

Get Your Eyes Checked

Luke 11:33-36

May 17, 2020

I want to turn us back into the Gospel of Luke and get your attention back into the text, there, and Luke Chapter 11, as Jesus brings this discourse that we've been looking at for some time, here, he brings this particular discourse to a close. So you can find your way to Luke 11:33. As you turn there, I'll just make a couple of remarks by way of introduction.

The scene opened back in verse 14, Luke 11:14, when Jesus cast a demon out of a man and enabled him to speak. And while people are there marveling over this sign of his authority and power, the scribes and the Pharisees swooped in to the narrative to correct the narrative, and you might say, and they said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the Prince of Demons." So they wanted to set the record straight about where this power, this authority was coming from. And that lie, that slander was enough to awaken the unbelief that was lying dormant in the crowd. They began asking Jesus for a sign, ignoring the sign he had just done and asking him for a sign, putting him to the test. "Are

you really the Messiah? Show us then. Do something cosmic, do something heavenly, a heavenly sign. Impress us!"

Jesus could have walked away, but he did not. He turned his attention to address the slander and this testing of him to ask for a sign. To awaken faith in the elect or to strengthen the faith among the believing, Jesus did answer the false charge from the Jewish leadership. And we saw that in verses 17 to 26.

And then he turned his attention to address the growing, increasing crowds in verses 29 to 36. And he started from this premise, states clearly in verse 29. He doesn't just hold this to himself, he actually says it out loud that this generation is an evil generation. He just comes right out of the gate and tells them exactly what his judgment is about them. "This generation is an evil generation, and that is the reason that you ask for a sign." So instead of dancing to the tune of their unbelief, Jesus points them back to the testimony of Scripture. He points them to the sign of Jonah.

There had been a lot of evil moments and days and years in Israel's past generations. Plenty of evil to go around, abhorrent, unspeakable acts of evil and wickedness. If you've

been following along with us in our daily Bible reading, you've been seeing that, haven't you? We're in 1 Samuel now, which means that we have passed through the period, the horrible period of the judges. I don't want to spoil the story, but the times of the kings are not going to get any better. You can see the wickedness even in God's chosen people, those who have Scripture given to them, those who have the, the ministry of the prophets. Well, even the ministry of the judges given to them by God, all of that is recorded faithfully on the pages of Scripture. You can see the wickedness of past generations.

But the sins of Jesus' generation, their sin is especially wicked. It is especially wicked because of his unparalleled greatness. That's how we ended last time is looking at his unparalleled greatness. "Behold, something greater than Solomon, something greater than Jonah is here right now on the scene. All the fulfillment of all the law and the prophets is before you in the flesh. God's Shekinah glory tabernacling being with you. The light itself is in your presence."

God sent his only begotten Son, "glory as of the only Son from the father," John 1:14, "full of grace and truth," to be the light of the world. The true light, which gives light to everyone was coming into the world. And Jesus testified about

himself, saying, "I am the light of the world," John 8:12.

"Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

And after that discourse, you may remember in John 8, that discourse almost got him stoned at the end of the chapter. Immediately after that discourse, before Jesus healed a man born blind in John 9, he explained the significance of what he was about to do in healing that man and giving, restoring sight to him. He said in John 9:5, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." "I am the light of the world."

The problem with this evil generation, it is not due to a lack of light that they have failed to believe. It's not because the sign isn't clear enough. It's not because the sign's not impressive enough. The problem is with their vision. The problem is with their eyesight, and they really need a visit to the divine optometrist. And that's what Jesus is about to do, is take them into the optometrist's office in Luke 11:33 and following. Follow along as I read that.

Jesus says in Luke 11:33, "No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket but on a stand so that those who enter may see the light. Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. Therefore, be careful. Be careful lest the light in you be darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, having no dark part, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light."

The problem with Jesus' generation, it's really the same problem in our own generation. Shouldn't make any mistake about that, but the problem is not an external problem. The problem is internal. The issue is not a lack of light. I mean, that is to deny reality, right? I'm standing here in light. The issue is not a lack of light; it's not a lack of a sign. The issue is an internal problem. It's called the cancer of unbelief that resides in the human heart, the fallen human heart. Unbelief, it perverts desire. It makes people love sin and hate righteousness. Unbelief makes people love the poison and hate the antidote. It makes them love the disease and reject the cure.

As Jesus said in John 3:19, he said, "This is the judgment. The light has come into the world, and the people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil." That's evidence of a malady, of a serious disease in people. It's called sin and death and depravity. The Bible is very clear about this. Unbelief. It's like a hideous disease that sends its tentacles throughout the entire human personality. It makes deadly tumors grow in all places within the life. Those tumors wrap around the heart and the mind. They stifle the thinking. They suffocate life and joy and power. Those tumors bend the will to feed the disease. And certainly that has an effect first and foremost on the vision. It distorts the eyesight, takes away clarity and purity, and it perverts all desire.

Many of you probably know that one of our own church members has had a brain surgery recently. She was telling me this week that among the many positive results of taking a tumor out of her head out, of her brain has, it's been especially exciting for her to discover how dramatically her vision has improved.

It's incredible. Slowly, she said, almost imperceptibly over the past few years, she was losing her eyesight. She was no longer able to read her printed Bible even with her reading glasses. She had to use her reading glasses, and even when those were no longer effective, she had to use electronic screens and devices where she could change the lighting and the brightness and increase the font size and all that. Now that the tumor has been removed, lo and behold, her vision is returning to her. She's able to read her Bible again, not the electronic version, but her print Bible, and she's even able to read it better without her glasses on.

I wonder how many of us would find similar results if we were to remove spiritual tumors from our lives. I wonder how many of us would find that those tentacles of unbelief that are in the sin nature have wrapped themselves in different ways in our lives, and we need to go place by place, room by room, in the house of our souls and cut out what doesn't belong, remove it so that we might see clearly.

I think we can start right here in this text by getting our eyes checked. Check the health of our eyesight. Test our vision. Test our spiritual perception and see, is our eye healthy or is it unhealthy? Is it giving us the full advantage of light? Or is

our eyesight dimmed, distracted, turned away from truth? Because if our eyesight is good, if our vision is in good working order, our lives are going to be making daily progress in holiness. We're going to be pleased with holiness in order that we may know God fully, that we can enjoy all the gifts of his goodness, find pleasure in doing his will, and in so doing bring him glory by the way we live these lives that he's given us. Because that is the point of life, to enjoy, to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

So what I'd like to do this morning is to interpret this section of Scripture just briefly. And then I'd like to draw out some implications of Jesus' teaching and offer some counsel in getting your spiritual eyes checked. Okay, so we'll visit the optometrist together today.

So first, let's talk about the interpretation of the text. We need to start where we always should start with, with Bible study. We should start by understanding the text well. Before we jump to application, let's start with understanding what's actually written. We'll do that by breaking this text down into three points. We're going to look at Jesus' proposition in verse

33, and then the comparison that he makes in verses 34 to 35 and then the conclusion that he brings us to in verse 36. So proposition, comparison, conclusion. That's the flow of the text.

First the proposition in verse 33. Here's his proposition. "No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but on a stand so that those who enter may see the light." Obvious, right? You might call that a truism, something that is self-evident just on the face of it. It's more than an experience-based observation. It's not as if Jesus has experienced the common way of humanity and "Oh, they tend to light things and put them on stands." No, that is not the issue. What he's saying is just a fact of life. It is patently obvious. No one lights a lamp and then hides it. Nobody. If you want darkness, you don't light a lamp in the first place. Making the effort to light a lamp, that means you want to see things, means you want others to see things.

The kind of lamp that Jesus refers to, it's the same, by the way, as Luke, the one in Luke 8:16. It's virtually synonymous as the statement here, but spoken on a different occasion. In fact, Jesus really liked this light metaphor, and the lamp metaphor. He used it on a number of occasions to make a

number of different points. This is a different one than in Luke 8.

This kind of lamp, though, as we've said before, small handheld terracotta lamp, had a shallow bowl-shaped reservoir to hold the oil. The top of the lamp was enclosed but had openings to add oil and also allow access for air. There's a nozzle attached to the, to the lid or the lip of the bowl with a hole through the nozzle that a wick would go through. The wick would run the length of that hole down into the oil, dip into the oil, and keep that flame burning with the oil, not the wick. So with that lamp lit, you're free to set that handheld lamp, take it out of your hands, and put it onto a lamp stand, to free up your hands to do other things in the room, other housework or reading or writing, or whatever.

So no one goes to the trouble of purchasing oil, filling a lamp, inserting a wick, lighting a lamp, only to store it in a cellar. The word there for seller is *crypte*, where we get the word "crypt" from. Here, it's probably referring to some kind of an enclosed nook in the wall, like a cupboard. Well, no one's going to light a lamp, only to hide it in a cupboard. No one's

going to light a lamp to hide it underneath a basket. That that word for basket is probably more like a wood storage bin for grain that held the daily amount of wheat or whatever to make the bread.

But no one lights a lamp only to shroud the light in darkness, either to put it in a hidden, tucked-away cupboard or to put it underneath one of these grain bins. The reason that a lamplighter lights a lamp, notice the rest of verse 33, is "so that," that's a purpose clause so we can make this even more explicit by translating it that way. No one, the purpose of lighting a lamp is in order that those who enter may see the light. The lamplighter lights a lamp with the express purpose, with the intention that those who are coming into the home, those who are entering his home in order that they may see that light.

Now I'm not trying to be Captain Obvious here. I'm not trying to torture you by crawling on the floor to notice every strand in the carpet. I, it is important for us, though, to slow down just for a moment and draw out the subtle point that Jesus is making here. If no one. No one. Universal statement. If no one lights a lamp and hides it but lights a lamp for an express purpose, then can we say that that "no one" includes God as

well? I think it's a fair assumption, and we can assume that when God sends such a light, oh, I don't know, so just turning the lights on at Creation, shining the light of his saving Gospel through his beloved Son in the face of Jesus Christ, well, we can assume that God, like everybody else who lights a lamp, God intends people to see.

Notice the domestic context here too, how this light is set upon a lamp stand within a home. Light is there for, for those who are, and this is a present tense participle, so it's these people who are characterized by entering into the home. God's intent is that for those who are entering, for all those who are coming inside the house, he wants them to come in. He wants them to see the light, not to focus just on the light, but what the light reveals, so they can see everything in the house, so they can enjoy all that the light reveals to them, so they can enjoy the food around the table, so they can see one another's faces, so they can see expressions. You know how communication, they say, isn't just merely speaking. It's not just words, but it's body language. It's facial expression. God wants us to see all of that in his home.

So the problem with this crowd, the problem with this evil generation, they're all standing outside in the darkness. They are unwilling to cross the threshold and enter into God's Kingdom. And not only that, but they are implicitly complaining against Christ by seeking a sign. They're tacitly blaming him that they're unable to see the light. Listen, they don't come in because they won't come in. Like all depraved sinners, they are unable because they are unwilling. They're unwilling because of unbelief. Something wrong, isn't there?

And that brings us to the second point, is the comparison. Second, the comparison. Jesus wants us to see in the next two verses, verses 34 and 35: "As the handheld lamp is the light for the home, so also," verse 34, "your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye's healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it's bad, your body is full of darkness." Again, Jesus takes the role here of the divine optometrist. He's he's helping us to understand how to diagnose the condition of our own eyes, our own eyesight.

And again, this may seem to you like Captain Obvious kind of stuff, but the phenomenon of physical sight makes a deeper

point about spiritual perception, and that's the point. Spiritual perception. That's what comes next. What's obscured here in the English translation is the nuance that Jesus gives here to the condition of someone's eyes, whether good or bad.

Let's start with the first one, there. He says, "Your eye is the lamp of your body. So when your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light." Healthy eyes see clearly, which is one way that the word *haplos* is used. *Haplos* is the Greek word, and the basic meaning of that word *haplos* is "single" or "singular" or "without any folds." The contrasting word to *haplos* is the word *diplos*, so *haplos* and *diplos*. *Diplos* means "double-folded," "two-fold," and it has a negative connotation that means duplicity.

So to have healthy, healthy, *haplos* vision is to have singular vision. Is to have integrity in what you are looking at, what you're looking after, what you're looking to, to see with simplicity. You don't have any guile, any duplicity, any deceit, no ulterior motive. Healthy vision then comes from a sincere heart, comes through a transparent life, an honesty of motive, a purity of vision, singularity of vision.

Now hold that thought for a moment and let's look at the second statement. He says, "Your eye is the lamp of your body, so when your eye is bad, your body's full of darkness." "When your eye's bad, your body's full of darkness." The word translated "bad" there, it's *poneros*. The last time that Jesus used that word was in verse 29 to say that this generation is a *poneros* generation, an evil generation. So *poneros*, when it's talking about the body health, it can mean "unhealthy." It can mean "diseased," "bad." But Jesus is connecting, clearly connecting here, the indictment of his generation as *poneros*, "evil," in verse 29, which is a diagnosis of this generation's vision, its eyesight, which is *poneros*, "bad." "Evil." This generation is *poneros*, "evil," because its vision is *poneros*, because its eyes are *poneros*. They're afflicted with the disease of unbelief.

So when the heart is unbelieving, the eye is bad, and when the eye is bad, the whole body is full of darkness. Interesting statement, isn't it, "full of darkness"? Full, full, like, it's like almost like saying full of emptiness, full of hollowness, full of nothingness. But the idea of fullness means controlled by, influenced by, under the influence of, darkness. Jesus looks across this swelling, growing crowd of people, and he could see.

And this, this is an insight that does not require the eye of omniscience, which he did have, which he had available to him by the Spirit, but it's just, this insight just requires the astuteness of a godly perception. He could see these people's lives governed by darkness, governed by darkness, under the influence and the control of darkness and unbelief.

In the language of Paul, Ephesians 4:18, they are, he's speaking of the Gentiles here, but this certainly applies to the Jews, but he says, "They're darkened in their understanding because of the ignorance that is in them due to their hardness of heart."

Godet put it this way; he said, "If the Jews were right in heart, they would see the divine sign put before their eyes as easily as the queen of the South and the Ninevites perceived the less brilliant light placed before them. But their heart is perverse. That organ is referring to the vision, the organ of eyesight, the eye, that organ is diseased. And hence the sign shines and will shine in vain, before their view. The light without will not become light in them." End quote.

Again, what good are more signs going to do for this crowd when they lack the ability to see what the signs are pointing to? What good are more signs? What good are more demonstrations of power? What good are more miracles? And that's why Jesus says in verse 35, he's completing comparison here. He goes from the handheld lamp in verse 33 to the physical eyesight in verse 34, then from physical eyesight to, now verse 35, spiritual perception. He says, "Therefore, be careful lest the light in you be darkness."

The verb translated "be careful" is the verb *skopeo*. We get the word "scope" from that word, to scope out or to look through a scope. It could be translated, *skopeo* can be translated to "take care," "watch out," "take heed," "notice carefully," "keep a watchful eye on something." So what are we to be careful about? Take heed for what? "Lest the light in you be darkness."

Darkness is a metaphor for spiritual ignorance, lack of spiritual perception. It's not an innocent condition. It's a matter of moral culpability. It's a matter of guilt before God. It's a matter of accountability before God. Darkness in

Scripture is always portrayed as a pitiable condition as we see the consequences of darkness and ignorance.

You can imagine somebody, imagine a man entering into maybe a dark, abandoned, multi-storied warehouse or factory. Dangerous in there. It's dark, spooky. He's entering on a dark night. He has no flashlight. He's just running haphazardly at full speed ahead, running through this dark abandoned factory. Not going to turn out too well, is it? In my foolish youth, I used to do such stupid things, run, that's where I got this illustration, from my own life. So running through dark factories and things like that, it doesn't turn out well. I can tell you through scraped shins and banged up knees and falling over, and cuts and bruises, it does not turn out well.

Imagine a second man, though, running into that same place, but he has the added liability of being a blind man. In either case, whether with a man with vision but no sense or a blind man running into a darkened, abandoned, dangerous factory, you can imagine the picture, the pain and the injury that's certainly going to result from this pitiable, lamentable situation.

But "darkness" in Scripture, it doesn't just have a pitiable, pity sense attached to it. It also portrays a condemnable condition, the consequence of wicked moral judgment, because it's not that they're just blind and foolish and can't help it. They make a decision to do it. So take this same dark, abandoned, factory warehouse and you got the same blind man and imagine him insisting to you that he's not blind, he's not blind at all. He can see perfectly. He can see just as well as anyone else. In fact, he, he, he is insulted by your insinuation that he can't see as well as you do. So in spite of your repeated pleadings to him, in spite of your concern, in spite of you even trying to hold him back, he breaks away and he's driven into that dark, abandoned, multi-storied warehouse factory thing by his lusts.

He imagines that he will find satisfaction in that place that you're trying to hold him back from, in that hopeless, empty, dark space. And he refuses your guidance, and he hurls himself inside. You tried to tell him. But in the heat of his sinful passion, it's cooked his brain, it's driven him to madness. It sends him headlong into degradation and pain and sorrow. And if this madness is not cured, it's going to turn into his death. Is he innocent? No. He's rejected all the

warnings. He's sinned against the Law-Giver. He's sinned. He's broken out against all sound reason. He's broken through the law, and he's gone against the pleadings of even the Savior, who tried to pull him back from certain harm.

Look, I realize it's an imperfect analogy, but it, this illustrates what Jesus is trying to say here to his own generation. Woe to those who think their eyes are good when they are in fact bad, and for many that they are blind. Jesus called the Pharisees "blind guides of the blind." Singular pronouns in this verse. Singular form of the verb. Jesus is speaking to individuals here. It's as if he's looking around in that crowd. He's trying to make eye contact with each of the people in the crowd.

Imagine him looking directly at you, too, beloved, you too, and he's saying, "You, my friend. You be careful. Be careful lest the light in you be darkness." Folks, each one of us has a moral responsibility to be careful, as Jesus is saying here, to watch out lest we, too, should suffer the malady of spiritual blindness, lest we think we're seeing just fine, but in reality our eyes are afflicted with disease, not seeing clearly. We need to get our eyes checked, and we need to do so regularly.

Well, we've seen the proposition, verse 33. The comparison, verses 34 to 35. Finally, the conclusion that Jesus is driving us to in verse 36. Up to this point, Jesus has not distinguished here between the unbelieving crowd and those who are listening who may believe in him, like his own disciples. The context, though, indicates, as we've been reading it, Jesus has been speaking mostly to unbelievers at this point. He's giving a warning to this evil generation, but again, we need to remember that Jesus turned in the very beginning to answer the slander and then addressed the request for a sign. He did that to help and awaken faith in his elect people and also to strengthen the faith in his elect.

So as we come to verse 36, this is where the believers come into view. We need to see how great an encouragement he gives in verse 36 to us believers, from the weakest of all believers to the strongest of them. This is a verse for those who have heeded the warning of verse 35, who take full advantage of their vision plan that he gives them, get their eyes checked regularly so that as they enter into his home they can take full enjoyment in the light.

So verse 36 says, "If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it'll be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light." Jesus said in verse 34, "When your eye is healthy, your whole body is" the expression "full of light." So healthy eye, body full of light. Now verse 36. It's a conditional sentence, and it's structured in such a way that it assumes the truth of the condition that's given for those who heed the warning. That is, believers. So it's "If your whole body is full of light, having no dark part," and Jesus assumes that to be true, then look at the promise. "It will be wholly bright."

Wholly bright. Those expressions "full of light," "wholly bright," it's a single word in the Greek, *photeinos*. *Photeinos*. *Photeinos* means "bright, shining, radiant, brilliant." It's used once in verse 34, twice in verse 36. Jesus is emphasizing its importance by repeating it. *Photeinos* is a, an adjective; it describes something that is either composed of light or is full of light. It can be used to describe a flash of lightning from the sky, a, a ray of light, whether the beam comes from a small, handheld lamp or comes from the sun itself. *Photeinos* can refer to divine glory, like the Shekinah glory of God that Peter,

James and John saw on the Mount of Transfiguration. The radiance, the brightness of, that radiated outward from Jesus himself, that they themselves saw. That's the word there.

Photeinos.

You may feel like you don't have a light that is fully bright. And you're right, Christian. You're right to sense that, that you don't experience this, what Jesus said, "Wholly bright," as when a lamp shines its ray and gives you light. And why is that? It's because in you, like all of us this side of heaven, we have to admit that within us there is some dark part. There is something that has not been hit by the rays of divine light.

To kind of get the meaning of the verse, imagine there are two sisters, two sisters. One woman has good eyesight. She gets her regular eye checkups. She knows she has clear 20-20 vision. She just went to the, the optometrist just last week. Her sister, on the other hand, she has other things in mind. She doesn't ever visit the eye doctor. She's certain her eyes are fine. She's got full confidence in her eyesight, never questions

her vision at all. She says, "I'm perfect vision, 20-20 or better."

Well, these two sisters, as sisters sometimes do, I hear, they go furniture shopping one day. The 20-20 woman notices that her sister, the one who never visits the eye doctor, she keeps tripping over the footstools in the living room displays. They walk other parts of the store. Her sister runs right into a floor display, knocks it over. They go outside, her sister trips over the curb, stumbles to get into the car. It becomes apparent to both of them, one of them, just by observation from her perfect 20-20 vision, she just got checked last week, and the other by painful discovery, that one of them needs to visit the eye doctor. When she does, the optometrist finds that she's developed cataracts, and she's having some trouble seeing clearly.

That's what Jesus is doing for us here. He, he's saying, if your whole body is full of light, having no dark part, the lamp is lit, the lights are on; so long as your eyes are working properly, that is, no cataracts, no eye floaters, no diseases look, you can take full advantage of the light. See clearly. Get

around well. Never stumble, never injure yourself. See what's good to put in your mouth and what's bad to put in your mouth. Your life will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its ray gives you light. Listen, the error is never in the quality of the light. It's in the health of the receptor.

So that's what these verses mean. That's the interpretation. Now let's shift gears and look at the implications of these verses and how these things apply to us. Just three of these few comments, and then we'll be done. Implications and applications. First, first one, just listen, 1-2-3, first one. The implication here is the necessity of regeneration. The necessity of regeneration is the first implication, and then there's an application that corresponds to that. The application is you must be born again. Implication, the necessity of regeneration. How to apply that? You must be born again. Notice the priority in verse 33 that those who enter may see the light. OK, so first you enter, and then you see. You see?

Everyone in this world, everyone I've talked to, unbelievers, doesn't matter if they're high, low, rich, poor,

well-born, poorly born, educated, uneducated, elite people, riffraff, everybody in between. Everyone says in this world that I live in, that you live in too, they say, "Show me and I'll believe. Seeing is believing. Let me see the proof. Let me see the evidence because I am scientific. And I'll consider it." Listen, are we in the West, are we in the modern world, are we any different than these unbelieving Jews? We share a lot in common, don't we? We we want to see the sign first. "Give me the evidence first, give me the proof, and then we'll believe." Don't we share the same characteristics of this first century evil generation?

That's not the way with God. He says, "First, believe, and then you will see and understand." Anselm of Canterbury made that a maxim: "Credo ut intelligam." "I believe so that I may understand. I believe so that I can see. I believe so I can understand." The same thing as Augustine before him. And you say, "How can that be? How can I believe unless I first understand, unless I first see? And then I'll make a good choice and believe."

It was Nicodemus' question, too, when he came to Jesus. Remember him? One of the Jewish rulers in the Sanhedrin. He came to Jesus by night. He came under the cover, John is sure to point out, the cover of darkness. Tried to have a conversation with Jesus, a conversation in darkness. Jesus stopped him short. He made the same point. Seeing and entering depend entirely upon the new birth. That's John 3. He told Nicodemus, John 3:3, "Unless someone is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." Two verses, two verses later he said, "Unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Seeing and entering depend upon the new birth.

He's alluding in this text, Jesus is, to the clear teaching of Ezekiel 36:25 and 26, the need there for cleansing symbolized by water. Need to be born of water. And then the, the need for spiritual regeneration affected by the Spirit of God who creates new life in you. That's to be born of the Spirit.

So listen, when God sends the Spirit to you by the same power that he used to create the world, the same power to do miracles, the same power to affect the virgin birth, the same power by which he raised Jesus from the dead, by that same

power, the Spirit causes you to be born anew, causes you to come into being as a new creation, a new creature, a new thing it hasn't been before. And when that happens, you hear with new ears. You see with new eyes. You believe because you have a heart to believe. You now have a mind that understands and embraces and chooses to repent and put faith in Jesus Christ.

Like breathing is to a newborn baby, so is believing to a new creation in Christ. Seeing the light entering the house, entering the Kingdom, both of those, all of those depend on the new birth. And in the new birth, manifest in the believing the Gospel, repenting of sins, putting faith in Jesus Christ, listen, the sin, this is such good news, the sinner is forgiven of his transgressions. All sins. He's washed and cleansed of all sin, all ugliness against God, all rebellion, all impurity.

He's healed you from spiritual diseases, all those diseases that cause you to go against conscience and good judgment, that, it's like running into that factory and stumbling over everything and you, you come out of that experience, and you say, "Why did I do that? That was dumb. That hurt. I'm never gonna do that again." And what are you doing next week? Running into the factory!

What gives? God will forgive everyone who comes to him in faith. That's what David said in Psalm 10:3 that he rejoiced over. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name, bless the Lord, O my soul. Forget not all of his benefits. Who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit."

Test number one: The divine optometrist starts with the most basic, the most fundamental question. He asks, "Are you born again. Are you born again? Because if you're not born again, then you don't have eyes to see. Let's start there. I wanna put some eyes in your head." Do you have a new nature? Do you have new desires? New affections? Do you believe and embrace the Gospel just intuitively? And now do you see the evidence that's always been there. Do you see it clearly, and you wonder why you never saw it before?" Are you born again? That's the first test.

Well, listen, if the promise of forgiveness of sins, if the promise of a clear conscience before God does not compel you to put your faith in Christ, let me, let me come at this from

another angle. When David says in Psalm 103, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, forget not all of his benefits," he continues in that text by saying that he, God, crowns you, after doing all that, after forgiving your iniquity, healing your diseases, redeeming your life from the pit, then he does something else. He crowns you; he takes you from the basement, from the pit, and he elevates you to heaven itself. "He crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, and from his table he satisfies you with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagles." Isn't that awesome?

So a second implication-application here, number two, the implication here from the text, from Jesus' teaching, is on the goodness of God. On the goodness of God. And the application, therefore, based on the goodness of God, is that you must love him, worship him, give thanks to him for his infinite love and goodness. Again, back to verse 33. The purpose of God indicated there, God, as we said, is the one who lights the lamp, sets it on a stand. Why? In order that those who enter may see the light.

God is the original lamplighter. He's the source of all light and of all life. When God created the heavens and the earth, he also created light, Genesis 1:3, "And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was" what? "light." "God saw," it says in the next verse, "God saw that the light was good." The light is an expression of his goodness.

In order to see the light, which God designates as good, we need the appropriate light receptors in our heads, which God also gave us. Jesus indicates that in verse 34. He speaks of "your eye," by the way, which God gave you. And that eye that God gave you is the lamp of the body. So God gave the light. He gave you the eye to see the light. He gave the eye to serve the good of the body that benefits from the light. And he gave you the ability to enjoy what the light reveals, namely, an entire world, even this cursed world, but an entire world filled with the manifold, manifold evidence of the goodness and kindness and love of God.

Back in verse 31 in the text, remember, Jesus talked about the Queen of the South, there. She came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and when she, when she

arrived, when she made that long journey, she off-loaded on Solomon everything that was on her inquisitive mind. I mean, I don't know how you parents are, but when you're, especially when you're locked up and, you know, locked down here, shut down, you're locked up with your kids in the house, and how many times will they ask questions and offload for you moms, especially, everything that's on their little minds. And how do you feel at the end of the day? Exhausted.

This Queen of Sheba had been storing up questions. She had heard of Solomon. She'd had a long journey, a voyage and then some land travel, to get there to Israel to go and see Solomon in Jerusalem. And she offloaded everything that's in her inquisitive mind, and 1 Kings 10:3 says that Solomon answered all of her questions. There was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her. You know the joy of that? To be able to pepper your professor with questions and questions and questions, and him not to be exhausted, not to be frustrated by that. But to just gently continue to explain and give you the answers, and she's, nothing hidden from him.

And further, in 1 Kings 10, she observed all the wisdom of Solomon, the evidence of the wisdom, the house that he built, the food of his table. Imagine the wisdom of Solomon applied to, applied to food on his table, culinary delights, the seating of his officials, the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his cupbearers, all the burnt offerings he offered at the house of the Lord. And then the text tells us, "When she saw all this, there was no more breath in her." She couldn't breathe, she's breathless.

You know what? "Behold, something greater than Solomon is here." Something greater than Solomon. In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. You know where Solomon got his wisdom from? Christ, "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," Colossians 2:3. Listen, it's Christ who invites us into the house to partake of the table that he's spread out before us. His wisdom is personified in Solomon's poetry.

Proverbs chapter 9, if you'll permit me, I think I have a warrant to insert his name into the text here. Solomon says in Proverbs 9:1 and following, "Christ has built his house. He is

hewn his seven pillars. He has slaughtered his beast. He's mixed his wine. He's also set his table, and he has sent out his young women to call from the highest places of the town, 'Whoever is simple, let him turn in here. To him who lacks sense,' she says, 'come, eat of my bread. Drink of the wine I've mixed. Leave your simple ways and live and walk in the way of insight.'"

God in his infinite goodness, he created the light, he gave us the ability to discern the light, to see the light. Why? In order that we might enjoy what's revealed by his light, that is, a world filled with his goodness. When we look to see the very brightest expression of light and truth and knowledge and wisdom and righteousness and holiness and perfection of God, we find ourselves looking at none other than Christ himself.

And then we begin to understand what Paul meant when he wrote 2 Corinthians 4:6. "God, the one who said 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shown in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Why should we not love this God? Why should we not worship this loving Savior? Why would we not count it our great pleasure, sworn duty, to give thanks to him forever for his

infinite goodness that we enjoy in the light of his glory? God is the source of all goodness and love and light and truth, and truth and wisdom, and he's therefore our supreme joy. And he's our greatest reward.

So another test, test number two, the divine optometrist asked another very basic question. Test our vision. Are you growing to see? Are you growing to see? Is your vision showing you with increasing clarity and frequency and intensity the goodness and the depth of the love of God? Because if not, my friend, there's something wrong with your vision. Your eyes are bad. The problem is not the light. The problem isn't God's goodness. The problem isn't God's love. It's all there to be seen, and if you're not seeing it with increasing clarity and frequency and intensity in your life, something's wrong with your vision. You need to get your eyes checked.

But if so, well, listen, my friend, your vision is clearing up. It's getting better. The tumors are being removed, and you can see more clearly, more frequently. You're on your way to what the text says, "wholly bright," verse 36, having no dark part as when a lamp with its rays gives you light.

So, final set of implication-application, here. Number three. The implication here is the necessity of sanctification. The necessity of sanctification, and the application is, "work out your salvation with fear and trembling." The necessity of sanctification is the third implication. And the application then is work out your salvation with fear and trembling. After God said, "Let there be light," there was light. And then we read, "God saw that the light was good, and God," get this, "separated the light from the darkness." That's why John tells us in 1 John 1:5, "This is the message we've heard from him and do proclaim to you, that God is light. In him is no darkness at all." Greek is emphatic there.

This has implications, right? God is light. In him, no darkness at all. God created light, called it good. He separated the light from the darkness. Where does he want us to walk? In the light with him. "So if we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth, but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light," guess what, "we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin."

This isn't talking about sinless perfection here. Assumes that in this life before our glorification, we will sin, but if we are pursuing the light, walking in the light, as God is in the light, while we fellowship with one another, that is our fellowship in him in the light. And we're cleansed from our sin by the blood of Jesus Christ. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 7:1, "Since we have these promises beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God."

Listen, if you're not a Christian, you're missing out. If you're not a Christian, you need an initial sanctification, to be set apart by his grace, to be sanctified by the justifying grace of God. If you're not yet a Christian, listen, my friend, now is the appointed time. Today is the day of salvation. You have only one way to apply this sermon. Repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins.

Flee to Christ. He is the only refuge. He is the ark who will protect you from the coming storm of the wrath of God. He once destroyed the world with a flood and spared his people,

just eight of them in a boat, from that deluge. He will come again in judgment, not this time in water, but in fire. You need to be in the ark of Jesus Christ, so put your faith in him, the Christ who died for the sins of all who put their faith in him, who was buried, who was raised from the dead by the power of God. What are you, what are you waiting for?

Now for those of you who are Christians. If you have been justified by God, if you have been declared righteous because your, your sins have been imputed to Christ, and then Christ's righteousness has been imputed to you, and you are in union with him and that is a reality, then you need to make progress in your sanctification. You've been set apart, yes, but you need to grow in holiness. Remaining sin, you know this, remaining sin still has power to deceive you. Indwelling sin still entices the heart, still responds to temptations. It still lusts for evil things, still pursues what's abhorrent to God.

Romans 6:2 says, "How can we who died to sin still live in it?" Answer: We can't. We cannot still live in sin. We despise it every day. Every day we wake up, we face a choice, sometimes all throughout the day, sometimes, sometimes it's, it's so

apparent, and sometimes it's so subtle we face a choice all the time. Don't we? Between light and darkness, between good and evil, between truth and error, between the spirit and the flesh.

Listen, don't let that intimidate you. Instead of cowering in the face of sin, stand up and consider the compelling goodness of God, and let his kindness lead you, like a shepherd leads a little lamb, let his kindness lead you to repentance. Meditate on his greatness. Contemplate his goodness. Deepen your knowledge of his love and his compassion, and let the true knowledge of God become a conviction that anchors your soul, compels you to choose light and reject darkness, causes you to pursue the good that God has created and to turn away from all corruption and evil, to walk according to the truth, turn away from error, the lies of the devil, the deceptions of the flesh.

Paul says, "Walk by the Spirit and make no provision for the flesh." And when you walk by the Spirit, when you're occupied with seeing the fruit of the Spirit grow in your life, you're not going to walk according to the flesh. The two are incompatible. Not only will you find that there is no time for sin, the Holy Spirit keeps us busy with such good things, that

you're going to find your desire for earthly things waning, dimming. There will be an increased disinterest in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the boastful pride of life. You'll find an increase in a longing to do God's will, glorify him, honor Christ, speak about his Gospel, his saving work, and keep in step with the Spirit of God. That occupies a lifetime, a thousand lifetimes.

So there is no time for sin. And that's what Jesus intends for us believers in verse 35, that we be careful, that we watch out for, take heed to our eyesight, that we're wary of self deception, we're wary of spiritual complacency, we're wary of the tendency to become spiritually mediocre. Because sin dims spiritual perception. Sin dulls the spiritual senses. It's like a glaucoma, like a degenerating disease that has to be eradicated, removed. And that will happen when we pay daily attention to this.

And then Jesus makes this blessed promise to us, "If your whole body is full of light," I love this, "having no dark part." Oh, for the day, right, when our lives are wholly and perfectly conformed to that statement, "having no dark part." In

that day our soul will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light. "Having no dark part." Listen, that is the blessed promise of completeness, of final perfection, what the Bible calls to be "glorified." The hymn writer put it this way, "My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought, my sin, not in part, but the whole, is nailed to the cross. I bear it no more. Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul."

Yeah, what a glorious thought, indeed, to know that we have freedom from the eternal penalty of, of sin through justification. To know that we are experiencing freedom from the present power of sin through sanctification. And that hope that always drives us on, that we will one day enjoy the unending freedom from the very presence of sin, never to be troubled, with one dark part.

Then that statement, we should "become wholly bright as when a lamp with its rays gives you light," that's the promise of parity in holiness with Jesus Christ himself. The equality of glorification in his glory. "For we know," John tells us, "that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him," again, seeing light, right, "see him as he is." What a promise!

2 Corinthians 3:18, "We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, we're being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another, to another. For this comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

Test number three, the divine optometrist asks another pointed question about your vision. Are you living according to the dictates of a new nature? Are you? What do you love and hate? Where are your affections? Does what you see in the love and goodness of God compel you to live a holy life, not because you have to, because you long to, you know it's well-pleasing to your father? Is the fruit of the Spirit growing in your life with increasing evidence, clarity, productivity? Is your aim to be like Jesus Christ? Beloved, if it's been awhile, maybe you're like that second sister, you need to get your eyes checked. Be like that first sister. Keep your regular vision appointments. Do it every day.

So test number one: Are you're born again? Test number two: Are you seeing and rejoicing in the goodness and love of God. And then test number three: Does the love of Christ compel you toward holiness? Are you making progress in sanctification?

Because with healthy eyes, sincere, pure, singly focused, you will glorify God and enjoy him now, and, beloved, forevermore. That's the promise of this text.

Let's pray. Our Father, we're so grateful for your goodness and kindness to us to give us, well, first, light and then eyes to see the light. And then, as you've opened our eyes, to see a world of goodness in you. And we see in Christ all that we long for: holiness, perfection, truth, love, compassion, mercy, kindness, gentleness, meekness, and oh, an abundance of joy. So Father, please compel us by what Jesus teaches us here to check our eyes often, and let the light in us not be darkness, but let, it let it be wholly bright. Let there be no dark part within us. Let us examine ourselves often daily, to search out all those recesses of the mind and the heart, and bring the light of the truth of your word into it. Drive out all unbelief, and let us be believing people who rejoice in your goodness, your greatness. For you are our Father, and we exist to bring you glory. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen.