

## “Eyes to See”

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Genesis 12:1-3, 17:1-4  
Joel 2:28-29  
John 14:12-14*

A man went to an eye specialist to get his eyes tested, and asked, “Doctor, will I be able to read after wearing glasses?” “Yes, of course,” said the doctor, “why not!?” “Oh! How nice it would be,” said the patient with joy, “I have been illiterate for so long.”

Patient to his optometrist: “I’m very worried about the outcome of this operation, doctor. What are the chances?” The optometrist to his patient: “Don’t worry, you won’t be able to see the difference.”

Patient: “Doctor, I think I need glasses.” Teller: “You certainly do, this is a bank.”

I trust you have picked up that this morning’s sermon has something to do with “seeing”. And the seeing I wish to expound upon – is more than just plain sight (as wonderful as that is).

Often Jesus talks about “seeing”, seeing beyond what’s in front of you. In Matthew’s gospel, Jesus teaches about those who see but do not perceive, do not really see. He goes on to declare, “But, blessed are your eyes, for they see...!” (Matthew 13:16).

This is seeing deep within the mind, and heart. This is seeing much more than what your open eyes happen to be looking at. This seeing. This having “Eyes to see” opens us to creativity, to imagination, to discovery, to innovation and much, much more!!

We humans are very creative beings. We have a wonderful capacity to “imagine what could be.” We revel in acts of the imagination. With delight we dare-transcend the borders of convention. Our satisfaction, is in our not being satisfied. In a sense, if we can dream it, we can make it happen.

Now, I realize the complications of this type of thinking, yes, we are “limited creatures” But, we “limited creatures”--possess far more freedom and creativity than we use! For all of our real hurts and problems--there is within us the capacity to transcend our particular limitation and create new possibilities.

It is so easy to fall into the lie - "that is just the way it’s going to be." “The same old, same old.” “No! That’s not the truth!”

Now change can be hard, or it can be easy, but change is possible. Reaching beyond your grasp is part and parcel of who and what you are. It does not mean that everything you wish for you get. It’s not that simple. Creativity comes with a cost.

Commitment and hard work come into play when we **"IMAGINE"**,

When we **"DREAM"**,

When we **"ENVISION"**.

But this we must do. We must open ourselves to what lies beyond our grasp, to what is hidden around the corner, to what is shrouded by the darkness up ahead.

Be this in terms of our faith,  
our marriages,  
our families,  
our professions,  
our friendships,

we must believe that things can be different, that things can change and take on a new reality.

We must make our dreams, our visions happen - We must have Eyes to See!

To a large degree we are the architects of our reality.

With faith in God and God's meaningful universe - we creatively fashion our future.

Now again, I am not ignoring the vast panorama of the way things are. But I am convinced that the way things are, are not the way things have to be.

But, our faith commitment to this way of believing, is up against a formidable opponent. That opponent is "cynicism".

A book entitled the The Cynical Americans, Living and Working in an Age of Discontent and Disillusion chronicles the cynical status of our culture.

"At our best, we are: a nation of skeptics, hard-nosed but, open-minded, realistic in real time but ever mindful of timeless ideals.

By contrast, cynics are: close-minded and disillusioned. They cast aspersions upon those they deal with, and believe that people are self-centered and self-serving. America is sliding into widespread cynicism today."

Some 43 percent of the American populace fit the profile of the cynic: seeing selfishness and fakery at the core of human nature.

Now, as good Presbyterians - we have no illusions of the perfectibility of human nature. Yes, we recognize the capacity to destruction and evil within the human species. But, we also recognize the wondrous capacity of positive health actions. Our faith does not want us to live as cynics, as people "close-minded and totally disillusioned with life." In fact it demands otherwise!! A healthy dose of skepticism is helpful, but cynicism-no!

There are varied reasons for the cultural cynicism-and the issues run deep. I have no intention of summarily dismissing the problem as being simple to rectify. But what I do want to say, in response to the outcome of cynicism and disillusionment, is that our faith will enable us to withstand disappointments, and lead us into believing in new possibilities. How we need people today with - Eyes to See!

One such person was a man named Abraham. In Genesis 12 we have God instructing Abraham to leave his home. "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you." And Abraham went! He left the known, for the unknown. He took the risk! Before he could "see" what was "out there" - he journeyed to the unknown; he believed in possibilities. He journeyed with "faith", with the "eyes to see"!

Abraham believed God, and then he saw the reality created. His first seeing was with inner eyes - from the heart and mind. Then he saw clearly.

"And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing...and by you, all the families of the earth will bless themselves." Thank God for Judaism! Thank God for the Judeo/Christian tradition!

Just look at the history that followed. Specifically - the history of the development of monotheism, and a culture and civilization devoted to moral-ethical standards.

Develop eyes to see. Become the person who loves and cares deeply; become the person that is resolute in expressing integrity in everything you do; the person that defines his/her life in terms of others. Truly see life, as God's purpose!

The scripture from Joel is also quoted in Acts 2, referring to the Day of Pentecost. "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions."

How we need to dream dreams, and see visions! How we need to see and then make it happen. Eyes to see!

In the Spring of 1945 when the Dutch people were dying of starvation at the rate of 2,000 children of God per day, there were those with eyes to see! Yes, there was a war going on! Yes, there was great danger throughout Europe! But, there were those with eyes to see, beyond the horrible realities surrounding them - and they saw that they could make a difference, they could change what was happening - this death by starvation!

Never, never underestimate the power of having such eyes to see!

In John, Jesus is attributed with saying; "He who believes in me will also do the works that I do; *and greater works than these will he do...*"

I have always been intrigued by that statement and its ending - and ***greater works than these will he do...*** Greater works than Jesus! (It's there in the Bible.) Imagine! I mean...really "imagine" all of the possibilities!

Just believe in the future!

Eyes to see!!

Cynicism is reigning in our culture.

We hardly believe what we do see, let alone see on a deeper level.

Disillusionment holds the reins to our spirits. This must change!

Jesus declares - *there is more to life*. He knew of and followed Father Abraham's vision, seeing. We are to do the same, and even more...

Friends, in your life - what are your eyes seeing?

Friends open yourself to having Eyes to see - and change your life and your world.

Amen.