

## THROUGH WHOSE EYES?

### INTRODUCTION

Have you ever stood in front of one of those distortion mirrors? I haven't seen one for a long time. Sometimes you would find them in a shopping center or an amusement park at a carnival or show. They would give a contorted reflection. When you look into these mirrors, your body seems to balloon out of proportion. You see yourself as extremely skinny or overweight. We don't actually look like that, but the warped mirrors make us appear so.

Anyone who has a teenage daughter will understand that you need to be extremely careful in how you describe them. Often, even when they look in a normal mirror, they will see themselves as overweight and unattractive. As a parent, you know that it's not true but due to their stage of life and the effect of peer pressure, they battle to see themselves as they truly are.

How do we see ourselves? Through whose eyes are we looking at ourselves, what is the image we have of who we are and what we can do?

This morning I want to address these questions:

- Through whose eyes do we see ourselves?
- How does God see us?
- What do we need to do to get a proper perspective?

### MESSAGE

**Psalm 139:13-17** (NKJV) For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. 14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. 15 My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them. 17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them!

The words written here by David demonstrate an understanding of who we truly are, we are fearfully and wonderfully made. We are the work of God and it's wonderful. We have been skillfully made by God Himself. He thinks precious thoughts about us!

**Jeremiah 29:11** tells us God has plans for us, plans for good and not disaster.

In Christ, the promise is made even greater, **Ephesians 2:10** says, "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."

What potential, what promise has God implanted into us. We all have the seed in us to be world changers and achieve amazing things and live amazing, powerful, meaningful lives. We are the children of God!

But to many of us, because of how the world has shaped us and the way that people have treated us, or sometimes because of peer pressure, we carry our own sense of inferiority, and it results in us seeing ourselves in a warped or contorted manner like those distortion mirrors make us see ourselves. A poor self-image is no closer to reality than the image reflected by those mirrors, but when we have a wrong view of ourselves, we become disillusioned, focusing on our failures and weaknesses and exaggerating each flaw. This can severely limit us from reaching our true potential as children of God.

***How many of us here today can say we are achieving our full God-given purpose? Can we say we are achieving all that God has given us the potential to achieve? Through whose eyes do we view ourselves?***

### **WE HAVE BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE WHO DIDN'T SEE THEMSELVES THE WAY GOD DID**

Moses is a prime example. In Exodus 3 we read how God approached Him from the burning bush and said, "10 Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

And Moses answered out of his own distorted view of himself, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

God answered, "I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

Moses in his insecurity replied to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?"

What Moses was really saying is this, "surely those people will see me the same way that I see myself I go to them?"

And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" In my own paraphrase, I'd like to say that what God was really saying is this, "it doesn't matter how you see yourself, or how the people see you, I AM WHO I AM, and they need to start seeing you the way I see you!"

The answer is so clear here, Moses says, "Who am I?" and finally God answers, "I AM WHO I AM". The truth here is that the answer to our distorted view of ourselves is not, "Who am I, but "Who is God".

We know that Moses grew from strength to strength and He did become God's chosen leader who had a powerful relationship with God and attained the fullness of who he was in God, leading God's people out of captivity with great signs and wonders.

***How about us this morning? Will we start seeing yourself though God's eyes? Will we keep seeing ourselves through our own eyes, saying, "Who am I?", or will we be willing to step out in boldness knowing that "I AM WHO I AM", the Great IAM has called, prepared and sent us?***

**Gideon is another remarkable example!**

**Judges 6:12, 14-16** And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, "The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valour!" Then the LORD turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?"<sup>15</sup> So he said to Him, "O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." <sup>16</sup> And the LORD said to him, "Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man."

Gideon replied out of His own distorted view of himself, he saw himself as an unlikely candidate to be used by God, he was the weakest of the weak, he was afraid, he was hiding in the winepress threshing his wheat when God came to him. He answered God, "how can I save Israel."

But God encouraged Gideon with these words:

- "The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valour"- "I AM is with you",
- "Have I not sent you?"
- "Surely I will be with you."

Gideon learned that it wasn't about who he saw himself to be and was used by God to deliver the Israelites from their enemy. The most remarkable thing is that God moved and Gideon's small group of 300 men defeated an army of 135000 without having to draw their swords. 120000 enemy soldiers killed each other and then Gideon was willing to go after the remaining 15000. When he focused on the truth that it was all about God, and that the outcome of his calling was not dependent on his own ability, he was able to achieve his God-given calling!

We may see ourselves as being weak and being the least, but just like Gideon, God is saying to us "The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valour!" It's not about how strong, how influential, or how rich we are. It's got nothing to do with how we see ourselves. It's about He who is in you, He who is with you and He who has sent you! He is almighty, He is all powerful and He will give enable you to reach your full potential in Him!

***Are we possibly like Gideon today, afraid, hiding, too small in our own eyes? Do we doubt our qualifications to be used by God? God didn't see Gideon as the least, He saw Him as a mighty man of valour. Not only that but He turned him into one. What about us this morning? What can God do through you and I?***

### **WHEN OUR ENEMIES SEE US AS SMALL AND INSIGNIFICANT**

There are a few examples in the Bible where God's people's enemies saw them as insignificant. Every time it was a mistake.

In Nehemiah 4 while Nehemiah and his people were rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, their enemies had nothing good to say about them. **Nehemiah 4: 1-3** But it so happened, when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, that he was furious and very indignant, and mocked the Jews. 2 And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish—stones that are burned?" 3 Now Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "Whatever they build, if even a fox goes up on it, he will break down their stone wall."

And then we read this:

**Nehemiah 6:15-17** (NKJV) So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days. 16 And it happened, when all our enemies heard of it, and all the nations around us saw these things, that they were very disheartened in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was done by our God.

When we see ourselves through God's eyes, we begin to achieve great feats and the enemy who mocks and scorns us and sees us small is disheartened!

### **David definitely saw himself through God's eyes.**

Possibly the best Biblical example of someone seeing themselves with God's perspective is David. He had experienced who he was in God even as a young shepherd boy and the result was a life filled with powerful heroic acts in the strength of His God.

When David faced Goliath, he heard the enemy's mocking voice making him to be something small and insignificant.

**1 Samuel 17:42-47** (NKJV) And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained (**belittled**) him; for he was only a youth, ruddy and good-looking. 43 So the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44 And the Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!" 45 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 46 This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. 47 Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands."

We know the outcome, God gave David a mighty victory that day and Goliath was defeated once and for all.

***Has the devil been belittling you? Have you been believing his lies? Have you listened to the mocking and responded in fear or in faith?***

***David knew the answer. The question was never who David was? It was who God was? Goliath saw him as a boy with no chance, but God saw Him as a mighty king of Israel?***

## **CONCLUSION**

I'm reminded this morning of who is in me that makes me great! **1 John 4:4** speaks the truth! "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."

I am of God! When I look at myself in faith's mirror, I see a man if God, filled with His Mighty Holy Spirit! I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. If nothing is impossible for God, nothing is impossible for me!

Through whose eyes have you been seeing yourself? Through the eyes of the One who made you fearfully and wonderfully, the One who saw you as so important that He gave His own Son Jesus Christ to pay for your sins? Do you see yourself as one who is filled with the Holy Spirit who is greater than the devil?

Or are you like the person looking in a distortion mirror, warped and contorted view of who you are and the enemy is having a wonderful time robbing you of your full potential in Christ Jesus.