

New Eyes

Helpful Resources

Map of Palestine in the Time of Christ

Making Sense of It All

- The Big Picture

Jesus continued to make His way to Jerusalem for the last time. There He would be arrested, tried, and crucified. However, along the way, Jesus taught, healed, and ministered to people. With some, like Bartimaeus and Zacchaeus, He changed their lives. With others, like the Pharisees, the disciples, and the rich young ruler, He challenged their views and values. However, in all cases, Jesus “opened eyes” and gave people a new perspective, a new way to view the issues of life. In this review, we will consider some of those issues and discover that Jesus is still clarifying and refocusing our eyes on the things that matter to Him.

- New Eyes, New Sight

Everyone has a view of the world. Before salvation, our views are more secular, sinful, and self-centered. But after salvation, when the Holy Spirit indwells us, our eyes are opened, and our view of the world changes, becomes clearer. Instead of thinking about life in terms of our selfish opinions, desires, and agenda, we begin to see life with God’s eyes, through the lens of His values. Life becomes less about us and more about Him. These changes are part of the sanctification process, as God gradually conforms us into the image of Christ (*Romans 8:29*).

A good example of this change is the Apostle Paul, formerly Saul (*Acts 9*). Before He met Christ on the road to Damascus, he had a distorted view of the world, even towards the people of God, as he was determined to persecute them. Yet, after his encounter with Jesus, “there fell immediately from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight” (*v.18*). Paul’s life was radically changed, and his view of the world changed as well. Though he once was blind to the truths of God, he could see clearly. He would help others see as well.

Another good example is Bartimaeus (*Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43*). For some reason, he had lost his sight, and he asked Jesus to regain it. When his eyes were opened, He began to follow Jesus, glorifying God. When the Lord opens our eyes, we begin to see what is most important in life. Our narrow, selfish lens is replaced with His views and values.

- Seeing Life Through God’s Eyes
 1. **Prayer** (*Luke 18:1-14*): Jesus taught His followers that they ought “to pray at all times and not lose heart” (*v.1*). He wanted people to be confident in their prayers (*v.9; Heb. 4:16*), but not arrogant, like the Pharisees who trusted in themselves.
 2. **Marriage and Divorce** (*Mark 10:1-12; Matt. 19:1-12*): Jesus confronted the Pharisees’ view that divorce was allowed for any reason, and He reminded them of God’s intent at creation, one man and one woman for life (*Mk. 10:6-9*). What are the biblical reasons for divorce? Read *Matthew 19:9* and *1 Corinthians 7:15*.

3. **Faith and Works** (*Matt. 19:13-30*): We cannot do anything to inherit eternal life, not even the commandments (as the rich young ruler hoped); rather we must put our trust in Jesus with child-like faith. Works are an effect of salvation, not a prerequisite for it.
4. **Eternal Life** (*Matt. 20:1-16*): All those who believe in Jesus will be saved, no matter when they believe. All of His followers will inherit eternal life. We should rejoice!
5. **Greatness** (*Mark 10:32-45*): God's view of greatness and the world's view of greatness are vastly different. Jesus esteemed and exemplified servant-leadership. He turned the meaning of leadership right-side up. But this view is easier said than accomplished. Why?
6. **Ministry Responsibilities** (*Luke 19:1-27*): In the story of Zacchaeus, Jesus noticed the sinner in need of salvation. Even in the crowd, He spotted Zacchaeus in the tree. There are ministry opportunities all around us, but are we paying attention? Then, when Zacchaeus was saved, his eyes were opened. He made right all that he had done wrong.

Also, like the parable of the minas, we each have roles and responsibilities in the ministry of Christ. It is not our responsibility to compare ourselves to others or to do what others do. Our responsibility is to invest our gifts and resources faithfully for the glory of God.

The Lord said to His people in Isaiah, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts" (*55:8, 9*). Why do we view the world differently than God does? How can we learn to see the world the way He does? May our desire be to have eyes that see. Let us strive to clarify our vision and see the world as God sees it.

- Prophetic Passage

On the road to Jerusalem, Jesus stopped and spoke to His disciples (*Mark 10:32-34*). He told them what would happen to Him once they arrived in the city. He even shared specific details. He would be delivered to the religious leaders, condemned to death, mocked, spat on, scourged, and killed. But He also prophesied that His resurrection would occur three days later. Although this is a clear prediction of future events, the disciples missed the moment.

The Bottom Line

The Lord not only opens eyes for the first time, He also enables us to focus our vision on Him.

Questions to Consider

1. Has your worldview changed since coming to Christ? Do your eyes see differently now than when you were first saved? Who or what do you credit for your "clearer vision"?
2. What is the difference between confident prayer and arrogant prayer?
3. How do Americans view marriage today? Explain why.
4. Should there be other reasons for allowing divorce? Why or why not?
5. So many people and religions attempt to earn their salvation. What does this tell you?
6. Can you practice servant-leadership and succeed in the world today? Why or why not?
7. Who in your life exemplifies servant-leadership and shuns the world's view of greatness?
8. What is your role and responsibility in the work of Christ? How has He gifted you to accomplish your task(s)? Have you been faithful to invest what God has given you?