



LOOKING AT OTHERS THROUGH THE EYES OF CHRIST

A Message from the Quorum of Twelve Apostles

To see through the eyes of Christ, is to view others with unconditional love

These are easy words to say, but putting them into action can be far more challenging. We face situations, pass judgment, make decisions, interact with others and 'live life' every day. But how do we apply this to our daily, busy lives? The answer lies within the scriptures:

"... for the Lord seeth not as a man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7).

Jesus himself said, ***"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24).***

Another passage warns us to, ***"... take heed, that ye do not judge that which is evil to be of God or that which is good and of God to be of the devil" (Moroni 7:14).***

Even as a follower of Christ, it takes more than the knowledge of Jesus' life and teachings to see with the eyes of Christ. It requires us to possess and demonstrate (the pure love of Christ), which rests in our heart, not our brain. We're asked to look at others as He sees others. God gave us His only son, Jesus Christ, who died for all of us, regardless of who we are. The Lord does not see us for the color of our skin, our race, our income level, our educational level or even our culture. He loves us all, equally.

Sometimes we look at others and quickly decide, or think that "they wouldn't be interested in listening to our testimony (of what the Lord has done for me) or interested in accepting an invitation to come to church". We sometimes make

these decisions based on the way others look, the way they talk, what we ‘think’ we know about them or what we perceive to be their way of life. But isn’t this exactly why Christ died for us – that ALL might find salvation and have eternal life? In fact, Jesus spoke about this very topic saying, **“...*They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*” (Luke 5:31-32).**

Let’s consider a few examples: There was a woman by the name of Rahab in the Old Testament, living in Jericho - chapter 2 in the book of Joshua. In this account, Joshua sends two men as spies to investigate the land. They went to Rahab’s house seeking lodging and information. The king heard of these two men, and demanded Rahab surrender them. She defied the king and protected the Israelite spies. By faith (*Hebrews 11:31*) she let the two men out through her window to safety, asking that she and her family be spared when the Israelites attack Jericho. Soon afterwards, she and her whole family escaped the attack and their lives were spared. What’s left out of this summary is that Rahab is referred to as a harlot (or prostitute). Despite her life of sin and reputation, she was used of God, which ultimately helped the armies take the city and settle in Canaan (the Promised Land). The Lord used a prostitute to not only further His purposes, but following her ancestry line, we find in chapter 1 of Matthew, that *Rachab* (Rahab) is found in the genealogy and blood line of Jesus! Her lifestyle of sin, before meeting the children of Israel, could have been ‘held against her’, but instead, she was used to bring about His purposes.

We read in the Book of Mormon about Alma and the sons of Mosiah who, **“*became a great hinderment to the prosperity of the church of God; stealing away the hearts of the people; causing much dissension among the people; giving a chance for the enemy of God to exercise his power over them*” (Mosiah 27:9).** The scripture says these men were wicked and idolatrous, leading many into sinful paths and seeking to destroy the church. Yet, an angel of God was sent to convince them to change because **“...*the Lord hath heard the prayers of his people, and also the prayers of his servant, Alma, who is thy father; for he has prayed with much faith concerning thee...*” (Mosiah 27:14).** You see, no matter how much sin someone’s involved in, when the spirit of God touches their heart and they repent, their life is changed. The past is wiped away by the cleansing blood of Christ. We can’t permit ourselves to look at those who are outwardly involved in evil or

destructive ways and think, “they are beyond saving” or “I won’t waste my time praying for them”. In fact Jesus said, “**...Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you**” (Luke 6:27-28). Because of the prayers of the righteous, Alma and the sons of Mosiah were each used in their own way to further the church and lead many to the joy of serving Christ.

We also read about a man in scriptures called Didymus, who was called by Jesus to be one of His twelve apostles in the land of ancient Israel. Also known by the name of Thomas and commonly referred to as ‘doubting Thomas’, because he doubted Jesus' resurrection when first told by the other disciples. Thomas’s response was, “**...Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe**” (John 20:25). There’s no record of the other apostles and followers of Jesus ‘scorning him to shame’ because he doubted. In fact, eight days later, when Jesus appeared to them, Thomas touched the nail prints in His hands and wound on His side, and responded by saying, “**...My Lord and my God**” (John 20:28). His doubt could have consumed him and although many have labeled him a ‘doubter’, history records that he travelled outside the Roman Empire to preach the gospel, travelling as far as India and being the first to establish Christ’s church in a distant land. In reflection, some might have looked upon Thomas and wondered how he could be used by God, showing such doubt, but in fact, he was one of the first foreign missionaries, sharing the hope of salvation.

Finally, let’s fast forward to the 1920’s when a man who had been baptized fell back into his former ways with those associated with organized crime and illegal activities. He was so angry, that he brought a handgun to church one Sunday afternoon with the intent of killing one of the elders. A deacon confronted him as he entered and convinced him to sit and wait until after the service was over. Unaware of what was happening, the power of God fell upon the ministry and an elder preached a ‘thunderous sermon’ that shook the very core of his soul. Immediately after the meeting, the man dropped the gun, embraced the elder, repented and asked to be reinstated in the church! Because he felt the power of God, his heart was changed. Miraculously, neither his former ‘boss’ nor his associates found him or retaliated against him for leaving his old way of life behind. His decisions and actions could have caused fear in others, but through this

brother's testimony and life changing events, many found Christ through the restored gospel of Jesus Christ - *A History of The Church of Jesus Christ – Vol 2, page 193-194.*

When Jesus looks at us, He looks with love, into our heart and soul.

Although we are not able to see into the hearts of others, we are promised through the gift of the Holy Ghost that He will lead, guide and direct us inasmuch as we are following in Christ's path. Our problems; selfishness; vanities; anxieties; prejudices; lack of trust or faith; judgmental or inaccurate assessment of others ... can all be removed when we permit the power of the Holy Ghost to work in our lives. ***“And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5).*** Our daily challenge of seeing others through the eyes of Christ can only be accomplished when we walk in the humility and righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Our desire is that we might all see through the eyes of Christ and follow the examples He gave us, that as we walk through each day, we might, ***“know that this love which thou (Christ) hast had for the children of men is charity; wherefore, except men shall have charity they cannot inherit that place which thou hast prepared in the mansions of thy Father” (Ether 12:34).***

In the Love of God,

The Quorum of Twelve Apostles

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