

# Look with New Eyes

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***"Blessed are your eyes for they see..."***

Matthew 13:17

## INTRODUCTION

One of the wonderful things about the teachings of the New Church is that they *literally* change the way we think...

- they're not simply good ideas or useful suggestions
- they're not a new "flavor" of religious thought to be added to all the other religious flavors out there...

No, they're much more than that...

New Church teachings are the product of a *new revelation*...

- which means they cause *seismic* shifts...

- ...in our thoughts and attitudes
- ...in our wants, needs and desires
- ...in our hopes and dreams

So one of these *profoundly* important ideas is this:

**We are all spiritual beings who happen to be walking around in natural bodies**

In other words, our spirit is in the "driver's seat," not our body

Our spirit determines everything about us...

- what we say and do right now
- what we think and feel right now
- whether we smile or frown

- whether we wish to be helpful or unhelpful
- whether we choose to believe, or not

Our body isn't making these decisions - it's our spirit!

And so when it comes to our EYES, our spirit is *choosing* what to LOOK at...

- drawing our attention to certain things
- and pushing other things to the periphery

## **WE SEE WHAT WE WANT TO SEE**

The way we look at the world around us and the people in it...

**...has everything to do with what we love.**

Two people can look at the exact *same* object and notice vastly different things

An Engineer and Artist could both be looking one of the Great Pyramids in Egypt but "focus" on completely different things...

- the trained "eye" of the Engineer notices the design, structure, and materials of the pyramid
- whereas the trained "eye" of the Artist takes in the whole scene - the contrast between light & darkness, the pyramid against the backdrop of sand and sky, the mixtures of colors and tones, etc.

Or two Astronomers can spend a lifetime studying the starry universe

- one concludes that there is a God
- the other concludes there is no God

Our eyes focus on the things we love...

as a result, our "worldview" tends to be based on what we've trained our eyes to look at...

## THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE EYE

Eye is said to be the "window" into the soul.

It's true, the eyes reveal so much - get glimpses of a person's spirit

- loves, good and bad
- sad eyes, happy eyes, angry/kind, patient/impatient, etc.
- to a degree, convey what we're thinking
  - innocence vs. guilt

Eye Dr. - can diagnosis the health of his patients by looking at back of retina

Correspondence of the eye = understanding (see AC 2072).

Everyday language: *"I see what you're saying."*

One teaching says the eye is the most noble organ of the face because it...

*"...communicates more directly with the understanding than our other sensory organs" (see AC 4407).*

### **We have "good vision"**

...when truths of the Word are the "lens" through which we view the world and other people

### **And "poor vision"**

...when human intelligence & pride is the "lens" through which we view the world and other people

**When it comes to our spiritual growth and development, the principle of seeing what we NEED to see (vs. what we WANT to see) becomes a more urgent matter...**

In our reading from *Matthew* today, the Lord speaks about how it's possible to

- see but not really "see"
- how we can be blind to the truth even if it's staring us in the face!

All sorts of reasons for this...

- sometimes we're *preoccupied*, thinking about something else
- sometimes we're *tired or busy*, miss important cues, signals in the body language of those we love - our children, loved ones and friends

And then...

- **sometimes we miss seeing important things because we lack the compassion, the sensitivity, to love one another as the Lord has loved us**

And so the Lord uses parables because, "seeing we do not see..."

The Lord gave the parable of the Good Samaritan because sometimes we lack the love, the compassion to be empathetic toward the plight of others and "*walk by on the other side*," turn a "blind eye" to those who need our care and attention...

Yes, we can miss a lot of things going on around us...

### **TRAINING OUR EYES TO SEE DIFFERENTLY**

[E.g. documentary on Coyotes - walk by the edge of our peripheral vision]

Thankfully the Lord is at hand, opening our eyes

- ...to new possibilities
- ...to new attitudes, thoughts, and habits
- ...ones which promise to fill our lives with greater purpose and meaning

We all get stuck in a rut at times...

We stare at the proverbial "four walls" of our life and nothing seems to shift.

We find ourselves stuck in the same old thought patterns and attitudes.

Our standard, "go to" answers for life's challenges and difficulties start to sound empty and hollow, even to our own ears!

Spiritually speaking, this happens when the influx of spiritual light (truth) from the Lord gets "interrupted" or "blocked" by our own stubborn, selfish attitudes...

Remember at the time of the Judges, how *"everyone did what was right in their own eyes"* (Judges 21:25)?

To do what is "right" in our own eyes...

- is to let ugly thoughts and feelings take root in our mind
- is to let our own justifications for why we do what we do become the norm, the excuse for why we don't need to change
- is to draw our own conclusions about "right" and "wrong"
  - who deserves our forgiveness
  - who doesn't

*"Thought from the eye closes the understanding whereas thought from the understanding opens the eye"* (DLW 46).

The Scriptures are full of beautiful expressions about the Lord opening people's eyes.

The phrase "lift up your eyes" (many times)

Elisha prayed to the Lord that his servant might see that he was not alone;

*"Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he might see..."* (2 Kings 6:17).

The Psalmist says, *"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things..."* (Psalm 119:18).

## **LOOK WITH NEW EYES**

Let us not get discouraged - sometimes we don't see what we need to see because we aren't ready, aren't ready to see the truth.

We read: *"so that we may be led from our old life to a new, worldly passions must be cast aside, and heavenly affections assumed. This is accomplished by countless means known to the Lord alone"* (AC 4063).

## **As the Lord changes our loves, our eyes are opened to new things...**

We have all experienced this...

...as we get older, our tastes and sensibilities change

- our priorities change.
- our interests change.
- we have a better idea of what we want and don't want.

And we start noticing things we never noticed before...

The truths of the Lord's Word become our "chief cornerstone"

This is the Lord's doing..and it is marvelous in our eyes (Psalm 118:23).

So let us remember that it is the Lord who gives us "new eyes."

There's so much more that the Lord wants us to see and so He...

***"...gifts us with a life we previously did not have..." (AC 4063).***

***because of this, "...new thoughts contrary to those we had before now arise..." (AC 2272).***

## **BLESSED ARE YOUR EYES**

When the disciples asked the Lord why He spoke in parables, He answered by saying...

*"...because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven..." (Mt. 13:10).*

And the Lord ends by saying *"blessed are your eyes for they see..." (v.17)*

What the Lord shown us in the New Church is a privilege, a blessing.

What will we do with this "new sight?"

Paradigm shifts are everywhere in the Word

- go the extra mile
- turn the other cheek
- practice the Golden Rule
- live by the Lord's New Commandment

Remember that it is your spirit that determines everything about you...

- what you say and do right now
- what you think and feel right now
- whether you smile or frown
- whether or not you reach out with a helping hand
- whether you choose to believe, or not

Your body isn't making these decisions - it your spirit!

Think of a challenge you are facing right now and pray to the Lord for the ability to look at it with new eyes.

"Open my eyes, Lord, that I might see..."

In time, you will start to see things you never saw before.

**AMEN.**