

## **Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.**

**Sunday January 5, 2020. "Seeing the world through new eyes"**

### **I Intro.**

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work thru from the message this past Sunday. Whether you were able to attend the worship service or not, this devotional is free-standing and you can still use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. Take as long as you need to dive into this material and feel free to share it.

### **II A brief word.**

If we haven't said it to you yet, **Happy New Year!** We can't believe it's 2020. Of course we say the same thing every time a new year rolls around, but this one just feels different doesn't it. It's been a wild ride behind the scenes at NCC as we close out our Advent season, mark one year in transition as a staff, and look ahead to a future we're so excited about. There will be a staff retreat early in January as we look to put some details to our new theme, plan some church-wide fellowships and serving in the community opportunities, and to see where God is taking us. Stay tuned and hold on as God continues to use his people at NCC to share the good news of salvation and love.

### **III Sunday.**

Sunday was a stand alone service to start the new year. Of course just about every church in the country is playing with the new year 2020 to talk about improving our spiritual vision, to live the epic life God is calling us to live. And of course, NCC is no exception. As you can see by the title of this devotion, Sunday we hit the topic of cultivating, (we use that word a lot), a life that will help us see the world in a new way...hopefully the way God sees his world.

**Do you have any hopes or dreams for 2020?**

**What one or two things would you like to be able to 'see' differently this upcoming year?**

The message began with a dramatic scene from the movie *"Field of Dreams"*, in which Timothy Busfield's character who has not been able to see the Chicago White Sox players on the field that Ray built, and in which Ray's Daughter is hurt, suddenly able to see what has always been there. A classic example of how something can be right in front of us, has always been there, but we miss it for a variety of reasons. We don't pay attention, we're not in the moment, we get distracted by shiny little things. Then something happens and suddenly what was invisible to us we now can see. Not because it appeared, but because something caused us to develop a different way to see that thing, what we're calling 'new eyes'. And that is the entire premise behind this stand alone message. The scripture was a fairly familiar passage for some, with an unusually obscure reference in it. Read **Ephesians 1:15-18** and we'll use it to unpack the idea of seeing the world through new eyes.

**As always, what jumped out to you from this passage?**

**How would you understand and define the term, "eyes of your heart"?**

This passage seems to teach that Paul wants his readers to grow an ability to see differently than they usually tend to, and there are some things they need to incorporate into their lives to do so.

### **1. Grow a spirit of wisdom and revelation.**

We ought to be continually learning new things from God to grow wisdom. This comes from being open and developing a spirit, desire, an attitude of wanting to grow in wisdom. To be continually open to new and fresh understanding from God. Doing that well only comes from God, and committed to a mature community to help us from each other's experiences too.

### **2. Know God better.**

Having a regular practice of habits and behaviors allow us to actively enter the presence of God. This isn't only your devotional or prayer time, it can be. But it's bigger, just actively being in the presence of God, growing a more and more intimate relationship with him.

### **3. Know ALL that God has given us.**

Most of our limited sight, seeing things through human eyes, is operating out of a scarcity mindset. BUT, if we are aware of all that God has and wants for us, then we will see others in a completely new and different way.

**Do you know, are you aware of ALL the “riches of his glorious inheritance are”?**

**Do you possess ANYTHING you can call your glorious riches?**

Passage is telling us, if we did know, were aware, of all that God wants to share with us, then we would grow these new eyes.

Kal gave three practices that could help us develop the above to improve our vision for 2020.

### **1. Start the morning checking in with God.**

**What do you do first thing in the morning that helps align your heart with God?**

The less other things you do before this moment, the more God will speak into your day. This is; **“what do you incorporate into your life that helps you listen to God?”** A simple and yet absolute truth is; Whatever you start your day with, that's the emotional filter you'll see everything else in the day through. Beginning your day sensing God's presence will change how you 'see' your world.

### **2. Pay attention when judgments pop up.**

Paying attention to our inner voice. We all have a running commentary about our interaction with the world that helps or hurts how we relate to others. This inner voice is informing your perspective and worldview, and is what shapes your thoughts and feelings about what you see.

**When you move through the world, what thoughts, opinions, beliefs, judgments feelings rise to the surface?**

So when those judgments, opinions rise up, and they will, examine them to see how they affect how you see your world.

### **3. Go to new places.**

We are creatures of routine. Our brains desire, crave familiarity, and predictability so we will always drive the same route, order the same thing at our favorite restaurant, believe the same things.

And familiarity breeds...contempt, or at the least apathy and complacency. We **need freshness and newness in our daily routines to experience God in new and life-enhancing ways.**

So, do something different regularly. Drive a different route. Eat at a different place. Get dressed in a different room in your house in the morning. Sit in a different place here on Sunday morning.

**What couple of things could you change up that would help you see the world differently?**

This message was an important start to a new year, a new decade, and an increased emphasis by us at NCC to be a place that accepts everyone, no matter where they are in their spiritual journey or their understanding of God. AND we want to be a loving presence in the community for Jesus. Not to fix people or get them to be or believe like us. But to simply love them, and be *'for them'*. Because we believe that God is *'for us'*.

This will be a theme we hope to carry with us the entire year.

So, a final question. **How would your life look differently, how would you relate to God and others if you were to improve the “eyes of your heart” and see everything differently?**