paul tells us that “the wages of sin is **death**, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. 6:23).
- b. For those who do not have faith to obey, 2 Thess. 1:7-9 states that when Jesus returns **in flaming fire** he will bring “**retribution** to those who **do not know God** and to those who **do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus**.⁹ These will pay the penalty of **eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord** and from the **glory of His power**.”
- c. And that place away from the Lord’s presence where the disobedient go is **Hell** itself (Rev. 21:6-8 – “Then He [Jesus] said to me, “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.⁷ He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.⁸ But for the **cowardly** and **unbelieving** and abominable and **murderers** and **immoral** persons and **sorcerers** and **idolaters** and all **liars**, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”).

3. I must honestly ask myself how I can sit by and allow this to happen to others.

- a. For, if I truly believe God’s word, then I must open my eyes to the reality that **doing nothing** is **deciding to let people eternally suffer** in the fires of Hell.
- b. For, we know there is an **alternative**, the way of salvation and life in the knowledge of Christ by the gospel, which we hold in our hands.

4. We need to open our eyes to see the world’s condition through God’s eyes!

II. Open our eyes to the value of a soul.

- A. Jesus said that person’s soul, even the vilest of sinner’s, is invaluable (Matt. 16:24-26 – “Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take

up his cross and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For **what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?** Or what will a man **give in exchange for his soul?**”).

1. I have often found it quite difficult to get the **world** to **see** this because, I think, for them to address it requires **self-sacrifice**—to deny oneself and follow Jesus!
 - a. This world claims to offer so much at their fingertips and is screaming at them to live it up, to do what they feel.
 - b. Thus, many have little time for or interest in their soul, the one eternally valuable thing they have, because the trivial and temporal things of this world have caught their eye!
 2. I have also found it difficult to get a **Christian**, like myself, to **see** this because, I think, for me to address it properly requires **self-sacrifice**—to **deny myself** and **follow Jesus**.
 - a. For, Jesus said that “you will know them by their fruits” (Matt. 7:16, 20).
 - b. So, I must honestly evaluate my fruits, my efforts, in this area to determine what I value more—my interests, time, feelings, having friends, or the souls of others?
- B. We must open our eyes to the value of a lost soul!
1. **God** values souls enough to send Jesus to die for them (Rom. 5:6-8 – “For while we were still helpless, at the right time **Christ died for the ungodly**. ⁷ For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. ⁸ But **God demonstrates His own love toward us**, in that while we were yet sinners, **Christ died for us**.”)
 2. **Jesus** valued souls enough to **leave heaven** to **die on the cross** for them (Phil. 2:5-8 – “**Have this attitude in yourselves** which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but **emptied Himself**, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He **humbled Himself** by becoming **obedient** to the point of **death**, even **death on a cross**.”).
 3. We need to open our eyes to the priceless nature of souls and understand that allowing them to die without Christ is to allow destruction to come on what God cherishes the most!

III. Open our eyes to the work set before us

- A. We must be like our Master, like Jesus (Matt. 10:24-25 – “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for the **disciple that he become like his teacher**, and the **slave like his master**...”).
1. Jesus came to “seek and save...the lost” (Lk. 19:10).
 2. To be like Christ we must be seeking the lost to reconcile them to God (2 Cor. 5:17-19 – “Therefore if anyone is **in Christ**, he is a **new creature**; the old things passed away; behold, **new things have come**. ¹⁸ Now all these things are from God, who **reconciled us to Himself through Christ** and **gave us the ministry of reconciliation**, ¹⁹ namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and **He has committed to us the word of reconciliation**.”).
 - a. God through Christ chose to reconcile us to Him.
 - b. So, as the reconciled, we are given the job of reconciling others to Him.
- B. We must open our eyes to the “harvest” of souls before us.
1. The fields are ripe for harvest *now* (John 4:34-36 – “Jesus said to them, “**My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me** and to **accomplish His work**. ³⁵ Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that **they are white for harvest**. ³⁶ Already he who reaps is **receiving wages** and is gathering fruit **for life eternal**; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.”).
 2. Now is the time of salvation for all (2 Cor. 6:1-2 – “And working together with Him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain—² for He says, “At the acceptable time I

listened to you, and on the day of salvation I helped you.” Behold, **now is “the acceptable time,” behold, now is “the day of salvation”**).

3. It is time that we must **shine the light of Christ in our lives to the world** through **deed** and **word** (Matt. 5:14-16 – “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵ nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”).
 - a. **Deed** – “your light shine before men in such a way that they may **see** your good works”
 - b. **Word** – the world is to “**glorify your Father** who is in heaven”
 - i. Many good works are done daily by which the doers, not God, receive the glory.
 - ii. We must not only **act** in such a way that befits God’s glory, but also **speak** of God and the gospel so that the world knows God is to be gloried for our actions!
4. We simply cannot afford to wait for a more convenient time. Too much is on the line.
 - a. Instead, we must be people of faith praying for workers to be sent to harvest souls (Matt. 9:36-38 – “Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. ³⁸ Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.”).
 - b. Of course, we must surely know that such a prayer is of little value if we exempt ourselves from its plea.

CONCLUSION:

1. Brethren, let us pray that God will “open our eyes” to help us see...
 - A. The dire and dying condition of our world.
 - B. The value of lost souls that we might learn to truly care.
 - C. The work God has set before us of harvesting these souls for God’s glory and their salvation.
2. We have been blessed with the Gospel of Christ and the grace of God in our lives...and we are to bless others. Let us determine to do just that!
3. The gospel offers you forgiveness, salvation, a new start in life. Will you come to Christ by F-R-C-B?