

Seeing the Invisible

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2 Corinthians 4:3–6 (NKJV) “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. ⁵ For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake. ⁶ For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” (Note: The full text for this message is found in 1 Corinthians 4:3-5:11)

Those who do not believe the gospel are spiritually blind. Blindness is the inability to see, due either to a malfunction of the eye or the lack of light. Natural blindness is the inability to see the natural world. Spiritual blindness is the inability to see the spiritual world. In reality, the spiritual world is more real than the physical world for it preceded it. God made this visible world from things which are invisible: “*By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.*”¹ God’s creation includes things both visible and invisible: “*For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.*”² We are of His visible creation.

Our inability to see the invisible does not negate the reality of the invisible any more than natural blindness negates the reality of the unseen. Spiritual things are real even though they are invisible to the natural eye. Paul tells us that the unsaved cannot see the invisible things of God because their minds are blinded. Who has blinded their minds? It is Satan, the god of this world. How has he blinded them? It is through unbelief. He has deceived them into trusting their own human reasoning based upon the evidence of their five physical senses. No man has seen God. God cannot be put in a test tube. Neither can the invisible world. Why has Satan blinded them? It is so that they will not receive the light of the gospel so that they might be saved. Once a person believes in the gospel, he is able to see what he once could not see. He is able to perceive the realities of the invisible kingdom of God that is all around him. Jesus said: “*Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*”³ Those who believe have their eyes opened to what was once invisible.

A blind man who believes has more vision than a lost man who has physical sight. Helen Keller (1880-1968) was born both deaf and blind and eventually came to faith in Christ. She was the first deaf-blind person to earn a Bachelors of Arts degree. She once said: “The only thing worse than being blind is having sight with no vision.” Fanny Crosby (1820-1915) was blind from infancy. She is known as the “Queen of Gospel Song Writers”. She is said to have written between 5,500 and 9,000 hymns including “Blessed Assurance”, “To God be the Glory”, “Jesus is Tenderly Calling You Home”, and “Pass Me Not O Gentle Savior”. In addition, she wrote over 1,000 secular poems and published four books of poetry. She said: “It seemed intended by the blessed providence of God that I should be blind all my life, and I thank him for the dispensation. If perfect earthly sight were offered me tomorrow I would not accept it. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been distracted by the beautiful and interesting things about me.” She also relished the fact that the first face she would ever see would be that of her Savior, Jesus Christ.

¹ Hebrews 11:3 (NKJV)

² Colossians 1:16 (NKJV)

³ John 3:3 (NKJV)

If the spiritual world is invisible, then how can we see it? It is through the eyes of faith. Faith in God and His Word enables us to see God's invisible realities. Contrary to what skeptics claim, faith is not a walk in the dark. It is not living a fantasy. Faith does not deny natural facts. Faith embraces the invisible spiritual facts that others can't see: *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*⁴

If we are to see the invisible, we must first believe in the invisible God: *"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."*⁵ The God who created all things exists outside of His creation. Therefore, He can only be known by faith. The heroes of faith saw the invisible God through the eyes of faith: *"By faith he (Moses) forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible."*⁶ For those who are looking for evidence of His invisible reality, God has left a witness of Himself through the things He has created: *"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse."*⁷ In addition, through His Incarnation, Jesus Christ came to reveal the invisible God: *"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation."*⁸ After His resurrection, Jesus said to Thomas who had doubted His resurrection: *"Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*⁹

Second, we must embrace the invisible work of God within us: *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us."* We must not live according to who we are apart from Christ. We must embrace by faith the treasure that God has put within us. We are carriers of the knowledge of the invisible God and of the gospel of Christ. Because we live by faith in what others cannot see, we must not be surprised when we experience trouble or persecution.

Third, we must declare the invisible realities of God's truth by faith: *"And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak."*¹⁰ Those who believe God's Word speak differently. Those who believe declare in faith what they see through faith in God's Word.

Fourth, we must walk according to the invisible. It is not enough to declare our faith. We must also walk by faith: *"For we walk by faith, not by sight."*¹¹ In order to walk by faith, we must set our eyes upon the unseen realities of eternity: *"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,"*¹² *while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."*¹³ We must remember that this life is passing. One day our mortal bodies will be laid down in corruption, but later raised up in glory when Christ returns.

Finally, we must prepare to stand before the Invisible God: *"Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him."*¹⁰ *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."*¹¹ *Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences."*¹³ One day nothing that we have in this world will matter. One day we will each stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ. On that day the only thing

⁴ Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV)

⁵ 1 Timothy 1:17 (NKJV)

⁶ Hebrews 11:23 (NKJV)

⁷ Romans 1:20 (NKJV)

⁸ Colossians 1:15 (NKJV)

⁹ John 20:29 (NKJV)

¹⁰ 2 Corinthians 4:13 (NKJV)

¹¹ 2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)

¹² 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 (NKJV)

¹³ 2 Corinthians 5:9-11 (NKJV)

that will matter is “Have I pleased the Lord?” and “Have I done what He told me to do?” Now is the time to prepare.

Do you have eyes to see the invisible? Do you believe in the Invisible God? Have you believed in the gospel of Jesus Christ? If so, have you embraced the invisible treasure that God has placed within you? Are you living out God’s will and purpose for your life? Are you speaking according to your faith or according to your fears? Are you walking by faith or by what you see around you? Are you ready to stand before the Invisible God? One day you will see Him, not by faith, but face to face.