

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

841 Old Hickory Blvd.

Jackson, TN 38305

oldhickorycofc.com

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Spiritual Tunnel Vision

Peter warns that those who lack the “Christian Graces” of 2 Peter 1 are “blind and cannot see afar off.” (V. 9). The phrase “cannot see afar off” is from the Gr. *MUOPAZO*, from which we get the medical term MYOPIA, meaning near sightedness. So there is precedent for comparing a spiritual condition to eyesight – seeing or not seeing properly.

We often speak of keeping our eyes focused on Jesus and avoiding distractions around us, saying things like “looking unto Jesus” in our race as Christians (Heb. 12:2). The analogy of the eye is also used to show the need to be single-minded in relationship of Christ (with all for which He stands) as opposed to being double-minded (like eyes out of focus), trying to serve God and mammon at the same time. (Matt. 6:19-34). In this case, single vision versus double vision, has to do with focusing on the spiritual rather than trying to focus on both the spiritual and material at the same time. This only results in a kind of spiritual blindness.

Another spiritual eye problem has become rather common place among professed Christians of late is that of tunnel vision – the loss of peripheral vision. This pertains to various elements included in the “kingdom of God and His righteousness” upon which we are to focus. Physical tunnel vision robs one of a lot of beauty because he can only see what is right in front of him. He is also unable to see dangers that may be approaching him from the side.

Almost daily, on social media and other outlets, I notice some brother approaching a religious subject by picking out one aspect of the subject and declaring that it is “the thing” of importance and relegating all else on the matter as, at best, secondary or even worse as unimportant. Wittingly or unwittingly, they project themselves as having greater insight than most folks, when in reality their field of spiritual vision is too narrow.

On the subject of salvation. The New Testament mentions several things that have to do with our salvation. But, a tunnel vision brother, sees only “grace” with all else being secondary or unimportant. Another sees “faith” with all else, especially works and obedience, being secondary or unimportant. Once one reaches this point, there is a very small step from “unimportant” to “unnecessary.”

On the subject of reasons and motivations for serving God. We read, in the word, of “love,” “fear,” “duty,” “gratitude,” “hope of heaven,” to “glorify God,” etc. A tunnel visioned brother sees “love” as “the” rather than “a” motive and declares it should not be out of fear; or that it should be out of gratitude and not out of duty; or it should be to “glorify God” and not to avoid hell and go to heaven. One writer even suggested that serving God in order to go to heaven is “selfish” on our part.

If presented with a list of things mentioned in the Bible as contributing to salvation or a list of reasons for obeying/serving God and asked to select which is “the thing of focus,” there is nothing wrong with saying “all the above” and not allowing tunnel-vision to kick in. Our focus should be broad enough to include “all things commanded” (Matt. 28:19). Instead of spending effort poring over the list of things commanded, to select the one of most importance, accept them all. Which ever command is chosen is subjective to the one choosing. So, you have about as many “most important” things as you have people poring over the matter.

- Ed O. Bragwell Sr.

Autobiography in Five Short Chapters

Chapter One

I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in. I am lost... I am hopeless.
It isn't my fault. It takes forever to find
a way out.

Chapter Two

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I am in the same place.
But, I refuse to believe it is my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

Chapter Three

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in ... it is a habit.
My eyes are open.
I know where I am.
It is my fault. I get out immediately.

Chapter Four

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

Chapter Five

I choose to walk down a different street.

— by Portia Nelson

"Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Mark 9:50

SUNDAY SERMONS: Sunday Morning: *"Redeeming Love: Overview of Hosea!"*; & *"The Perfection of Worship!"*

Sunday Evening: *"So Must the Son of Man Be Lifted Up!"*.

WEB: The church's web page: <http://www.oldhickorycofc.com>

Elders: Kent Baumgardner, Gordon Percell & Gary Smalley

Evangelist: Chad Lynn

Sunday AM: 9:30 & 10:30

Sunday PM: 5:00

Wednesday PM: 7:00

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

HEAR THE GOSPEL

(Romans 10:14-17; John 20:30-31; Romans 1:15-17)

BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST

(Acts 8:37; John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6)

REPENT OF PAST SINS

(Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30)

CONFESS CHRIST

(Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37)

BE BAPTIZED

(Romans 6:3-4; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36-39; 1 Peter 3:21)

LIVE A FAITHFUL LIFE

(Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-11; John 15:1-8; Hebrews 10:23-25)