

# Do You See What I See?

*Pastor Jelani Lewis*

**It's Complicated | Week Four**

February 21–22, 2026

Hey Church! Welcome to all the campuses, those joining us online, those that are a part of our Gateway Gatherings and our prison campuses. Come on church can we put our hands together at every location and welcome everyone connecting with us this weekend.

If I haven't met you yet, my name is Jelani Lewis and I have the privilege of serving all of our campuses as well as leading our Southlake campus. And I have been a part of Gateway for almost 20 years and I just want to say thank you to Pastor Daniel and Pastor Tammy for saying yes to this assignment and I truly believe **the best is yet to come** for Gateway Church. Amen?

Before I get into the message I do want to comment on the commercial for The Kings University. Gateway is a strategic partner of The King's and I am a proud graduate of The Kings. While I was there, I learned theology and leadership which was not only instantly applicable to my role or profession if you will, but it was applicable to my life as a whole. I also built relationships with classmates and professors so I didn't walk this journey alone and I still have many of those relationships to this day. Lastly, I decided to go back to school and get a masters with a young family and I didn't want to take more time away from my wife and children so that meant I needed to get up early for schoolwork and that practice built disciplines in my life that made me a better husband, father, and follower of Jesus. So, I am not one that believes that college is for everyone but I do believe that learning and growing and being equipped is for everyone and often God chooses to do that through higher education. So if you are at all interested in finding out more, whether you want to work at a church or God has called you into marketplace, the Kings has something for you and we have representatives in the lobbies at every campus that would love to connect with you after service.

Now, how many of you are ready for the word today? For the last several weeks we have been in a series on relationships called "It's Complicated" where we have been learning principles to help us have healthy relationships. Also, we just had our Marriage night and it was incredible. Today I get to conclude this series with a message I've titled "Do You See What I See?" (I saw that you picked someone else first)

Let's pray.

Intro:

There's a story about a teenager who was playing basketball in his driveway and unfortunately lost one of his contact lenses... "That's easy. You were looking for a piece of plastic. I was looking for \$150." It matters how we see something. How we see something matters! And for our purposes today in a relationship series, how we see people matter. Why? Because ...

## **How we see people impacts how we treat people.**

For example, In **Mark 6:34** Jesus saw the crowd coming to Him and he saw them like “sheep without a shepherd” and the scripture says so he began to teach them. Because how we see people impacts how we treat people.

In **Acts 14**, God uses Paul to heal a lame man and the scripture says the people saw Paul and Barnabus as Greek gods and they were bringing sacrifices to them and Paul had to tell them “We are just human.” How we see people impacts how we treat people.

So if how we see people impacts how we treat people, then how *should* we see people?

1 Samuel 16, the story picks up where God has communicated to Samuel that He has rejected Saul, the first king of Israel and its time to anoint a new king. Samuel was a prophet (A chosen spokesperson for God and God would speak to him and through him to convey a message to his people). God tells him that the new king is one of a man named Jesse’s sons. Jesse has eight sons and what we are about to read is Samuel’s interaction with Jesse’s first born son.

### **1 Samuel 16:6–7 (NLT)**

**<sup>6</sup>When they arrived, Samuel took one look at Eliab and thought, “Surely this is the Lord’s anointed!” <sup>7</sup>But the Lord said to Samuel, “Don’t judge by his appearance or height, [1 Samuel 10:23 – When Samuel anointed Saul, the Bible describes him as standing head and shoulders above everyone else] for I have rejected him. The Lord doesn’t see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”**

*(for Samuel) Based on my past experiences and my own biases, this must be the guy.*

As human beings, we are inclined to judge by what’s on the outside. As believers, however, we have to ask God to help us see people the way He does. And when we see people the way God does, we treat people the way He desires. So let’s talk about how we see people and how God sees people.

*As human beings, we are inclined to judge people by their external appearance.*

### **1. How do you see yourself?**

Story: Erin and Jelani — “I can’t believe you told them the truth!” What is the truth about you? Like who are you? How do you see yourself?

*What’s the truth about you ... who are you REALLY? How do you see yourself? And more importantly how does God see you?*

The answer to this question matters for multiple reasons but one of which has to do with the Great Command.

### **Mark 12:30–31 (NLT)**

**<sup>30</sup>“And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.” <sup>31</sup>The second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ No other commandment is greater than these.”**

The Bible connects loving our neighbor to how we treat or see ourselves. Now the Bible doesn't explicitly say we are to love ourselves. It does say husbands are to love their wives like their own bodies (Eph. 5:28)

*There IS a connection between how we treat others and how we view ourselves.*

So how should we see ourselves? What is our identity?

### **John 1:12 (NLT)**

**But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.**

Let me remind you today, *if you have placed your faith in Jesus Christ, you are not an orphan, slave, a reject, a burden, a mistake ... you are not broken. You are a child of the Living God.* No, you have a father and a family and a good future because you are a child of God. God sees you as his child!

Let me show you how else God sees you. This takes us back to our theme scripture for this series.

### **Colossians 3:12–14 (NIV)**

**<sup>12</sup>Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. <sup>13</sup>Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. <sup>14</sup>And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”**

*Paul tells us what we're supposed to do ... but BEFORE he does that, he tells us who we ARE.*

Paul gives us the WHO before the DO!

*Dearly loved* — Paul actually prayed in Ephesians 3 that we would know how deep, high, wide, and long God's love is although we would never fully comprehend it.

*“But you don't know what I did ... last year, last month, last week, etc...”*

Holy — set apart, otherness, different

*You are CHOSEN*

**Chosen** (Greek adjective) -ek-lek-TOS

1. To select or literally "*chosen, out of a personal preference (intention).*"

*God PREFERRED you ... you were chosen out of a personal preference for Him.*

**Jeremiah 1:5 (HCSB)**

**“I chose you BEFORE I formed you in the womb; I set you apart before you were born. I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”**

The Voice (TV singing competition) — God picked you before you performed. He selected you before you sang. He hit the button before you hit a note!

*On The Voice, if you perform well enough, you're picked by one (or more) of the judges ... but God hit the red button for you before you were even born! Not because you're so good ... but because HE is so good!*

What would happen if you saw you the way God saw you?

*If we actually knew we were chosen, holy, who we are in Christ ...*

When I know who I am...

- I don't have to talk down to someone to make them look small so I can feel bigger.
- I can celebrate the successes of others without harboring jealousy in my heart.
- I don't have to accept being devalued, belittled, or mistreated by someone because I know the behavior I accept from you is training you on how to treat me.
- When I know who I am, like Jesus in John 13 knowing who he was, I can wash your feet or in essence, serve you with joy. I can serve as a door greeter welcoming people into the house of God. I can serve on the prayer team taking the needs of people before a miracle working God. I can serve in Kids and youth ministry building up the next generation.
- Even outside the church, when I know who I am I take the gifts and talents God's given me and instead of simply building a career I partner with God to build his Kingdom.

So how do I know who I am? God's Word.

**Religion: My identity is built on being a good person.**

**Gospel: My identity is not built on my record or my performance but on Christ's.**

*The Bible tells you who you are.*

*If you want to know who you are in God's eyes, simply agree with God's Word daily*

Application: **Agree with God's word daily.** (Prayer and Posted Scripture)

*Greater is He that is in me*

*I am more than a conqueror*

*I am fearfully and wonderfully made*

I need to remind myself daily of what God says about me.

“Satan knows your name but calls you by your sin. God knows your sin but calls you by your name.”

*I don't need to hear more from Satan, I need to hear more from God.*

I need to hear daily what God says about me.

How do you see yourself? We should see ourselves as children of God dearly loved, holy, and chosen by Him.

## **2. How Do You See Others?**

Justus — “You can't see me!” He thinks because his eyes are closed, I can't see him. He doesn't realize because his eyes are covered, it's only impacting his ability to see me. Like Justus, I wonder sometimes if some of us really can't see others because OUR eyes are covered. Instead of our eyes being opened with love, maybe they are covered with biases, bitterness, and stereotypes (and they haven't been opened by love) that affect how we see people.

Let me ask you ... how do you see others?

Do you see people as a means to an end? An obstacle in your path/way? A problem to fix?

**“How you see others is a great test of your spiritual maturity. It's a better indicator of your spiritual maturity than how much Scripture you know, how often you attend church, or whether you serve, tithe, or pray.”**

In other words, the more we spiritually mature, the more we should see people the way God does.

So how are we to see others and how does God see others?

*So how does God see people?*

In the creation narrative God gives us the foundation.

### **Genesis 1:27**

**So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.**

Imago Dei (Latin for Image of God) — everyone has inherent worth and value so we treat them with honor, dignity, and Christlike care.

It doesn't matter your background, socioeconomic status, your demographics, your ethnicity, red, yellow, black and white you are precious in his sight. Therefore, it doesn't matter how the world

may devalue humanity, in the house of God we are going to honor, and respect, and treat people with equality because they were made in the image of God.

**“There are no ordinary people.” C.S. Lewis (Weight of Glory)**

The person sitting next to you is not ordinary ... they are extraordinary! Why? Because they have been created in the image of God!

*We live in a world that actually devalues humanity ... but let that not be said of the house of God!*

*This is the foundation: We are ALL created in the image of God.*

**Mark 12:31 (NLT)**

**The second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ No other commandment is greater than these.”**

Notice Jesus doesn’t say change your neighbor. Fix your neighbor. Adjust your neighbor.

*Nowhere in the Bible does it say, “change” anyone*

Love card vs the change card — “If you play the love card, you give God an opportunity to change you both.”

*You get to decide which card you play on your spouse.*

***God never called us to change people ... He called us to LOVE people.***

*1 John 4:8 – GOD is love*

Love means we listen, we pray, we serve. And it doesn’t mean that we have to be a door mat no it means that we do speak the truth when necessary but **Ephesians 4:15 says we are to speak the truth in love!**

Love your neighbor. God is love (1 John 4:8) so we are to see people the way He does.

**1 Sam. 16** — For the next 7 sons, Samuel has to ask God, “Help me see them the way YOU do?”

**Practical Challenge: For the next seven days, ask God every day to help you see people the way He does.** God help me see my spouse, my children, my parents, my teammate, teacher, my boss, my business partner, roommate, my crazy cousin Eddie ... Because how we see people impacts how we treat people. I’m learning this...

*What if for the next seven days, everyday, the people of God asked God that question? Because how we see people impacts how we treat people.*

Story Erin and I (postpartum depression after first child) —

Froze her in time ... I let a season of difficult days define her and I gave her no room or grace to grow.

*NONE of us want to be defined by our worst day.*

Fragilized — I saw her as fragile (being careful and another's side of this that is treating her with excessive care or caution deeming she just can't handle it).

How God sees Erin?

**Genesis 2:18 (NLT)**

**Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him."**

**Helper:** ezer (AY-zer)

It's actually a term frequently used for military help and used 14 times in reference to God Himself. It emphasizes effective strength supplied from outside oneself, helping at a real point of need. It could be translated as "strong rescuer" or "powerful life saver." The woman, the ezer, God brought is an equal partner who protects and strengthens and helps.

*How would I treat her if I saw her as the "ezer"*

I saw her as fragile when God calls her fierce. I saw her as weak and God calls her a powerful life saver. I saw her as too sensitive and God calls her a strong rescuer!

**How you see people impacts how you treat people AND how you treat people impacts who they become.**

Story: True Story of professor with the 2 Advance English classes

I saw Erin as fragile and so I treated her that way. Consequently I cultivated the fragility that I resented.

The professor saw the students as advanced. Treated them that way (spoke life, called them up to their potential, he appropriately challenged them), and they became advanced English students.

How we see people, impacts how we treat people, and how we treat people, especially those closest to us, impacts who they become.

Conclusion: We've talked about How we see ourselves and how we see others but the most important thing about us is how we see God? You see none if this doesn't work if you don't have an accurate view of God. God is love and he...