

EYES OPENED

NO. 3117

A SERMON
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1908
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON
ON THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 5, 1874

*“And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, 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.”*
2 Kings 6:17

[Another sermon by Mr. Spurgeon on the same text is #2215, Young Man! A Prayer for You]

THE believer in Christ sees much more than any other man sees. There is a proverb which says, “Seeing is believing,” but that is not true, for there are many things that we see, which if we are sensible persons, we shall not believe, since our eyes are very apt indeed to be deceived, and optical illusions are very common. If you turn the proverb around the other way and say, “Believing is seeing,” you will often find it come true. The man who has believed has “the evidence of things not seen” as yet, he is like Moses, who is described as “seeing him who is invisible.”

Faith is to a man like new eyes—eyes with a far wider range of vision than natural eyes ever have—eyes which see the truth, which natural eyes often do not—eyes which wax not dim, but which, as age increases, grow yet more bright and farseeing. Blessed is the man who has the eyesight of faith. Elisha had it, and therefore, when he saw the hosts of Syria, with their horses and chariots, encompassing the city of Dothan, he also saw the angelic hosts with their horses and chariots of fire, which God had sent to guard him from the Syrians.

The eyesight of faith produces, in the man who possesses it, a calm and quiet frame of mind. Elisha’s servant said, “Alas, my master!” but Elisha did not say, “Alas, my servant!” for there was nothing to cause him to be alarmed. The servant said, “How shall we do?” but his master said nothing of the kind, with those horses and chariots of fire visible to his eyes, he had no need to be dismayed, and no reason for asking the question, “How shall we do?”

It is a grand thing to have a calm, serene frame of mind, so as not readily to be put out of temper, and to grow angry, or to become depressed and anxious, but to possess one’s soul in patience and peacefulness. This is to be a king among the sons of men. When others are driven hither and thither, like the thistle-down upon the hillside, this man stands like the royal oak in the midst of the tempest, too deeply rooted to be easily swept away.

He is the man who is not “afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.” He can say, with David, “My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise,” and he is of the same mind as that psalmist who said, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth is removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.”

Oh, that we all had these eyes of faith, that we might enjoy such calm, quiet patience as Elisha enjoyed! If we could see what Elisha saw, we should be as quiet and serene as Elisha was. But most men have not this calmness of mind because they have not the spiritual eyesight which would bring it to them. The narrative before us, if we use it as a kind of illustration, will help us to realize the blindness of those who as yet have not had their eyes opened, and I trust that it will also lead us to admire the rich

grace of God which has been manifested in those of us who have had our eyes opened that we may see the things of God.

I. My first observation shall be that THE NATURAL EYE IS BLIND TO HEAVENLY THINGS.

Man boasts that he can see, but he cannot. He sees natural things, and he often sees them very clearly. His penetrating eye has looked into the bowels of the earth and the depths of the sea, and has peered among the stars. Scarcely anything has been able to conceal itself from the wondrous power of research possessed by the human mind. For natural things, the natural eye is sufficient, but as the natural man understands not the things of the Spirit of God, seeing that they are spiritual, and must be spiritually discerned, so the natural eyes discern not spiritual things. Let me prove this, as I can very readily do.

For instance, *God is everywhere, yet sin-blinded eyes see Him not.* When our eyes are opened, we can see God everywhere, it would be impossible to place a Christian where he would not feel the presence of his Maker in creation. Whatever landscape his eye gazes upon, he says at once, "My Father made all this," and he can see traces of his Father's handiwork, not merely when he looks upon the face of the earth, but also when he looks up to the stars.

Not only in a calm, clear night, but amidst the hurly-burly of the tempest, the Christian realizes that God is there, he does not need anybody to point out to him the fact that God is present, for he knows it. How often have some of us walked out when the storm has been raging, and delighted to look up to the flashing lightning because we saw in it the glances of our Father's eye, and to listen to the peals of thunder because we believed them to be our Father's voice, that voice of the Lord which is full of majesty, and which "breaketh the cedars of Lebanon."

Yet the natural man can go through the world and not see God at all. Yea, and he will even have the effrontery to deny that God is there, and he may go further still, and say that there is no God at all. David says that such a man is a fool, but the modern name for him is "philosopher."

In David's day, no one but fools said that there was no God, but now, those who say that there is no God claim that they are among the wise ones of the world. Yet, how can they see if they are blind? We need not think that any strange thing has happened, for Paul wrote, long ago, about those who lived in his day, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." They said, "We can see," and therefore their sin and their blindness both remained.

So blind is man that in addition to not seeing his God, *he does not see the law of God.* Go into a parish church, and you will usually see the ten commandments printed legibly before you. Yet I am speaking the truth when I say that men cannot see the law of God with their natural eyes. You can scarcely go into a house in this country without finding a Bible, and in that Bible there are the commandments that God gave to Moses, yet, notwithstanding that, the natural man does not see the law of God, for even if he reads the ten commandments, he concludes that the mere letter of them is all that they mean.

He reads, "Thou shalt not kill," and he says to himself, "I have done no murder, so I am clear," not knowing that "whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause" has broken that commandment. He reads, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and he says, "I am clear," forgetting that even a lascivious look is an infringement of that command. The law is spiritual, and has to do with thoughts, imaginations, and secret wishes, as well as with words and actions, so who among us can stand unabashed in its awful presence?—

*"No strength of nature can suffice
To serve the Lord aright;
And what she has, she misapplies,
For want of clearer light."*

Instead of asking that our hearts may be inclined to keep this law, it would be better far for us to look up to Him who has kept the law on His people's behalf, and whose precious blood can cleanse us from the stain of the innumerable infringements of that law of which we have been guilty. Till we see Christ's

face in glory, and are perfect through His perfections, the law will be far above us, and will continue to condemn us for our shortcomings. But the great reason why men do not comprehend the high spirituality of the law, its exceeding breadth and wondrous severity, is because they are blind.

Being thus blind to God, and to His law, *they are also blind to their own condition*. He who has his eyes opened but for a moment will perceive that his soul is as full of sin as an egg is full of meat, and that sin comes out of him as naturally as water flows from a fountain. He sees that every action he performs is stained with sin, and that he is so guilty before God that condemnation has already passed upon him—so guilty that he can never make any atonement for the past, and that nothing he can do or suffer can ever save him.

He must feel, if once his eyes have been opened, that he is lost, ruined, and undone by nature and by practice too, and that only a supernatural act of divine grace can deliver him from the danger into which he has brought himself, and the guilt into which he has plunged himself. We say this to men, and we have said it hundreds of times, but they cannot see it, and when they do not, we ought by no means to be surprised, but simply to say, “Of course, this proves the truth of what we have already said. The very fact that men cannot see it proves that they are blind, if they saw it, we should have spoken falsely in charging them with not having sight.”

And inasmuch as men are not able to see their sin, and to see their danger, *therefore they do not see the way of salvation*. They may attend a purely Evangelical ministry, and hear the way of salvation put as clearly as ever it can be put, yet they will not understand it unless their eyes are opened by a miracle which only the Holy Spirit can work.

It is strange that when people are convinced of sin, though they have attended the plainest possible ministry from their childhood, we have to teach them the very A B C of the Gospel, and we have the greatest possible difficulty in making them see that faith in Jesus, faith in the divinely-appointed Substitute for sinners, does in a single moment save the soul.

The inward spiritual perception of what justification by faith really means comes to no man except to be given him from above. And because man does not see his sin, he does not see the remedy for that sin. Not understanding his danger, he is not in a position to see the wondrous scheme by which he is delivered from that danger, through the grace of God, by the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, through the effectual working of the ever-blessed Spirit.

This is the reason why men do not admire and love our blessed Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. They cannot see His beauties, or they would be enamored of Him. If you tell me that any eye has been turned to the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet that the possessor of that eye has not trusted, loved, and adored Him, I tell you at once that that eye must be a blind eye, for could it see, it must be charmed with Him, could it really behold Him, it must be fascinated by Him. Well did our hymn-writer say—

***“His worth, if all the nations knew,
Then the whole world would love Him too.”***

But man is so blind that he cannot see the light of the Sun of righteousness. Jesus shines full in his face in all the splendor of His infinite love, yet the blinded soul cannot behold that supernatural radiance.

This want of spiritual discernment makes man ignoble. Samson with his eyes open is a hero, but Samson blinded is a sorry spectacle, from a judge in Israel he sinks to a slave in Philistia. Men believe in the keenness of their intellect, but it is to them their greatest shame, though they do not know it, that they cannot see the things of God, but grope like blind men in the dark.

It is their blindness that makes them so contented to be what they are. Could they but see themselves as they really are in God’s sight, they would not rest a moment without crying to Him for mercy. Could the ungodly man truly know what he is, and where he is, the cry, “What must I do to be saved?” would constantly go up in every house of prayer, and in every private house men and women and children too,

would be found praying to God to save them. But the blind soul says that it sees, and it is perfectly satisfied to remain blind even though that blindness, unless it is miraculously cured, will end in eternal death. Oh, that God, in His infinite mercy, would now give spiritual eyesight to any here who are thus blind!

Until He does so, *this blindness of theirs will keep them proud of what should be their shame*. They are covered with rags, but they think they are decked out in the choicest apparel. They are poor and miserable, but this blindness of their soul makes them boast of being princely in their riches, and therefore, they will not come to God for the true light, and the true life, and true wealth, but remain self-deceived and un-humbled.

This blindness of theirs places them in great danger. If God, in His sovereign mercy, does not open their eyes, they will fall into the ditch, and probably drag others down with them, or they will go struggling on in the self-conceit of their fancied knowledge, and will never be led into the light, but they will be only undeceived when, in hell, they open their eyes for the first time to find that they are cast out from God forever and ever.

This is our first point, that the natural eye is blind to heavenly things.

II. The next truth is that GOD ALONE CAN OPEN MEN'S EYES.

We may lead blind men to Jesus, but we cannot open their eyes. We can, in a measure, indicate to them what spiritual sight is, and we may explain to them what their own sad condition is, but we cannot open their eyes. Neither can anyone but God alone open their eyes. There are some who, in mockery, give them artificial eyes, and try to make them look as if they could see, they teach them to trust in an imitation of Christianity which has a name to live, and yet is dead, but nothing less than vital godliness will avail for them—nothing but the real work of God the Holy Ghost upon the soul.

It is all in vain for you to wash your eyes in baptismal water, whether it is in a few drops or in the deepest river, you must have your eyes miraculously opened by God, or they never will be opened. It is all in vain for you to be orthodox in your creed, and to be a member of what you believe to be the best church under heaven, unless there has been in your soul a divine enlightenment so that you have seen yourself, seen your Savior, and seen your God with your inward eyes. Unless God shall open your eyes, you must still abide in the darkness of spiritual blindness.

Why it is that God alone can open men's eyes? It is because *to open the eyes of blind souls is an act of creation*. The faculty to see is gone from the fallen spirit, the eyeball has perished, the optical nerve has died out through sin. God will not merely clean the dust out of old eyes, or take cataracts away from them, but old things must pass away, and all things must become new. He gives new eyes to those who have totally lost all power of sight. The act of creating a soul anew is as much a work of God's omnipotence as the making of a world.

Remember also that *those who have their eyes opened by God were born blind*. The man who was in that sad condition, and whose eyes Christ had opened, truly said, "Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind." It is so spiritually, this old original sin of ours, this inwrought blindness of our nature, is not superficial, it has not merely to do with eyeballs, and optic nerves, and the like, but it has to do with the heart, and the will, and the conscience, the understanding and the perception of spiritual things, and divine power is needed to remove such blindness as this.

We must remember too, that *man is willfully blind*. Our old proverb says, "There are none so deaf as those that won't hear, and none so blind as those that won't see." It is not merely that man cannot come to Christ, but he *will not* come to Christ that he may have life.

It is not merely that he cannot see the truth, but that he loves darkness rather than light, and does not want to see. You cannot convince a man who is resolved not to be convinced. If sinners were only willing to see, they would soon see, but their will itself is in bondage, and utterly estranged from God, and therefore it is that only a divine power—the will of God—can overcome the desperately wicked will of man.

It must be a divine work, and therefore *it was set down among the covenant blessings* that the Lord Jesus Christ, when He came, would open the eyes of the blind, but why it should have been put down as His special work if others can do it, I cannot tell. But no others can do it, God alone, God in the person of Jesus Christ our Savior, by the effectual working of the ever-blessed Spirit, must come and open the eyes of those who are spiritually blind.

*“If Thou, my God, art passing by,
Oh let me find Thee near!
Jesus, in mercy hear my cry,
Thou Son of David, hear!”*

*Behold me waiting, in the way,
For Thee, the heavenly Light;
Command me to be brought, and say,
‘Sinner, receive thy sight.’”*

III. Now, thirdly, though we cannot open the eyes of the blind, WE CAN PRAY FOR THEM THAT THEIR EYES MAY BE OPENED.

This is what Elisha did for his servant, the young man could not see the horses and chariots of fire, and Elisha could not make him see them, but he offered this prayer for him, “LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw.”

How often we feel our helplessness in dealing with sinners! Godly parents, have you not realized your helplessness in dealing with your own children? If you have had the notion that you could convert them, you have soon had it driven out of you.

When you have gathered the little children in the Sunday school around you, perhaps you have pictured to yourself the power and influence you would have over them to lead them to Christ, but I will warrant that you, who have long been earnestly engaged in such holy service as that, have learned, as the Reformer did, that “old Adam is too strong for young Melancthon,” and you have lifted up your heart to God, finding prayer to be the only resource you had in such an emergency.

It is a blessed thing to be driven to despair as to any ability of our own to do any good, for we never rely wholly on God’s power as long as we have any confidence in our own. While the preacher imagines that he can do something, he will do nothing. While teachers or parents entertain the belief that there is some innate power in themselves with which they can do God’s work, they are not on the right track, for God will not work through those who believe in their own self-sufficiency.

But when you say, “I can no more save a soul than I can open the eyes of a man born blind, I am utterly helpless in this matter,” then it is that you begin to pray, and beginning to pray, you are taught how to act, and God uses you as His instrument, and eyes are opened, ay, opened by you, instrumentally, but God has all the glory.

Now, when should you specially pray for those who are blind? I think this narrative teaches us that *we should do so whenever we see them in trouble*. This young man said to Elisha, “Alas, my master!” so that was the time for Elisha to pray for him, “LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see.”

Carefully watch those about whom you are anxious, and pray most earnestly for them when they are under affliction or difficulty. I am sure that trials are providentially sent to unconverted men in order to help the ministry guide their minds and hearts in the right direction. If they were left without trials, we might scarcely find a joint in their harness where the arrows of the truth might enter. If they always continued in prosperity, they would become so proud and presumptuous that they would be unwilling to listen either to a rebuke or to an invitation.

It is a grand opportunity for you when you visit a man in the time of sickness, or when you find him depressed in spirit, or hear him saying, “Alas! Alas!” Then is the time to speak to him about God, and to speak to God about him.

It is also a good time to pray for sinners when we hear them inquiring. This young man said to Elisha, “How shall we do?” Be always ready, when you hear them asking, “What shall we do?” or “How shall we do?” to point them at once to Jesus, and also to take their case to Jesus in prayer.

It is also a good time to pray for them when we ourselves have had a clear sight of the things of God. You ought, by the very clearness of the vision which you have enjoyed, to pity those who still sit in darkness, and to pray that they may be brought into the light. Elisha had himself seen the horses and chariot of fire, and therefore he prayed for his servant, “LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see.” When it is well with you, speak to Christ on behalf of poor sinners. When you have good times yourselves, remember those who are starving away from the banquet, and pray the Master of the feast to give you the grace to “compel them to come in.”

It is well to pray for sinners too, when their blindness astonishes us. I know that sometimes, you are quite amazed that people should be so ignorant about divine things. It surprises you that intelligent people should have such mistaken notions concerning the very simplest truths of God’s Word. Even if you are astonished, do not be vexed at them, but pray earnestly for them.

I have sometimes heard two Christian men arguing because they did not agree in doctrine. One of them has been quite sure that he held the truth and equally certain that his friend was in error, and instead of being thankful that he could see more than his friend could, and praying God to bring his friend to see the same, he has grown angry, and struck out right and left, as if the way to make his brother see was to smite him in the eye.

But it is not so, controversy very seldom brings any truth home to the heart. We can secure that result much better by praying for others than by fighting with them. Pray, “O Lord, open their eyes.” That is a far wiser thing than abusing them because they cannot see.

Let us also remember, dear friends, that *when we received our spiritual eyesight, it was mainly because others had been praying for us.* Most of us can probably trace our conversion to the intercession of a godly father, or mother, or teacher, or friend. Then let us repay those prayers which were offered for us in years gone by, by pleading for others who still are blind.

***“Pray that they who now are blind,
Soon the way of truth may find.”***

It will glorify God to open the eyes of the blind, therefore let us pray for them with great confidence. When we are asking for anything about which we are somewhat doubtful as to whether it will glorify God or not, we may well speak with hesitation, but as we are sure that it is for God’s glory that men should see Jesus, and rejoice in Him, let us crave this boon for them with great importunity and much holy boldness, and we shall certainly have our heart’s desire.

Now father, mother, sister, brother, friend, just at this moment breathe the prayer to heaven, “Lord, open my children’s eyes, open my brother’s eyes, open my husband’s eyes, open my wife’s eyes.” Let such prayers as those go up perseveringly, eagerly, expectantly, for verily there is a God that hears prayer. Make this the burden of your daily approach to God for anyone in whom you are specially interested, “O LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see!”

IV. Fourthly, there is this blessed fact, in the narrative before us, that GOD DOES OPEN MEN’S EYES.

God can do it, and according to this narrative, *He has done it in an instant.* A moment before, this young man could see no horses or chariots of fire, but as soon as Elisha’s prayer was registered in heaven, his servant could see what was before invisible to him.

The processes of human surgery are often slow. Man requires time for his operations, but the great operation of the soul’s salvation is instantaneous. The soul is dead, and it is made alive in a single moment. The soul is in total darkness, and it is in bright light the next instant. The moment anyone believes in Jesus, spiritual eyesight is given to him with which he can see his God.

How I delight to think that whenever anyone comes into this house of prayer, and the Gospel is being preached, my Lord and Master can, at any moment, apply it with power to the soul, and give, to anyone present, immediate, instantaneous salvation. God's Word, like a hammer, can smite the rocky heart, and out of it the waters shall gush. The Lord touches the eye, it looks to the brazen serpent, and healing is instantly given. O my brethren and sisters in Christ, pray you fervently that the blind may have their eyes opened, seeing that God can do it, and can do it at once.

The Lord specially does this for the young. Our text says, "The LORD opened the eyes of *the young man.*" Certainly He can give sight to the oldest, but here is comfort for those of us who are concerned about our children, He can also do this for the young. Their eyes are often blinded by the glitter and glare of the world. They say that they want to see life, and to see pleasure, but God can so open their eyes that they shall be able to see life, and to see pleasure, in a higher and truer sense, in Jesus Christ.

Young people who are here now, I pray the Lord graciously to grant that you may not go any further in the journey of life being blind, but that even now He may open your eyes. If He were to do so, you would see your sin, you would see Jesus Christ as your Savior, you would see yourselves saved by faith in Him, and you would then see before you a happy future and a glorious reward at the last. I pray the Lord to open the young men's eyes and the young women's eyes. He can do it, and He will do it in answer to prayer, let us go to Him, and ask Him to do it now.

Dear friend, *He can open your eyes.* I know that you are saying, "I wish I could see Christ, and read my title clear." Well, I do not know what your character may have been, and I cannot tell what scales may have come upon your eyes, but I know that there was a man of whom it is written, "There fell from his eyes, as it had been scales," as though there had been many scales upon his eyes.

However many there may be, the Lord Jesus Christ can take them all off at once, and He can do it for all the blind people in this building right now. O God, I pray thee, open the eyes of every sinner here to see Thyself, Thy Son, Thy truth, Thy law, Thy Gospel, Thy holiness, Thy covenant! If Thou wilt do this, it will be Thy work alone, and Thou shalt have all the glory of it.

Do you not remember how it is written of Hagar, "God opened her eyes"? I wonder whether there is anyone like Hagar here. She had been sent away by her mistress, and she and her son Ishmael were famishing, she had put him under one of the shrubs, out of her sight, and she thought that all was over with both of them, but "God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water." The well was there before she saw it, but truer eyes needed to be opened that she might see it.

So, the Lord Jesus Christ is nearer to the sinner than the sinner imagines, as Paul says, "The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Sinners do not understand the simplicity of salvation until their eyes are divinely opened. They are looking about for salvation, and there it is, all the while, close at hand.

I remember my dear old grandfather looking about his study to find his spectacles while he had them on, he was looking through the spectacles to find the spectacles, and there are many who act just as inconsistently as that with regard to salvation. There is Jesus Christ Himself helping them to find Him, and they would not begin to seek Him without help from Him in the seeking, yet they think He is far away from them. There is water close to you, yet you are dying of thirst. There is bread by your side, yet you are perishing of hunger.

May the Lord graciously illuminate your understanding that you may see that you have not to do anything, or to be anything, or to feel anything, but simply to let Jesus Christ be everything to you, and you yourself be nothing at all. To rest in Jesus Christ simply and entirely, that is all that is needed, but

until men's eyes are opened they cannot see that, but our comfort is that God can open their eyes, may He do so this very hour!

V. My last remark is that **EVEN THOSE PERSONS WHO CAN SEE NEED MORE SIGHT.**

We all need to see more in the Scriptures. Each of us needs to pray to the Lord, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." There are some brethren who have weighed us all up, and declared that we are not sixteen ounces to the pound, as they say, and they set us down as being unsound, but as they were never appointed by God as inspectors of weights and measures, their judgments upon us cause us no alarm whatever.

We do, however, confess that we are not infallible, we do make mistakes about the meaning of Scripture, and mistakes for which we are very sorry. It is well for a minister, when he is preaching, sometimes to say, "Friends, so much as this I think I do know, but there are some things which I do not know." It might be a comfort to us to hear that the preacher did not know everything, for we would then see that he was like ourselves.

Here is the Bible, and if any of us imagine that we perfectly understand everything there is in it, that is proof that we know very little of it. "Oh, the depths, oh, the depths!" Jerome used to say, "I adore the infinity of Scripture," and well he might. He who is a superficial student of Scripture picks up a few grains of gold, but he who digs in this mine gets nuggets, and he who digs still deeper finds solid beds of gold, and the further he descends into the very heart of the truth, the more he discovers that the riches of it are incalculable, and he often has to stop in his search and cry, "Who can fully understand Thy Word, O God? We can no more understand that than we can understand Thyself to the full."

We need also to have our eyes opened as to the great doctrines of the Gospel. I meet with some who mix up the covenant of works with the covenant of grace in a most remarkable manner, and talk to the children of the free-woman as if they were children of the bond-woman, and make salvation to depend partly upon self and partly upon Christ, which would be a salvation neither worth preaching nor believing.

If we have begun in the Spirit, let us not seek to be made perfect in the flesh. If salvation is of grace, then it is not of works, otherwise grace is no more grace, but if it be of works, let us say so, for then it cannot be of grace, otherwise work is no more work. A clear line of distinction between merit and mercy, between desert and sovereign grace, must ever be drawn, and he who has cried to the Lord, "Open thou mine eyes," until he has had his eyes opened concerning that distinction has much reason to bless and thank God.

Oh, for a clear testimony, throughout all our churches, to the grand fundamental doctrines of grace! Pray that you may give it yourself, and that you may hear it every day.

We need also to have our eyes opened with regard to Providence [See sermon #3114, God's Providence]. What blind eyes we often have with regard to that! We cry, with poor old Jacob, "All these things are against me," at the very moment when they are all for us. We cannot see how a certain thing can be right though it would be impossible for us to prove that it was wrong. We are often unable to find any promise to sustain us even though there are thousands of promises stored up for us in God's Word.

Oftentimes *we need to have our eyes opened to see ourselves.* We imagine that we are growing in grace when we are really growing spiritually leaner every day. We need to have our eyes opened with regard to temptation, for we may think that we are not being tempted at the very moment when we are in the greatest danger from temptation. We need to have our eyes opened as to what is most desirable, for we often aspire after the high places when the lowest are the best, and seek wealth when poverty would be the better soil for the growth of grace.

***"Gold and the Gospel seldom do agree;
Religion always sides with poverty,"—***

says John Bunyan, and I think he is very near the truth. We need to have our eyes opened that we may see a great deal more of our Savior. The strangest thing of all is that though the Lord has opened our eyes, and we have seen Jesus as our Savior, we know so little of Him after all. Brothers and sisters, are we not all too much like the man who saw men as trees walking? We see things in a muddled and confused manner, not at all clearly.

I pray the Lord to open your eyes and mine to see what it is to be a lost soul, that we may sigh and cry over souls that are being lost by the millions. May He open our eyes to see the true character of sin, and the desperate condition of those who are steeped in it, and to see the terrors of the wrath to come, that final judgment of God which shall overwhelm the wicked!

Then may He open our eyes to see the reality of His eternal love, the cleansing power of the precious blood of Jesus, and the almighty efficacy of the ever blessed Spirit, and may He open our eyes in such a way that, seeing these things, we may be startled into earnestness, amazed in devotion, constrained unto consecration, and may give ourselves up, from this time forth, spirit, soul, and body, to serve the Lord!

O Young man over yonder, if your eyes are opened by God, you will see that what you are striving to get is not worth getting, and you will begin to ask how you can live to the glory of God! Young woman, if your eyes are spiritually opened, you will no longer find any joy in that sinful pursuit of yours, but you will find that there is no true joy save in trusting Christ, and living wholly for Him.

Brother ministers, if our eyes are opened as they should be, they will more often be full of tears than they now are. Elders of the church, if your eyes are opened as they should be, you will watch for souls as those that must give account to God. Teacher, if your eyes are truly opened, you will look upon your children in a very different light from that in which you now see them, and they will then be very precious in your sight.

I pray the Lord that where the eyes are not opened, they may be opened now, and that where the eyes are opened, they may be opened still more, till to each one of us that promise shall be fulfilled, "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off." God grant it, for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

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