

## Seeing the Unseen

We live in a physical world where we tend to live on the realm of our 5 senses being: touch, taste, sight, smell and hearing. Our increasingly materialistic world discards anything beyond this realm. Skeptics look at the spiritual world with disdain. A quote from a recent movie starring Whoopie Goldberg is that “people have created religion to make themselves feel better”. This was in the context of someone having died.

The most unfortunate thing is when this thinking enters the church and the Christian life is no more than morality and good ethics that can be evaluated according to our 5 senses. However we need to come to the realization that the Christian life is a spiritual life that is lived out in the material world. Not to understand this keeps us locked to the unknown and keeps us from discovering the deeper things of God which are often unseen with the physical eyes.

Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2: 14: “The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

John 1: 43 – 51

### 1) Nathanael the skeptic (vs. 43 – 46)

- Jesus called Philip to follow him.
- Philip responded in the same way Andrew did when Andrew went to find Peter to tell him that he had found the Messiah. Philip went and to tell Nathanael that he had found the Messiah – the one Moses wrote about in the law and the one the prophets also wrote about.
  - It takes faith, not skepticism to respond in this way.
  - If Philip did not have faith he would not have followed Jesus not would he have ran to tell Nathanael that he had found the Messiah.
- Nathanael responded: “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?”
  - Nathanael was looking at the circumstances through natural eyes and not through the eyes of faith.
  - He was skeptical of anything great happening from Nazareth.
- The thinking of a skeptic
  - Nothing is true until proven to be so.
  - Don’t trust anything out of the ordinary. Question everything.
  - If is different to what we’re used to then beware!
  - We ought to stay with what we’re used to.
- Skepticism isn’t always bad
  - It makes us question doctrine and practices that might be false
  - It keeps us alert to the dangers of the above
- The weaknesses of skepticism
  - A skeptic is normally hesitant to try anything new so finds it difficult to gain new ground in anything.
  - Tends to have a maintenance rather than a pioneer mentality. Maintain what you’ve got rather than pioneer new ground.
  - Is reluctant to accept spiritual practices other than what he is used to.
  - Limits God in what He can do
  - Doubts God – remember Thomas

### 2) The omniscience of Jesus (vs. 47 – 48)

- Verse 47 (The Message): When Jesus saw him coming he said, “There’s a real Israelite, not a false bone in his body.”
- When Nathanael questioned Jesus He said that He had seen him sitting under the fig tree.
- Jesus demonstrated his omniscience – being all knowing – by saying this.

- When Jesus met the woman at the well in John 4 he also demonstrated His omniscience by telling her about her life that no one had told him.
- Psalm 139: 1 – 4 tells us:
  - LORD, you have searched me and you know me.  
You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.  
You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.  
Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD.
- Jesus knows everything about us. There is nothing that we can hide from him.
  - Jesus demonstrated what it means to see the unseeing.
- It was this demonstration of his omniscience – seeing the unseen – that broke Philip’s skepticism and caused him to believe and proclaim Jesus to be the Son of God.
  - It was also a major factor in the Samaritan woman at the well believing and bringing many in her village to believe in Jesus.

### 3) Seeing the unseen (vs. 49 – 51)

- “You shall see greater things than that” (v.50)
  - Verse 50 The Message: “You haven’t seen anything yet”.
- How good is our vision?
- We are told to walk by faith and not by sight. (2 Corinthians 5: 7)
- Are we living according to our circumstances who by the spiritual vision that God gives us.
- When we make decisions do we look at our resources and then make the decision or do we ask God if it’s His will and if so make the decision regardless of the resources. Our spiritual eyes tell us that God will provide for what He has called us to do.
- 2 Kings 6: 8 – 18 - The eyes of Elisha’s servant are opened to see the spiritual army fighting for them.

Do you have a big decision to make but don’t know where the resources are going to come from?

Will the person you are sharing the Gospel with ever come to faith in Jesus?

Will your friend come through her problems?

Are you living in the realm of the material?

Are you looking at your circumstances and think that God has forsaken you?

Let us move to the realm of walking by faith and not by sight. Seeing the Unseen.

Where are you looking?

Set your eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of your faith.