

Jesus' Eyes of Fire: Fear of God and Intimacy with God

INTRODUCTION

Well, tonight we're continuing our series on the descriptions of Jesus in the book of Revelation. For those who are just joining us, what we're doing is identifying the thirty times in Revelation 1, 2, and 3 where Jesus reveals Himself. Of course there are more in the whole book of Revelation. But the reason these self-disclosures, self-revelations of Jesus, or when John identifies a characteristic about Him, are significant, is because this is what Jesus has determined is important to prepare us for the great outpouring of the Spirit, and the great trouble that's described in the book of Revelation. If we know, if we relate to Jesus based on the revelation that He gives of Himself before He describes the great revival and the great trouble, we can be sure that we will be a prepared bride. So we're identifying each one of these descriptions and speaking them back to God. We're declaring them back to God and asking Him for revelations.

GOD, THE MOUNT EVEREST OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

This is our fifth out of a total of twelve sessions. As I've said in each of the other sessions, these are the most challenging dimensions of the Word of God: the subject of God Himself, the attributes of God, the characteristics of God. Probably the most neglected aspect of the kingdom of God is the subject of God. There's a lot of teaching on how to get more blessing from God, or how to do the work of God, or how to relate to the people of God, but the subject of God Himself is often barely touched or not touched at all. So I find this the most challenging dimension of the kingdom of God. I call it the Mount Everest of the kingdom of God, climbing that challenging mountain which is God Himself. The Holy Spirit delights to reveal God to us, but it will take resolve and a vision to go deep in God. It will take some patience. Not many can climb Mount Everest, but the Holy Spirit invites anyone who has the resolve to do it. The reason we don't do it in the Spirit is because it takes effort, resolve, and consistency to stay with it.

THE TWOFOLD DIMENSION OF HIS EYES OF FIRE

Tonight we're going to look at the subject of the eyes of fire that Jesus has. He revealed this to John, and it was a new revelation to John when Jesus stood before him with eyes of fire. John fell like a dead man, as we read in Revelation 1:17-18, but here in Revelation 1:14, it says that "His eyes [are] like a flame of fire" (Rev. 1:14). His eyes speak of His ability to see everything. We all know that, that He sees everything, but the implications are vast. The implication of understanding this, even a little, really affects the way we relate to God in a very powerful way. The more I understand that His eyes are on me, the more I walk in the fear of God, and, secondly, the stronger or the more mature my intimacy with God is. So the two practical applications are, we grow in the fear of God by the revelation of His eyes of fire, but we also mature in our intimacy with God. We see that He sees us; that He feels what we feel; that His eyes are always on us; that we move His heart. He moves our heart as well. The connection is the knowledge of His eyes being on us.

THE OMNISCIENCE OF JESUS

Jesus is omniscient. Most of you are familiar with that term: It means He possesses all knowledge. Everything there is to know, He knows it. There is no fragment of information that He does not possess. He sees the full truth about everything, all the time. I mean, what a statement! He sees the full truth about everything, all the time. He sees through everything in the same way that fire penetrates metal. His eyes of fire penetrate to the core reality and the truth of everything that exists. He sees everything that is good and everything that is evil, without any distortion at all. He sees behind the scenes and below the surface.

THE PURITY AND POTENT PURIFYING POWER OF HIS EYES

Now, knowing this is what equips us to walk in the fear of God and in intimacy. His eyes are like pure fire. He sees without any distortion whatsoever, because fire is not only pure, it also purifies in the natural realm. When there is any defilement in metal, you put it through fire and it becomes purified. If there's defilement in water, you put it through fire, and that's one way of bringing purity to it. Jesus' eyes of fire are not only pure, but they purify us. The implication of His eyes of fire is that He has no distortion of truth, none whatsoever. He has no wrong information; He has no partial information; He has no biases based on His wounding. See, a natural judge, a human judge, even though he may try his best to judge impartially, he's affected by his own dysfunctions as humans, his own woundings, his own bias, his own partial or wrong information. But no implication of the truth escapes the knowledge of Jesus; not the smallest implication escapes His knowledge. He sees the whole thing. Jesus takes careful notice of everything and everyone, good and bad.

“YOU UNDERSTAND MY THOUGHT AFAR OFF”

In Psalm 139:2, David is speaking. This is one of the secrets of David's life: David understood that the Lord's eyes were on him. I mean, truly this is one of the great secrets of the power of his consistent love. If we understood more of what David understood, our love would be more consistent. Here is what David said in Psalm 139: “You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off” (Ps. 139:2). He says, “You know what I'm thinking; even when the thought is being formed in me, You can see it.”

“YOU COMPREHEND MY PATH”

“You comprehend my path” (Ps. 139:3). You know how many times we don't comprehend the path. Someone will say, “Well, why did you do that?”

You say, “Well, to be honest, I don't know why I did it.” But David said about the Lord, “He comprehends the path, how I'm walking and where I'm going.” We don't always know why we do what we do, but we certainly don't know the implications of where it's going to bring us. We might, a little, but the Lord comprehended the implications of the decisions David was making today and where they would take him. David said, “[You] are acquainted with all my ways” —my motives, my thoughts, the implications of my actions—“for there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O Lord, You know it” (Ps. 139:4). David says, “You know it altogether. You know what I meant to say when I said it, but I didn't say it very clearly. You know everything that I intend to say and what I mean to say. You know my words altogether.”

HE KNOWS US BETTER THAN WE KNOW OURSELVES

Of course the Lord knows us far better than we know ourselves. That is why we can trust Him. That is one reason why we trust His leadership more than we trust our own leadership. He knows us far better than we know ourselves. David said, “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me” (Ps. 139:6) —it is high. He says, “I can't even get hold of this. I can't attain it.” Of course, one thing we ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to us is to show us what He sees, and to show us the implications of what He knows. David said, “It is too wonderful; it is awesome. The implications are wonderful. I can't get hold of the fullness of it,” but beloved, we are on the journey to understand these eyes of fire.

HOW PRECIOUS ARE HIS THOUGHTS

“How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!” (Ps. 139:17). This moved David because David understood how God, how Jesus processed His information towards him. Now, he didn't know the name *Jesus*, but he knew the Lord. What Jesus thinks about us is precious to us if we get our minds around it. He says, “How great is the sum of them!” Jesus has so many thoughts about you. The sum total of all that He thinks about in relation to you is very great. It is more in number than the sands of the sea. Did you know that Jesus has more thoughts about you than the number of grains of sand on the seashore? David grasped that. He didn't grasp the fullness of it, but he had a fundamental revelation of the eyes of the Lord. When this touches us, it anchors our life. It makes us steady in our efforts to love God, because so often in our efforts we're giving ourselves and coming up short, but even in the little ground that we gain, David could see the power of that, because he could see that God understood the ground he was gaining. One of our big challenges is that our labors are small. We do our service, it's little, and we're reaching to love God, but it doesn't seem like we get very far, so our increase seems really small and sometimes not at all. The Lord sees the truth about what is in your heart in the good way, not just in the bad away.

THE FIRE OF GOD'S THRONE

Now, God's throne is ablaze with fire. Everything around God is ablaze with fire. It's not surprising to us that His eyes are full of fire, because in all that is around Him, there is a river of fire coming out of His throne. There is a sea of glass before the throne in Revelation 4. It is filled with flaming fire. Seraphim are high-ranking angels; the word *seraphim* means “burning ones.” The purity of fire is all around God's throne, so it's not surprising that Jesus' eyes are eyes of fire, that they are pure.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS FIERY EYES

Jesus' eyes of fire are emphasized three times in the book of Revelation. This is an unusual emphasis. There are only a few characteristics of Jesus that are emphasized three times or more. One of the notable features of the book of Revelation is its brevity. The Lord only gives us whispers about very big subjects. He says, “I will give you the whisper; now you meditate on it, and the Spirit will develop it to you.” He gives a whisper, just a hint of information, about something that will take place in the future. So the very fact that it's mentioned three times is an unusual point of emphasis in the book of Revelation. God's fire does two things: it imparts the good, the holy love of God. It also removes that which is unholy, that which hinders love. So His fire, the purity in His eyes, imparts and removes; it imparts the good and removes the bad. This isn't just figurative, that His eyes are like fire. It is part of the reality of His personhood, and of course Jesus can reveal His full glory, or He can appear with His glory restrained and diminished in terms of the ability of someone before Him to see Him. So He can appear to you without His glory being fully manifest, but when His full glory is being revealed, His eyes are like fire. The Scriptures tell us often to seek His face, but when we seek His face, we encounter His eyes. Though in our life right now we cannot see His face in the direct sense, we are gazing at His face. I tell you, His eyes are like fire. It is in that posture that He imparts to us good things, the love of God. It is in that posture that He empowers us to remove the things that hinder love in our life.

THE DOUBLE-EDGED FIRE OF HIS EYES

Now the fire of His eyes is the fire of grace if we're cooperating with Him even in our weakness or our brokenness; if we're cooperating with Him, those eyes will impart grace to us. To those who are resisting Him, that same stare, that same gaze of His face, will cause trouble, because the fire that warms and imparts grace and warms us is the fire that burns, or the fire that removes the things that get in the way.

AN EXHORTATION TO PURSUE THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS EYES

We are going to look at seven different aspects in this document or handout. We may not get to all of them. I'm giving a little summary of them, not that there couldn't be a larger number. I want to encourage you on your journey of studying the eyes of Jesus, because when you gaze at His face by faith in prayer and worship, this is what we're encountering, the reality of His eyes. Of course we want to experience it more and more.

THE DESIRE IN THE FIRE OF HIS EYES

His eyes of fire reveal His desire. In His eyes of fire there is desire that warms and tenderizes us. In His eyes we understand that He sees our failure, and this causes us to walk in the fear of God. We understand that He sees our longings to love Him. He sees the immature longings that are not fully developed; He sees what I call the budding virtues. He sees our longing; He sees the "yes" in our spirit. While it is barely being formed, He sees it, and that gives us confidence because He honors what He sees. That gives us confidence when we stand before Him, even in our weakness.

THE REMEMBRANCE OF HIS EYES

In His eyes He sees and remembers everything we do in love towards Him, even the weak love we show Him. The fact that He sees and remembers what we do makes every single day relevant. It makes every hour of every day relevant. I don't mean urgent, as if every hour you're in this intense urgency; that's not what I mean. But every hour is relevant, meaning nothing is wasted. No hour is boring when we understand that He sees us, and that He sees even the small giving of our self to Him. Even the small offerings of love He remembers, and they move Him. This makes every day important, whether anyone else sees what you're doing as important or not. The very fact that He sees and remembers crowns your life with glory. He sees you right now. He sees you in three hours, and six hours, and twelve hours sitting there longing to do right before Him. The reaching of your heart moves Him and He records it. You will never have a day that is unimportant, never. There is no day in your life that is not important, and when you understand that God sees it, it really affects and touches us. He sees our burdens; He sees our pain and our struggle. This is one aspect of walking in intimacy with Him; He is with us in all that causes us pain and struggle.

THE GREATNESS REFLECTED IN HIS EYES

He sees our greatness. The Lord sees your greatness far more than you do. He sees who you are to Him and what you're going to be; what you're openly, manifestly going to be. He sees that very clearly right now. Undoubtedly, the person who will be most shocked about how great you are is you. When you see who you are, when all the information is out in the age to come, you will say, "Well, if I had only known that, then I would have lived differently." Well, when we see what He sees, it affects us. He knows our future; He knows the future of the nations, but He knows our individual future. He knows where we're going. That gives us direction and hope. He knows all of our enemies that are going to rise up against us. He has the answer for those enemies, and that answer gives us security.

THE BURNING DESIRE OF JESUS

We're going to look at a few of the implications of those eyes of fire. His eyes of desire: This is speaking of His eyes of fire, revealing His burning desire for us. It isn't just His holiness. Sometimes you will study the fire of God and some will only focus on the purity end, not the desire end of what this fire is about. It is burning desire. The Lord revealed Himself to Moses in Deuteronomy 4:24 as a consuming fire, a jealous God. So when the Lord revealed Himself to Moses, He connected in Moses' thinking to fire and jealous desire. He put the two

together, because the fire in God's desire wants to move everything that gets in the way of our love connecting with Him in a full way. This fire in His eyes, by the Holy Spirit, warms our hearts; it tenderizes us. When I have increased revelation of His desire for me, it tenderizes my heart. It makes me open and receptive to Him in a far greater way.

JESUS, THE JEALOUS BRIDEGROOM

I love to be quiet, close my eyes, and say, "Lord Jesus, I want to gaze into Your eyes. Release the fire of Your desire and touch me." It's one of the prayers that I pray: "Release the fire of Your desire. Let me see how You feel when You look in my eyes. Let me look into Your eyes and let me feel what You see when You look into my eyes." He is more than a healer; He is more than our Master; He is the jealous Bridegroom. He will not relent until He has all of us. We sing songs about that, and that's an awesome truth, but it is real. He is a jealous God, it says in Exodus 34:14. His name is Jealous, or you could say, His name is Jealous Desire. Of course, His jealousy is pure. It is pure, holy, kind love. His name is Jealous Desire for You; Jealous Desire for Truth. He is a jealous God.

THE FULLNESS OF HIS GAZE, AND ITS RESTRAINT

When the disciples encountered Jesus on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:32), of course they didn't see His eyes of fire, but they felt the impact, because any time Jesus appears after His resurrection, He can restrain His glory, or He can manifest His glory. To these disciples on the road to Emmaus He restrained His glory. They didn't know who He was, but they felt the impact of His gaze touching them. They said, "Did not our hearts burn like fire inside of us, especially when He talked to us about the Bible?" When Jesus looked in their faces, of course it was Jesus preaching Jesus. He was looking at them. He had eyes of fire; of course they didn't see it, but they felt the power of it. I put myself in this same position as the disciples on the road to Emmaus. I say, "Lord, speak Your Word to me. Let me feel what You feel. Let me feel the fire and heat of Your gaze. Let me feel it tenderize my spirit."

Now, when the Lord appeared to John, John saw the eyes of fire and he fell like a dead man. He was overwhelmed when the glory was restrained. Well, the Lord wants all of us. That is what these eyes of fire are about. The God of fire is the God who wants all of us. We often pray, "Lord, we want more of You." The Lord says, "Good, I want more of you." We say, "More, Lord!" and He says, "More, My beloved. Give yourself to Me."

THE MUTUAL EXCHANGE OF RAVISHED GLANCES

One of the passages of Scripture the Lord has highlighted in our past in a prophetic way is Song of Solomon 8:6-7. He spoke this passage by the audible voice of the Lord over this movement back in July 1988, a long time ago. He said, "Song of Solomon 8:6". He has given two audible, voice-of-the-Lord directives to this movement. In 1983, twenty-five plus years, He said, "Do twenty-four/seven prayer in the Tabernacle of David. Do night and day prayer with singers and musicians leading the way." This was in May of 1983. Then, five years later, in essence—I'm interpreting, not giving a quotation—He said, "Do that prayer through the lens of Song of Solomon 8:6." And when He spoke that, He said He would release the anointing of Song of Solomon 8:6 upon believers worldwide. I mean, that would happen sovereignly; I don't mean related to us. He said He would do it sovereignly. He would visit ministries and individuals all over the earth and He would emphasize this passage and the reality of it to them.

Song of Solomon 8:6 is the eyes of Jesus locked into us, our eyes and His eyes developing a more continual connection, where the eyes of our heart are fixed on Him and we're receiving from Him, because it's in that posture of being fixed on Him that we receive most from Him. Jesus says in Song of Solomon 8:6, "Set Me as a seal upon your heart" —for, "My love," is what He's saying—"is as strong as death; My love is like flames of fire that cannot be quenched" (Song 8:6, paraphrased). Jesus is saying this through the poetic language of Song of Solomon. "My love is like a vehement flame. It cannot be quenched. Nothing can overpower it; if you yield to it, My fire of love will drive everything out of the way. Nothing can drown it." Nothing is more powerful than the love of God when we yield to it and stay fixed on it. There is no pornography, there is no bitterness, there is no addiction, there is no dysfunction more powerful than His burning eyes, His fiery heart. Many waters could try to quench it, because water puts out fire in the natural, but there is a supernatural fire that the water of sin or persecution cannot overpower if we yield to this fire. Stay steady; stay with it; go hard after it, and when you stumble and fall, repent, push "delete," and get right back in the race within the hour, going hard in confidence, in love. Don't wallow around for a few days or a few weeks licking your wounds with condemnation. Repent, push "delete," and jump right back in the race as a wholehearted lover of God. It's the only way to live.

THE BAPTISM OF FIRE

Now, of the seven, I am obviously spending too much time on this one. This is my favorite one. It's the first one: His eyes of fire impart desire. In Luke 3, John the Baptist spoke and said, "At this time, Jesus will baptize you with fire." This is a good fire; it's a holy fire. In the upper room in Acts 2, 120 people were praying and seeking the Lord for ten days and Jesus baptized them with fire. The way I see this is, Jesus set His gaze upon that prayer room, and the fire of God fell on them, giving them courage and supernatural power at the heart level. These cowardly men became bold. Men and women stood boldly because they had a supernatural fire of God empowering their heart and empowering their love.

THE FEAR OF GOD IN JESUS' FIERY GAZE

We're going to go to the next facet of His fire. His eyes see our failure. This produces the fear of God in us. One definition of the fear of God, though I would add a few things to it in order to have the complete definition, is the awareness that God sees everything. The fear of God is the awareness that He sees everything. The more I'm aware He sees everything, the more I have the fear of God in my heart, the more I am careful because I know it matters. If you know He sees you and you know it matters to Him, then it matters to you. I become more careful because I know it matters to Him. The small things matter to Him, meaning the small reaches of my heart when I say, "Lord, I want to be Yours. I feel dull and sluggish, but I want to give myself to You. I want to be fully Yours today." I can't feel much. I feel dull and sluggish and tired, but it matters to Him, and when I see that and know that, then it's worth reaching to Him because it matters to Him.

THERE IS NO CREATURE HIDDEN

It says in Hebrews 4:13, "There is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account" (Heb. 4:13). All things are naked, meaning He sees the behind-the-scenes truth of every situation in life. Nothing can be masked or altered. The truth of it cannot be hidden from Him. He sees it as it is with no covering. Every single situation in life is open to the eyes of Him. It is Him to whom we give an account. We give an account of our life to a man who is fully God and fully Man; His name is Jesus. The more I know I'm going to give an account for the good and the bad—even the good! It's a

beautiful account, meaning I stand before Him and He says, “Let’s talk about how much you love Me. I see on My record here that you really love Me.”

I say, “Oh, good. I love this! This is great.” You will actually give an account for the love, and though our love feels so weak, it touches Him more than we think.

OUR SOUL’S DESIRE, THE REFINER’S FIRE

In Malachi 3:2, the prophet Malachi links purity with fire, because fire purifies. It purifies metal; it purifies water; it purifies various elements. Malachi 3 is about the end times. Of course the principle is true throughout history, but when Jesus appears or manifests His glory in Malachi 3, it says that He—meaning the Messiah—when He manifests His glory, will manifest it as a refiner’s fire. The refiner’s fire isn’t just a negative. It’s not just, “Ouch, that hurts.” You hear people say, “I’m going through the fire... ouch!” There is an “ouch!” dimension to the fire, but there is a purifying and impartation dimension to the fire, too.

THE WARNING AND WOOING OF JESUS

Now, this is the negative dimension of the fire of Jesus. The reason I’m talking about the negative first is because the other five we’re going to look at are positive. Because when people think about how Jesus sees everything, more often than not, people say, “Oh, no!” Their first thought is dread. That’s because we don’t understand the implications of Him seeing everything. We only think of Him seeing the negative, but in a minute we’re going to see that He sees the positive, not just the negative. Jesus is warning and wooing; He is doing both. He is warning, but He is also wooing them to step out of immorality in the church in Thyatira.

“These things says the Son of God” (Rev. 2:18). He links His eyes of fire when He talks about His desire to remove immorality out of that church in Thyatira. His eyes of fire have a negative and a positive connotation here. These eyes of fire are going to disrupt the lives of believers who will not renounce immorality, but His eyes of fire are going to empower them when they do renounce it. So He’s going to disrupt and trouble to get the attention of believers who will not renounce it and resist it, and those who do will experience His eyes of fire. These eyes are going to impart the glory of God, little by little, and strengthen them on their journey. “These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire... I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants to commit sexual immorality” (Rev. 2:18-20). There was teaching in the church of Thyatira that was soft on immorality, that condoned immorality. They said, “Well, you know, in the grace of God it doesn’t really matter anyway, because we’re more spiritual than we are physical. The physical stuff doesn’t really matter because we’re more spiritual than we are physical.” That is Gnosticism. So she was teaching the superiority of the spiritual realm, meaning that the physical realm didn’t matter that much. Believers were emboldened to stay in immorality and not renounce it or resist it.

“I WILL CAST HER ONTO A SICK BED”

Jesus said, “I really like you, Thyatira.” He says that strongly. He says, “I love you; however, you tolerate this false teaching in your midst. This troubles Me.” In Revelation 2:22, He says, “Here’s what I’m going to do.” You can read the whole passage later on your own in Revelation 2. He says, “I am going to cast this woman into a sick bed to get her attention” (Rev. 2:22, paraphrased). Now, one of the specialties of the devil is putting sickness on people. There are times when the Lord looks at a believer who resists Him, and He woos them and warns them and woos them and warns them. He will cast them onto a sick bed. I’ve heard people say for years,

“Jesus wouldn’t do that.” Well, Jesus says He will. I’m going with Jesus. It’s not His primary way, but when a person He has warned and wooed, warned and wooed, given the positives and the negatives, won’t respond, in order to keep them from utter destruction He will awaken them in this way. The vast majority of sickness on the earth is the result of sin and the work of Satan. We don’t assume someone is made sick by Jesus, but in this extreme case He said, “I will do this.” It’s not the rule, but it’s within His authority and within His wisdom to use this.

AWAKENING AND ARRESTING DEADLY DOCTRINE IN THE CHURCH

In Revelation 2:23 He says, “I am going to go further: I will kill her children with death” (Rev. 2:23, paraphrased). This doesn’t mean her natural children; this means her disciples. This is a reference to believers in the church in Thyatira that were buying into the cheap doctrine of grace. They were buying into the grace of God that made immorality no big deal. Jesus says, “I will kill those disciples to wake them up and to keep them from spreading the infectious doctrine to others; to deliver them so that they don’t go further into deception themselves. I will kill her children, her spiritual children. Here’s what will happen: All the churches in the region of Thyatira” —which is in Asia Minor—“all the churches will do the math, connect the dots, and will know when she is on a sick bed and her disciples are dying that I, Jesus, have searched the heart and the mind, and that I know what I am doing. I have acted in power even in the midst of My Church.” He says, “The rest of the churches in the region will connect the dots, and they will grow in the fear of God.”

Again, this is quite common: Some would teach the grace of God that has no element of Jesus acting this way. And, again, this isn’t Jesus’ primary mode of waking people up, but He does do this, and when we understand it, we understand that He did it because He searched the mind and the heart. He knew the truth and He knew this was the best way to keep the air from spreading, to awake and to arrest this deadly doctrine that was going on in the church there. He says, “They will know I am the One who searches the mind and the heart.”

THE PLANS OF THE HEART LAID BARE

Jesus knows what is happening in our lives. He searches our minds and our hearts right now. He knows if we are planning to sin tomorrow or next week; He knows if we are planning it. Beloved, it’s different if you sin when overtaken in the moment. It’s still important that you don’t do that, that I don’t do that. I’ve done that many times in the thirty-five years that I’ve known the Lord; I’ve sinned in the moment. That is a different thing than a predetermined, “Next weekend I am going to do it.” The Lord takes that at a much more serious level. He has searched the mind; He knows it. He sees the plan and it troubles His heart, because some believers are planning next week to do A, B, and C, or next month or next year when they finally get to that situation where they seemingly can get away with it. The Lord says, “Tell them I search the mind. I know the plans, the good ones and the bad ones.” He not only sees the negative, He sees our longings to love Him. He sees the budding virtues. I’m talking about our desire to love Him that’s not mature; He sees that, too.

THE PRAISE THAT COMES FROM GOD

Now we’re going in the other direction. In 1 Corinthians 4:5, Paul is speaking. He says, “... the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and reveal the counsels of the heart. Then each one’s praise will come from God” (1 Cor. 4:5). This was a surprising truth to the Corinthians. Paul said, “When the Lord comes and reveals the hidden things, He will reveal the counsels and the motives of the heart.” It’s more than the motive. The counsels of the heart are the plans and the stirrings of the heart. He said, “When the Lord

does this, you are going to receive praise from God on the last day.” You say, “Now wait... if He reveals the thinking and the planning of my heart, why would I get praise?”

“Because,” the Lord says, “I see that though you stumbled you were setting your heart to love Me. You were praying. There were times you were even fasting to overcome this and asking for grace. I see the motive of your heart, and I will praise you on that day for the counsel of your heart.”

“But Lord, I stumbled a lot, too.”

The Lord says, “Yes, but you warred against it and it mattered to Me. It moved Me that you warred against it.”

THE GREATEST SURPRISE ON THAT DAY

Beloved, when the Lord reveals the godly counsels of your heart, the longings and the setting of your heart to do right, He will affirm you. He will praise you, which means He will point it out in an affirming way. I think this will be the most surprising thing on the last day. Many believers live with such an awareness of their brokenness that they don't have any esteem for the love they have. They don't count the love; all they do is count the failure. They count what comes up short and don't esteem the setting of their heart, but the Lord does and it moves Him. He sees the “yes” in your spirit even before you walk it out in your character. He sees the “yes” in your spirit, the cry to grow in greater love. He sees every moment of your heart to love Him.

THE SUBTLE STIRRINGS OF OUR HEART TO LOVE

Some of you undoubtedly did things today that grieved the Spirit. When you did that, whether today or yesterday or the day before, you said, “Oh Lord, this is not what I want.”

The Lord says, “Oh, that touches Me.” He sees that movement of your heart and records it in His book. Do you know the way that you move Him? Do you know that every time you repent of compromise, it moves Him and He records it in His book? Jesus sees our desire to obey Him before it is manifest in our character in a mature way. The revelation that a sincere believer is beautiful to God, even in our weakness, causes us to open our spirit and run to Him instead of running from Him.

THE UNNECESSARY BURDEN OF CONDEMNATION

What happens is that many believers, when they stumble, they get such a sense of condemnation, even though they repented, that they feel like it's more appropriate if they put themselves on probation for a few weeks, or a few days at least. They feel like they ought to feel miserable for a while after all they did. If they feel miserable for a few days or a few weeks, then it balances the score out. That is absolutely bad doctrine; it's deception, but if we understand that we are beautiful to Him even in our weakness, then the believer who has repented, who failed, but after they failed, called it “sin,” declared war on it, stood back before the Lord and is now ready to run towards Him; when we do that, we open our spirit in confidence instead of drawing back in shame. We gain nothing by wallowing for a few weeks or a few months in shame to get even.

That is what the devil wants us to do. We close our spirit and think, “I am so bad, I am so bad...”

The Lord says, “Lift your chin up and look Me in the eyes. Let's talk. I love you. I have already forgiven you. Run towards Me. Do you not see how I feel? Do you not know what I know when I see you?”

DESIRE, THE BEGINNING OF VICTORY

Jesus affirms the budding virtues. Our virtues are the good things in our heart towards the Lord. They all start out as a seed and grow over time. Even the desire is the beginning of victory. Victory isn't just what happens when you have the full breakthrough; it begins when you set your heart to obey and you repent a moment after you've sinned. That is when victory begins, when you agree to say, "Yes, that was darkness, and I am Yours. I am Yours."

The Lord doesn't say, "I have heard that a thousand times, you old hypocrite!" That's the devil talking to you. It really is. That is the accuser. The reason I know that voice so well is that I've heard that voice in the sense of my thought life in those early days when I was uncertain about this. Whenever I would stumble, I would say, "Oh, just forget it! I'm a hopeless hypocrite." And the Lord made it clear through His Word, "That is not Me speaking to you. I love the way that you are reaching to love Me. It moves Me."

HIS DELIGHT, OUR DELIVERANCE

When we feel cherished by God, when we receive His gentleness, it makes us confident in love like David did here in Psalm 18. The context of Psalm 18 is that David had been in compromise for sixteen months in Ziklag. For sixteen months he had been living with an element of compromise in his life. David says in Psalm 18:19, "[God] delivered me because He delighted in me" —He liked me.

Now, one of David's comrades could have said, "Wait a second, David, we know that for sixteen months you haven't been walking in the full way that you've known to walk."

David would have said, "That is right, but I repented, and the reason God delivered me is because He likes me." When I first began to connect with this, I thought, "David, the audacity, the boldness, to think God delighted in you! You haven't even been in full repentance for twelve hours yet, and you're convinced that God delivered you because He likes you so much." I looked right and left and said, "Hey, it worked for him! I am going to start running with this. This looks good to me."

The Lord delivers you not because He's going to delight in you but as a believer you've come to repentance; He says, "I delight in you right now. That is why I'm delivering you."

"Well, Lord, why do You not like me in a year or two, when I improve?"

"No, no. I like you. I see the movements of your heart."

THE GENTLENESS THAT MAKES US GREAT

David went on to say in Psalm 18:35, "God's hand upheld me," and he said to the Lord, "It was Your gentleness that moved me. It is Your gentleness that makes me great. Because You are gentle towards me, I will cast this off and I will grow up to be a great man of God" (Ps. 18:35, paraphrased)—not a famous man. He didn't say, "Your gentleness made me famous," but beloved, any believer can be great in God's eyes, because greatness in God's eyes is about loving Him, and about humility in the secret place of our heart. David said, "Because You are gentle towards me, I don't quit, but I keep pressing in."

Jesus sees our works. The fact that He sees everything that we do and our works—most of the works we do in our entire life are very small and seemingly unimportant. I've talked to people over the years and there is a great pain, which is really a distraction, but I do understand it. I've talked to many people through my thirty years of pastoring and they say, "I want to do something big for God." What they mean by that is, they read the one book of that one guy who had stadiums filled, and that is what they meant by, "Something big for God." They meant lots of people, or everyone knew about it, or it changed everything in the nation. There are a few people in history who have impacted millions of people by what they do, but ninety-nine percent of all human history, good and bad, what is done by ninety-nine percent of the human race only impacts a few people. That's not bad. What happens is, a lot of people get distracted by wanting something big, so that everything they do until then isn't important. That's a total distraction. Ninety-nine percent of all the people in the Body of Christ in history will only do small things. So if we get fixated on only having millions being impacted, that will probably never happen to ninety-nine percent of the people, or even 99.9999 percent of the people, but they are lost in this disillusionment, in this dissatisfaction of smallness.

The Lord says, "You do not understand. Every small thing that you do, I write it in My book. It moves Me. I remember it; I see it; I esteem it. I will reward you for everything you do." Beloved, it is the revelation that He sees the small things, that His eyes of fire can see through all the different mindsets of men. He sees the small things, the things that are obedient to Him; He esteems them and remembers them forever.

THE DAY WILL REVEAL OUR WORKS

Most of you know the passage in 1 Corinthians 3: "If anyone builds on the foundation of their life" —well, the foundation is Christ Jesus in their life, but if they build on that foundation with "gold, silver, and precious stones," or with "wood, hay, and stubble," then on the last day, when we stand before God, "each person's life work will become clear, for the Day will declare it" (1 Cor. 3:12, paraphrased). It will be revealed by fire: "The fire will test each one's work" (v. 13, NKJV). This is talking about their life work and all the individual acts of service. The fire of Jesus' eyes is testing it.

"If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward" (1 Cor. 3:14). Now, some people get the wrong idea that the work means how big the work is, and how famous they became through the work. The thing that's shocking when it says in 1 Corinthians 3:13, "The work will become clear," is that it will be clear on that day how important the little things are to Jesus. Many people can't see with clarity the importance of what they're doing. "Well, I help in this way... You know, I drive the shuttle bus."

"Well, what is your ministry?"

"I drive the shuttle bus and encourage a few people along the way. I pray for the sick every now and then. One guy got healed three months ago, and I led three people to the Lord, but... well, I'm not sure they were led to the Lord, but I tried, and I do drive the shuttle bus. I don't do anything important."

What? Beloved, that is significant to God. Every one of those points is significant to God. Sitting there in your chair when your heart feels sluggish, reaching to God, saying, "Lord, I want to be more Yours; I want to study Your Word; I want to give myself."

The Lord says, "I write it all in My book. All of that will become clear and evident on that day."

I think what will shock us is how important and how big the little things are. You will receive a reward; your life will be revealed. I don't know that it's most, but many people have the image that what is big is good. Big can be good, if it's the will of God, but remember that 99.9 percent of the Body of Christ in all of history has only done small things. That is the will of God, and that is good. They will be rewarded in a very surprising, very big way when they stand before God.

“NOT UNJUST TO FORGET ANY OF OUR WORK”

So as I get hold of this, it makes every hour important. Again, I'm not talking about the urgency of making sure I'm being intense every hour between now and the Lord's return, or when I meet Him. That's not what I mean, but I mean that every hour I can pause and know that His eyes are on me. “I love You.” Even the times when we're just enjoying Him. There are down times; there are intense times. There are all kinds of times, but every single day is important now. It says in Hebrews 6:10, “God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love.” The labor of love which you have shown in His name, He remembers. His eyes see it and His eyes of fire see it, so the fire can penetrate to the truth of it. He doesn't see the smallness of it and say, “Oh, forget it; it's only a small thing.” His eyes of fire see the truth of it. If there was another person, they would see it without eyes of fire and they would not esteem it in the way He does. His fire sees right to the core of the goodness that is in your heart, the desire to love Jesus while serving the saints.

“God is not unjust to forget any of our work” (Heb. 6:10, paraphrased). It is the love you show towards Him when you serve others. When you drive the shuttle bus, it's because you love Him. You are driving it because you want to be helpful to His cause. He says, “I see it. I will never forget driving the shuttle bus.” That's not my big point today, but I was talking about it the other day. Jesus said, “Assuredly I say to you, if you give a cup of cold water, I will never forget the smallest deed that you do” (Mt. 10:42, paraphrased).

THE FREEDOM OF KNOWING THAT HE SEES

We're going to end with this; then I will leave you the rest of the notes to read on your own, but when we understand that He sees, then we are not compelled to make sure everyone else sees. The more I understand that He sees, the less I'm compelled to tell you all that I'm doing. When I don't think that He sees, then I have to make sure you see. When we know that He sees, then we don't have anything to prove because it's already being proven before Him. It's already being proven. This is such liberty. I'm not saying I'm there, but I've gained ground over the years. It's a liberating feeling to know that it's already been proved in the secret place. I don't just mean in your private prayer life, though that is true, but I mean the secret things you do in service have already been manifest to Him. They are proven; they are manifest. We don't have to make sure everyone knows, because He knows, and it gives you power in your spirit to know that He knows.

You can read the others on your own time. We are out of time.

Let's go ahead and stand.

MINISTRY TIME

Oh, I love the eyes of the Lord. They terrify me, but they warm and tenderize me. He sees... oh! That is tender and terrifying at the same time.

Let's all stand before the Lord. Even before the worship team starts, let's wait on the Lord for a few minutes. I invite you all to close your eyes for a minute. We're going to gaze into His eyes of fire. They see everything. Their fire sees everything. Holy Spirit, come and touch us. Let's wait for a moment. Lord, I ask You to release fire on us right now, even like You did in Acts 2. Release Your fire right now, Lord.

I want to encourage you not to look around the room right now. Lock into His eyes. We can lock in faintly through our imagination into His eyes of fire, but He is staring at you. He has a smile now when He sees you. Get that frown out of your mind. He is smiling. His eyes are bright, but there's a smile on His face. Even when He looks at you, there is a smile and bright eyes. They pierce through all the traffic, and He sees your longing to be His. That moves Him.

Lord, release Your fire right now. Some of you are ensnared in various levels of immorality. Privately, you are saying, "Lord, I say 'no' to that. Release Your fire on my heart. Give me power at the heart level. Help me; help me."

The Lord says, "Stay with it. Stay with it; I will help you. I will help you. Lock into My eyes. Stay with it for weeks and months. Don't give up in ten days and say, 'Well, it's not working.'"

Holy Spirit, release Your fire right now. More, Lord! Here we are, Lord. Gaze on us right now, tonight, I ask You. Here we are, Lord. More, Lord. Release Your presence in this room on every single person, I ask You. We're going to wait a little longer. Some of you can feel His presence resting on your shoulders, your chest, or your face. If you feel that, I want you to come on up to these lines up here. Stand on these lines so the ministry team can come. We're going to keep waiting. As the instruments play, we're going to keep waiting. Lord, release Your fire right now; release Your glory on us, and Your eyes of fire. Lord, like how in the upper room tongues of fire fell on them, I ask that Your presence would touch us in our weakness right now. Increase the manifestation of Your glory right now in this room. All across the room; don't disconnect because you're not up front. Lord, I ask You to release a spirit of glory upon everyone in this room. Come and touch us with Your eyes of fire. We love You. We have set our hearts to love Jesus. Whisper to Him in your own way: "I love You; I am Yours." Say a couple of phrases to Him in the next few moments. "I am Yours. I hate the compromise I am ensnared in. That is not what I want. I love You, Jesus. I am about You."

The Lord says, "I see your heart. Do you know the way you move Me right now?" the Lord says. "Do you know?" says the Lord. "Do you know the way you move Me? Do you know? Do you know you have caught My eye? My attention is on you. You chose to die to that thing and love Me. For My eyes are like fire. I see the truth of your heart. I will set your heart on fire."

I want to invite anyone in the room who wants, to come up and pray for people. If you are visiting, you're still welcome, if you love Jesus, to pray for people if you want. Just ask the Lord to increase the manifestation of His glory on them. "Release Your power. Release the spirit of revelation upon them right now, I ask You Jesus."



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