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Using Our Spiritual Eyes

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be blind? Close your eyes and imagine. Imagine that you can not see. You can not see a clear blue sky with wispy clouds floating by on a summer day. You can not see the leaves on the trees or the roses in your garden after a long cold winter. You can not see the love on your friend's face or the smile on a child's face. If you are a visual learner like I am, you would not be able to dream or think in pictures any more.

How strange and difficult it would be to be blind. Could you cook a new recipe? Or know if your house was clean when friends dropped by? Could you grocery shop? Could you continue in your present job if you were blind?

I think most of us would agree that living life blind would be difficult and frightening.

I would like for you to consider that most of the world is blind. I don't mean physically blind. What I am talking about is far worse than being physically blind. Most of the world is spiritually blind. And living life spiritually blind is difficult and frightening.

2Corinthians 4:4 says "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

The world is blind to the fact that this earth is not what we were made for. We are not just physical beings. If we were just physical beings, there would be no difference between us and a tree, or a flower, or a bird. We are more than physical and we were

made for more than just this world. Let's not be blind to the fact that we are spiritual and we were made for eternity.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 says, "He has set eternity in the hearts of men."

Let's think about what we see when we use our eyes to look purely at the physical. What do you see? I think we see dissatisfaction. You may be thinking "No, I'm having a great time. I'm not living my life dissatisfied". But let's be honest. Aren't we basically dissatisfied in this world? We get that new living room furniture and we are happy for a while but then the newness wears off and we want a new car. Then the reality of the monthly payment sets in and driving it isn't quite as fun as it used to be and so then we want some new clothes or dishes or curtains and on and on it goes. Never quite satisfied with what we have. Don't get me wrong. I'm just as much of a consumer as the next guy but if we're honest with ourselves we'll realize that on some level we become dissatisfied with the constant chasing after more.

Since this retreat is about makeovers, let's talk about how satisfied we are with our looks. Most of us would be hard pressed to say that we are satisfied with our appearance. If I asked you to tell me the features about your face or your body that you liked, most of us would have nothing to say. But boy we'd have plenty to say about the things we were dissatisfied with.

We are always looking for ways to fix the things we think are unattractive about our selves. As far as our eyes go, we are always on the hunt for that perfect eye cream to smooth out those wrinkles, shrink those under eye bags, and lighten those dark circles. Have you found the perfect color of eye shadow that you've been searching for or that wand of mascara that will thicken and lengthen your eye lashes to rival the lashes of those beauty queens we see on the TV?

No. And I hate to break the bad news to you but you won't find any of those miracle products. You weren't meant to find

them. They don't exist. **You were not meant to be completely satisfied in this world because you weren't made for this world. You were made for eternity.**

So let's look beyond the physical. Let's look for something eternal. Let's open our spiritual eyes.

Now, you may ask, "How do I open my spiritual eyes?"

By fixing your eyes on Jesus.

Is Jesus a physical being right here that you can physically look at? No, he is spiritual and you can use your spiritual eyes which are in your mind and heart and soul to seek him and his word and his will for your life. It's all laid out for you in your Bible. I know that's not easy. It's hard to search the scriptures and find the answers that we are all looking for. It's hard to find the direction God wants us to take. But through seeking him through prayer and diligently studying his word and growing your relationship with your family in Christ, you will find the answers. You will get a glimpse of the satisfaction your heart is yearning for because whether you know it or not your heart is yearning for something that is eternal.

Remember Ecclesiastes 3:11 "He has set eternity in the hearts of men."

We go to great lengths to protect our physical eyes from damage. We use sunscreen and always put on our sunglasses. We moisturize with special eye creams that cost a gazillion dollars. We do all kinds of things in an effort to lessen the damage to our skin and keep our eyes as beautiful as we possibly can.

What are we doing to protect our spiritual eyes which protect our minds and our hearts and our souls? Do we put as much effort into the protection of our spiritual eyes as we do to our physical ones? Do we protect our eyes from the sexual images that come

blazing into our homes through the television? Do we protect our eyes from the filthy words that are written in trashy novels that we read.

Psalm 119:37 says “Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word.”

Every time we see an image that is unholy I believe that image is imprinted on our mind, our hearts, and our souls. And it stays there. Think about that. We’ve all seen things that we wished we hadn’t. And by thinking about it you can bring that image up in your mind’s eye. Don’t you wish it wasn’t there? Don’t you wish you hadn’t seen it?

When we die, our physical eyes, which we invested so much time, effort, and money into protecting from damage and those same eyes that we worked so hard to make beautiful will turn back to the dust from which they came.

But our spiritual eyes, our minds, hearts, and souls will go on to meet God. Will the images that have been imprinted on them be there for God to see? Will He ask what are those images doing on your heart? Why did you look at such ugly, unwholesome things? Did you let your kids see those things?

That is a sobering thought.

Romans 12:2 says “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind”

You may ask, “How can I be transformed and renew my mind?”

Renew your mind by thinking about whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy think about such things.

How could you possibly transform your mind, renew your mind, think about these beautiful qualities listed in Philippians 4:8 if you are watching shows on TV, and reading magazines and books that directly contradict God's righteousness and holiness?

I believe there is a deeper spiritual meaning behind the story of Peter walking on the water. Matthew tells us in chapter 14 that the disciples were in a boat out on the lake in the middle of the night. When here comes Jesus walking towards them on top of the water. Of course they were frightened but Peter says that if it is really Jesus then call him to come on out onto the water with him. Jesus says "come". The text says that Peter got out of the boat and started walking on the water towards Jesus but then he saw the wind.

I think he was looking at Jesus when he first got out of the boat but then he started to look around and he got scared and he began to sink. I think he took his eyes off of Jesus. Our lives are the same way. If we take our spiritual eyes off of Jesus we are going to sink. This world is very tumultuous and stormy just like that lake was that night and if we don't have our spiritual eyes on Jesus, then we are never going to make it.

Hebrews 12: 2-3 says "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

In other words, Fix your eyes on Jesus so that you won't be defeated.

Ephesians 1:18 "I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has

called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

And this is my favorite verse, the one that pulls it all together for me.

2 Corinthians 4:18 “So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Psalm 19:8 tells us that “The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes.”

When you begin to use your spiritual eyes to seek the things that are eternal and holy, your mind, your heart and your soul are going to light up. And that light is going to be so bright that others are going to see it in your eyes.

Since your eyes are the mirror or a window to your soul, what you take into yourself through your eyes will go into your heart and be reflected back to the world.

Your eyes are going to reflect the beauty that is in your soul. **And that beauty will last for eternity.**