

PRESENT TRUTH

A Teaching Newsletter of Lifestream Teaching Ministries

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 KJV)

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With Open Eyes

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Jesus said repeatedly, “he who has eyes to see...”. This certainly means something besides natural eyes that see the natural world in which we live. He was talking about spiritual eyes that see spiritual truth. As we begin to study the Kingdom of God, we have to be able to see with spiritual eyes.

John 3:3 NASB

(3) Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The Kingdom of God is a “hidden” kingdom that cannot be seen by unbelievers. We have to be “born again”, that is, have received a new spirit, in order to see the Kingdom of God. Just as natural eyes require light to see, spiritual eyes require spiritual light to see spiritual things. Just as the sun is the source of natural light for our natural eyes, the Son is the source of spiritual light for our spiritual eyes.

John 8:12 NASB

(12) Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

Our spiritual eyes have to be focused on Jesus as we follow Him. If we do that we will not walk in darkness spiritually.

Matthew 6:22-23 NASB

(22) "The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.

(23) "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

How can the light that is in us be darkness? If our light only comes from natural sources then we

are in spiritual darkness.

The Eyes of the Soul

Our real problem is that we do not see correctly, that is, we perceive reality in a manner that is not correct spiritually. This is due to what happened to man in the Garden and the resulting effects on our nature.

When the Serpent questioned Eve about what God had said, he evaluated her answers looking for an angle that would achieve his purposes.

Genesis 3:1-3 NASB

- (1) Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"
- (2) The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;
- (3) but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'"

The Enemy knew that he had an opening because Eve didn't answer the question correctly—God had not said anything about not touching the fruit, so he immediately contradicted God's statement about dying.

Genesis 3:4-5 NASB

- (4) The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die!
- (5) "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

The serpent implied that God had a less than honorable ulterior motive in prohibiting them from eating of the fruit of the tree. He told Eve that the result of eating would be that their eyes would be opened and that the result of their eyes being opened would be that they would be like God because they would know good and evil.

Eve took the bait by believing the serpent. She took the fruit and gave some to Adam and they ate in direct disobedience to the one simple command that God had given them.

Genesis 3:7-8 NASB

- (7) Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.
- (8) They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

Now the question is, “what eyes were opened when they ate?” Obviously, their natural eyes were open because they could walk around the Garden and not stumble over things. Also, their spiritual eyes were open because God would come to the Garden and walk and talk with them, fellowshiping spirit to spirit. That only leaves the eyes of the soul. Apparently, up until that time, the eyes of the soul were closed and man could not see from the soul, only from the spirit

and from the body.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate of the forbidden fruit, something was activated in their souls that had previously been inactive and something was de-activated in their spirits that had previously been active. In other words, the eyes of their spirits were closed (they were cut off from God by their disobedience) and the eyes of their souls were opened. The way that they saw reality changed. Their sight, their perception, became different.

1. **How they saw themselves**—prior to eating the forbidden fruit, they were naked but it was not an issue. After eating, it was an issue and they tried to cover themselves.
2. **How they saw God**—prior to eating the forbidden fruit, they saw God as a friend and fellowshiped with Him in gladness and joy. After eating the forbidden fruit, they saw God as someone to be feared, an enemy, and hid from Him.
3. The only thing that had changed was *how they perceived reality*.

The nakedness and clothing are metaphors. Prior to this event, man was naked before God. There was nothing hidden. God saw everything about man. After this event, man disguised himself with clothes before God and others. Man did not want anyone, including God, to see him as he really is. It is interesting to note that when fellowship with God is fully restored in the New Covenant, we will know and be known fully (I Cor. 13:12).

Prior to the fall, all data input from the surrounding reality flowed through the spirit of man for interpretation, including both spiritual sight and natural sight. After the fall with our spiritual eyes closed and our “soulish” eyes open, all data input from the surrounding reality flowed through the soul for interpretation. Therefore, by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, man received the ability, the capability, *to determine within himself apart from God* what is good or evil, right or wrong.

Prior to eating the forbidden fruit, right or wrong, good or evil, was not a consideration. All things came from God; therefore, it was all good. Now with our perceptions changed, all things have to be evaluated by ourselves as to whether they are good or evil.

The Results of Changed Perception

When the eyes of the soul were activated, man suddenly saw that he needed to preserve himself, protect himself and provide for himself where, previously, these things weren't issues. They were taken care of by God. How we pursue our own self-preservation is manifested in how we protect and provide for ourselves.

In order to preserve yourself, it becomes necessary to see others as enemies who want to conquer, control and take what you have for themselves. We seek to manipulate our circumstances to protect and provide for us even to the detriment of others. Because of the fall, this is now built into the nature of man.

When the serpent was tempting Eve, he appealed to an aspect of the nature of man.

Genesis 3:6 NASB

- (6) When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the

eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

After observing his success in this area and recognizing that the fall intensified this aspect of man, the Enemy began to construct his kingdom of darkness in the world systems in such a way as to appeal to the nature of fallen man. In other words, he constructed the world systems to be attractive to what man wants.

John tells us that the world has reached the place where it has become an alternative to the Father. If we love it, then we have to recognize the fact that the love of the Father is not in us. We cannot love both the world and the Lord.

1 John 2:15-16 NASB

(15) Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

(16) For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

John then describes the characteristics of the things in the world and divides them into three categories that are very close to what we read in Genesis regarding the nature of man.

1. Lust of the flesh—the cravings of the sinful nature, the desire to indulge. Also, this means our desire to identify our enemies and conquer them.
2. Lust of the eyes—we have relegated this to sexual lust, but that is only a manifestation of this and not its full expression. This is our plan, our vision, to conquer our enemies.
3. Boastful pride of life—this is boasting about what we have done and what we can do. How we have prevailed over our enemies.

John said that we are not to “love the world nor the things in the world.” The world has form and structure because there are things in the world. The world is the framework for these things. And all of these things that are in the world relate to the three areas that are attractive to the nature of man.

Perceived Value

I used to make my living in sales and one of the things that you have to get across to your prospect is the “value” of what you are selling. This could be real value or only a perception of value based on the circumstances of the prospect. Most of the hype that you see in advertising is the attempt to create a perception of value that has very little basis in the truth. So, you can immediately see that the change in the Garden in the way that we see things dramatically affects our view of reality. When Jesus said that He is Truth, the Greek root of that word is “reality”. We must see Jesus and see Him with fully open spiritual eyes in order to see true reality.

The world values things and has taught us that, to protect and provide for ourselves, we need the things of the world and that they are valuable to us. Therefore, the primary expressions of the world are to buy, sell and accumulate. This becomes so predominate that by the end of the age, the Antichrist will regulate buying and selling by making it a requirement that we receive his mark in order to participate. If we have become fully vested in the world system of buying,

selling and accumulating, what will we do when the mark is required?

The Kingdom of God values people and relationships. We learn in the Kingdom that relationships are more valuable, have more *real* value, than “things”, which have only a *perceived* value. The primary expressions of the Kingdom in relationships is giving, receiving and holding things in common.

We can see what is valuable to us by the way that we resolve differences and conflicts. Conflict resolution within the Kingdom is based on reconciliation and “gaining our brother”. Conflict resolution in the world system is based on determining ownership of (primarily) things.

If we are going to learn how to live in the Kingdom of God, we must learn how to see with the eyes of the spirit and not the eyes of the soul. We learn to do this by the experience of walking in the spirit. We have to be weaned from the world as an alternative to God. As we mature we learn to stop filtering situations and circumstances through the soul filter that comes from the tree of knowledge of good and evil and, instead, see from our spiritual eyes.

Hebrews 5:13-14 NASB

(13) For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.

(14) But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

It takes practice to do this. Part of maturing is gaining enough experience and practice in the situations of life to train our senses so that we walk by the Spirit, by faith, and not by our natural sight.

Our spiritual eyes have been opened by Jesus. Let us walk in His light.

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