

Short-sighted Vision or Eternal Perspective?

*M*yoopia is a visual defect in which distant objects appear blurred. The root word means “closing or contracting the eyes.” Another meaning for myopia is short-sightedness or lack of discernment in thinking or planning.

Many who are struggling with difficult relationships experience spiritual myopia by focusing so long on the pain and injustice in their lives that hope has become blurred and distorted.

A diagnosis of spiritual myopia reveals side effects of bitterness, negative thinking, and loss of perspective. The blame game becomes the sport of choice as wounded people accuse others and God for the misery in their lives.

The cure for spiritual myopia is a daily dose of gratitude for what you *have* instead of focusing on what you have lost.

Columnist William H. Smith wrote, “If you are a Christian, the Holy Spirit has planted a seed of gratitude in your heart. As you look at life through the eyes of faith, you’ll see many expressions of your heavenly Father’s goodness. And as you face with faith the sometimes harsh realities of life, you’ll see that the really important things can’t be taken away. The Father’s love, the forgiveness of sins, the promise of the resurrection are blessings you can’t lose. The seed of gratitude, watered with faith, can produce a great harvest of thanksgiving in your life”

As you see more clearly through the lens of faith, you will see how God used difficult things in the past to strengthen your faith and prepare you for the future. Instead of asking why, ask God to show you the lessons He wants you to learn as a result of your struggle.

Through the lens of eternity, your moments of pain quickly pass by like a blip on a radar screen. Aren’t you glad the scripture says “And it came to *pass* . . .” instead of “And it came to *stay!*”

“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.” (Psalm 30:5)

In case your vision needs a little tweaking, here are a list of treasures for which you can be thankful—which can never be destroyed, stolen, or lost by foolish living:

Identity—God placed within the heart of every person the desire to be known. Many people live their entire lives being defined by other people’s opinions and labels.

“She’s the fat lady who wobbles when she walks.”

“That’s the lady who has been divorced twice already.”

How have you been defined? Do you live on the basis of that description or does the passion of the *real you* shine through?

Your true identity comes from God and can never be diminished by your poor choices or others’ opinions.

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you.”

(Jeremiah 1:5)

When you suffer from being misunderstood or unappreciated, God understands your motives and celebrates your strengths and potential to become the person He had in mind when you were created.

When your longing to be known and accepted leaves you lonely and frustrated, remember that God has placed within you a desire that cannot be completely fulfilled except through Him.

You are all God says you are, and you can become all He intended you to be . . . if you take back your identity from the pockets of other people and give it back to God who created you as an imagebearer of Himself. If you need a reminder of who you are in God’s sight, read Zephaniah 3:16-17 and Psalms 139:13-16.

Stop living in the shadow of someone else, and give up trying to adapt yourself to the expectations of others. God has designed you to be free, creative, unique, and valued for who *you* are.

Your legal identity can be stolen, but no one can ever take away the essence of who God created you to be. Even if you have been verbally assaulted and beaten down for years, God can restore you, renew your spirit, and breathe new life and passion into your soul.

“When God comes to bind up our broken hearts, He does more than bandage the wounds. He heals them. He does more than turn on a light. He shows you things you never dreamed of seeing. He does more than pat you on the head and tell you to run along and play. He asks you to dance.”

“When God comes to rescue His beloved, there is never anything bland or routine about His coming. He comes in glory and in strength with astounding, take-your-breath-away love and devotion.” (Angela Thomas, *Do You Think I’m Beautiful*)

Love—Before you become cynical or minimize this treasure as just another cliché, wrap your mind around a quote from Max Lucado:

“You have not lived one unloved day—ever!”

If you don’t *feel* loved, perhaps you have been looking for love in all the wrong places. If your source of love is other people, you will be disappointed and disillusioned. God is the only source of true, lasting, unconditional love.

“I have loved you, my people with an everlasting love. With unfailing love I have drawn you to myself. I will rebuild you . . . You will again be happy and dance merrily with tambourines.”
(Jeremiah 31:3-4 NLT)

If you have put life on hold because a parent or spouse has withheld love or deemed you unworthy of love, you have been duped by a lie from the enemy of your soul.

When you approach life from a loved position, it changes everything! Instead of feeling “less than” or intimidated, you can face life with confidence and courage, knowing you are not defined by the opinions of others, but by the perfect love of El Shaddai.

“Because I love Zion, because my heart yearns for Jerusalem, I cannot remain silent. I will not stop praying for her until her righteousness shines like the dawn, and her salvation blazes like a burning torch. The nations will see your righteousness. Kings will be blinded by your glory. And the Lord will give you a new name. The Lord will uphold you in His hands for all to see—a splendid crown in the hands of God. Never again will you be called the Godforsaken City or the Desolate Land. Your new name will be the City of God’s Delight and the Bride of God, for the Lord delights in you and will claim you as His own. Your children will care for you with joy, O Jerusalem, just as a young man cares for his bride. Then God will rejoice over you as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride.” (Isaiah 62:1-5 NLT)

Although this was God’s message to the nation of Israel, it is also His message **to you** today:

*“Because I love you, _____(**insert your name**), I am praying for you that you will become the woman of beauty and passion I had in mind when you were created. Instead of being called _____ or _____, your new name is _____. You are my beloved, and I take great delight in knowing you intimately.”*

Hope—If you place your hope in finances or social status, you may find yourself in a desperate situation when the stock market crashes or job security is lost.

If you place your hope in family (even your church family), you may find yourself disappointed, disillusioned, and misunderstood when you don’t meet their expectations or when they fail to meet your needs.

Life is not fair; justice cannot always be served; and sometimes the bad guys win. But our hope does not come from this world system—it comes from God alone. When you seek God as your source of hope, you will not be disappointed.

“O Lord, you alone are my hope.”
(Psalm 71:5)

Eternal Life—When life is hard, and the pain of living seems unbearable, remember that you are living in a fallen world, which is just a temporary corridor to the lavish home God has created for those who receive His gift of love, Jesus Christ.

Since disease, bullets, accidents, or terrorist attacks cannot ultimately destroy you, live every day with a grateful heart for the eternal blessings and treasures God has provided for you to enjoy. By celebrating life to its fullest, you will bring glory to God who deserves all our praise!