
Looking At The Unseen

Seen things have become so real to some people that they have forgotten about the unseen.

We live in a world of the natural. We rub shoulders with the physical day after day until the unseen realm seems unreal. We are almost tempted to believe it doesn't exist!

But Paul said: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:17-18).

These words almost cause us to think the Apostle Paul had lost his mind when he said, "Look not at the things which are seen." How in the world can you look at something you can't see?

Paul is talking about unseen principles: the principles of God's Word which are actually spiritual law—spiritual forces that are unseen. These are eternal forces which always work when you set them in motion.

Notice what the Apostle Paul said: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen...."

In other words, if you're looking only at seen things, things of the natural, then the affliction will not work an exceeding weight of glory in you: It will work only while you're looking at things which are not seen.

You must shift over into the realm of spiritual law and begin to look at things which are not seen with the natural eye. You look at things which are not seen with the eye of the spirit—the eye of faith.

Notice Paul didn't say, "All affliction will work a far exceeding weight of glory." He said it would happen only while you're looking at things which are not seen.

Ask yourself the question: "What are the things which are not seen?"

Seen And Unseen: Both Are Real

If you're having financial problems and the bank statement comes back in red ink, then the thing that is not seen is the bankbook balancing or your need being met.

The thing that is seen is lack. Paul said that pressure will work for you an exceeding eternal weight of glory if you will look at things that are not seen. It is actually the looking at the unseen that brings the glory, not the pressure of the affliction.

This agrees with what he said in Philippians 4:8: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

In other words, get your mind off the problem and begin to think on the things that are not seen—the things you desire, the things you don't see with your physical eye. You must learn to see the answer by the eye of faith.

The word temporal means "subject to change." Things you are seeing with the physical, natural eye are always subject to change through spiritual law.

So many times what we see with our physical eye does not agree with the Word of God, the promises of God. The world's system shapes the seen things around us. They seem to be very real, and they are real; but the Word of God says that they are subject to change!

God's Word is the establishing force of the image of unseen things. We should not allow circumstances and the cares of life to create images within us. Take God's Word and change things that are seen—the things you don't desire—into things that you do desire.

Wrong Assumptions

Words produce images inside us; but sometimes we get these images by making wrong assumptions. Let me give you an example.

During a certain meeting, the Lord had been dealing with me about teaching on this subject of wrong assumptions producing false images. One night after the meeting, the man who took me to the motel was driving a gray-colored Grand Prix.

The next morning when he came to pick me up, he went out ahead of me to take my bags to the car. He told me he was parked down on the left.

I walked out and looked to the left. Seeing a car that looked like his, I started walking toward it. I heard someone blow his horn at me; but when I turned around I saw a gold colored Cadillac. Looking for the Grand Prix, I walked on. The man sounded his horn again.

Finally, when he backed up and blew his horn again, I looked to see who was in the Cadillac. It was my man.

I had an image of him sitting in a Grand Prix. Because I was looking for a Grand Prix, I missed him! The car had been right in front of me all the time, but I hadn't paid any attention to it. I just walked right by it.

Because we have not shaped the unseen within us, we miss it. We walk by it. We let it go. Sometimes God sets it before us; but because we've never shaped the image of the unseen within us, we keep pushing it out of the way, looking for something else. We're so wrapped up in what is seen that we fail to see the unseen.

Creating Right Images

We need to recognize one thing: It is God's Word that will establish the image of the unseen within us. We should not allow circumstances or the cares of this life to create images within us. What the Word says should create the image.

Let me paraphrase what Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:18: "If you don't get rid of that image of looking at the seen, and produce another image inside you, then the afflictions of life will not work in you an eternal weight of glory. But they will, if you're looking at the things that are not seen."

We should take God's Word and change the things that are seen—things we don't desire - into the things that we do desire.

Someone said, "I can plainly see my financial situation, I can plainly see the red ink on my bank statement."

Those are things you can see. The exceeding eternal weight of glory will be brought into place by looking at the unseen. Notice, it is not the affliction that brought glory, but concentrating on the unseen. The unseen is from the spirit world. Spiritual forces are released by God's Word being spoken.

Unseen things are shaped by the Word of God. For example, the Word says: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38).

"He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. 9:6).

"My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).

You may not see these things now with your physical eye, but they are very real. They are shaped by God's Word and your confession! When you look around, you see lack; but God's Word says, "Give, and it shall be given...He which soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully."

You change the seen with God's Word. You shape the unseen by calling things that are not as though they were (Rom. 4:17).

Charles Capps