



Eyes to See

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Through the power of the Holy Ghost, Christ will enable us to see ourselves and see others as He does.

Seeing God's Hand

I love the Old Testament story of a young man who served the prophet Elisha. Early one morning the young man woke up, went outside, and found the city surrounded by a great army intent on destroying them. He ran to Elisha: “Alas, my master! how shall we do?”

Elisha answered, “Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.”

Elisha knew the young man needed more than calming reassurance; he needed vision. And so “Elisha prayed, ... Lord, ... open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”¹

There may be times when you, like the servant, find yourself struggling to see how God is working in your life—times when *you* feel under siege—when the trials of mortality bring you to your knees. Wait and trust in God and in His timing, because you can trust His heart with all of yours. But there is a second lesson here. My dear sisters and brothers, you too can pray for the Lord to open your eyes to see things you would not normally see.

Seeing Ourselves as God Sees Us

Perhaps the most important things for us to see clearly are who God is and who we really are—sons and daughters of heavenly parents, with a “divine nature and eternal destiny.”² Ask God to reveal these truths to you, along with how He feels about you. The more you understand your true identity and purpose, soul deep, the more it will influence everything in your life.

Seeing Others

Understanding how God sees us prepares the way to help us see others as He does. Columnist David Brooks said: “Many of our society’s great problems flow from people not feeling seen and known. ... [There is a] core ... trait that we all have to get ... better at[, and that] is the trait of seeing each other deeply and being deeply seen.”³

Jesus Christ sees people deeply. He sees individuals, their needs, and who they can become. Where others saw fishermen, sinners, or publicans, Jesus saw disciples; where others saw a man possessed by devils, Jesus looked past the outward distress, acknowledged the man, and healed him.⁴

Even in our busy lives, we can follow the example of Jesus and see individuals—their needs, their faith, their struggle, and who they can become.⁵

As I pray for the Lord to open my eyes to see things I might not normally see, I often ask myself two questions and pay attention to the impressions that come: “What am I doing that I should stop doing?” and “What am I not doing that I should start doing?”⁶

Months ago, during the sacrament, I asked myself these questions and was surprised by the impression that came. “Stop looking at your phone when you are waiting in lines.” Looking at my phone in lines had become almost automatic; I found it a good time to multitask, catch up on email, look at headlines, or scroll through a social media feed.

The next morning, I found myself waiting in a long line at the store. I pulled out my phone and then remembered the impression I had received. I put my phone away and looked around. I saw an elderly gentleman in line ahead of me. His cart was empty except for a few cans of cat food. I felt a little awkward but said

something *really* clever like, “I can see you have a cat.” He said that a storm was coming, and he did not want to be caught without cat food. We visited briefly, and then he turned to me and said, “You know, I haven’t told anyone this, but today is my birthday.” My heart melted. I wished him a happy birthday and offered a silent prayer of thanks that I had not been on my phone and missed an opportunity to truly see and connect with another person who needed it.

With all of my heart I do not want to be like the priest or the Levite on the road to Jericho—one who looks and passes by.⁷ But too often I think I am.

Seeing God’s Errand for Me

I recently learned a valuable lesson about seeing deeply from a young woman named Rozlyn.

The story was shared with me by my friend who was devastated when her husband of 20 years moved out. With her children splitting time between parents, the prospect of attending church alone seemed daunting. She recounts:

“In a church where the family is of paramount importance, sitting solo can be painful. That first Sunday I walked in praying no one would speak to me. I was barely holding it together, and tears were on the brink. I sat in my typical spot, hoping no one would notice how empty the bench seemed.

“A young woman in our ward turned and looked at me. I pretended to smile. She smiled back. I could see the concern in her face. I silently pleaded that she wouldn’t come to talk to me—I had nothing positive to say and knew I would cry. I looked back down at my lap and avoided eye contact.

“During the next hour, I noticed her looking back at me occasionally. As soon as the meeting ended, she made a beeline for me. ‘Hi, Rozlyn,’ I whispered. She wrapped me in her arms and said, ‘Sister Smith, I can tell today is a bad day for you. I’m so sorry. I love you.’ As predicted, the tears came as she hugged me again. But as I walked away, I thought to myself, ‘Maybe I can do this after all.’

“That sweet 16-year-old young woman, less than half my age, found me every Sunday for the rest of that year to give me a hug and ask, ‘How are you?’ It made such a difference in how I felt about coming to church. The truth is I started to *rely* on those hugs. Someone noticed me. Someone knew I was there. Someone cared.”

As with all gifts the Father so willingly offers, seeing deeply requires us to *ask Him*—and then *act*. *Ask* to see others as He does—as His true sons and daughters with infinite and divine potential. Then *act* by loving, serving, and affirming their worth and potential as prompted. As this becomes the pattern of our lives, we will find ourselves becoming “true followers of ... Jesus Christ.”⁸ Others will be able to trust our hearts with theirs. And in this pattern we will also discover *our own* true identity and purpose.

My friend recalled another experience while sitting in that same empty pew, alone, wondering if 20 years of effort to live the gospel in her home was all for naught. She needed more than calming reassurance; she needed vision. She felt a question pierce her heart: “Why did you do those things? Did you do them for the reward, the praise of others, or the desired outcome?” She hesitated for a moment, searched her heart, and was then able to answer confidently, “I did them because I love the Savior. And I love His gospel.” The Lord opened her eyes to help her see. This simple but powerful change of vision helped her continue to press on with faith in Christ, despite her circumstances.

I witness that Jesus Christ loves us and can give us eyes to see—*even* when it’s hard, *even* when we’re tired, *even* when we’re lonely, and *even* when the outcomes are not as we hoped. Through His grace, He will bless us and increase our capacity. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, Christ will enable us to *see* ourselves and *see* others as He does. With His help, we can discern what is most needful. We can begin to see the hand of the Lord working in and through the ordinary details of our lives—we will see deeply.

And then, in that great day “when he shall appear we shall be like him, for *we* shall *see him* as he is; that we may have this hope”⁹ is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.