

Seeing The Unseen

Introduction:

The unseen has a great bearing upon the life of a Christian.

The very fundamentals of our faith involve the unseen.

We are to look to Christ and follow Him as the unseen object of our faith.

Heb. 12:1,2 “Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **2** fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Hope involves the unseen.

We have not seen heaven but through the word of God we believe it exists and hope to go there in the sweet by and by.

Paul stated that the unseen was a necessary element in constituting hope.

Rom. 8:24,25 “For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one also hope for what he sees?

25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.”

No one can deny the unseen and be a Christian!

If so, he would be a Christian without faith and hope for both of these great principles look to the unseen!

I. Reality Of The Unseen

A. Many Deny The Unseen In Religion

1.) Many Say “Seeing Is Believing”

2 Cor. 5:7 “for we walk by faith, not by sight—“

They walk by appearance.

They are influenced by the things that are seen.

They live for wealth, honor, splendor, praise, for the objects this world can furnish, and as if there were nothing unseen, or as if they should not be influenced by the things unseen.

The Christian has a firm conviction of the reality of the glories of heaven; of the Redeemer there; of the fact that there is a crown of glory; and he lives, and acts believing these are all real.

2.) Thomas: “Unless I shall see...”

Jn. 20:24,25 “But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore were saying to him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them, “Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.””

Many today are unwilling to believe because they do not see the Lord Jesus, and with just as little reason as Thomas had.

B. We Depend On The Unseen Daily

It is inconsistent and actually absurd to deny the unseen in religion when we accept evidences of thousands of unseen things around us day by day.

1.) The Mind

The inward man is one of the unseen things.

2 Cor. 4:16 “Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.”

A man said he would not believe in God until he could see Him.

Will he refuse to believe he has a brain until he sees it?

Even if a man would say, I know I have a brain due to anatomy studies, or pictures, etc., what have they but the brain – which is but a vessel for the mind. Our grey matter is not our mind, but its container.

2.) Electricity

Its effects are quite apparent, but who can actually see electricity!

It is evident all around us. We are surrounded by it; we order our very lives around it. (Let the A/C go out for a few hours if you don't believe it.)

But by direct observation, what can you prove of it?

3.) Law Of Gravity

We accept it as evident, but again who sees it?

4.) Atoms: Protons, Neutrons,

It is said that all substance is made up or composed from myriads of atoms -- who sees then?

Heb. 11:3 “By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.”

What about invisible gases: oxygen, nitrogen, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, etc.? Magnetic fields? Radio waves? X-rays? Microwaves? And hundred of other things.

C. Behind The “Seen” Is The “Unseen”

1.) Matter Does Not Create Matter

Mind is behind every existence of matter.

The ancients had a saying, “Ex Nihilo, Nihil Fit” which was to say, “From nothing, nothing comes.”

2.) The Mind Of God Is The Original Source Of All

What is a flower? God's thought.

Why a tree? God thought it out. Why whales, shrimp, crabs, dogs, etc.

How about the Bible? God and Christ are behind it.

2 Pet. 1:21 “for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

D. The Seen Is Temporal (And Therefore Decaying)

All physical things are rapidly passing away.

Death and decay are written on the wings of time.

1 Jn. 2:17 “And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”

All things are transient.

He who does the will of God builds on eternal foundations.

Is passing away – present.

There is consolation in this view of the transitoriness of the conflict with the world.

Even the lust which belongs to the world passes also.

The one who keeps on doing the will of God “abides for ever” amid the flux of transitory things.

2 Cor. 4:16-18 “Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

II. Recognize That Seen Things Do Not Satisfy

A. The Seen Does Not Satisfy

As a general rule, the more men have they more they want.

Ecc. 5:10,11 “He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance with its income. This too is vanity.

11 When good things increase, those who consume them increase. So what is the advantage to their owners except to look on?”

1 Tim. 6:7-10 “For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.

8 And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.

9 But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.

10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang.”

Heb. 13:5 “Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,”

We should not love and trust in money because the unseen God has promised to love us and support us in trouble. He is the one we should trust. He has our souls best interest in mind.

B. Money Will Not Buy The Best Or Most Important Things

Love, faith, forgiveness, a good conscience, and heaven.

These things are gained when we trust the unseen God.

III. Appreciate The Power Of The Unseen

A. Abraham Passed Great Tests Of Faith

Heb. 11:10,19 “for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.”

19 “He considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him back as a type.”

Abraham had a great belief in what he could not see that sustained him.

B. Moses Was Able To Faithfully Stand

Heb. 11:27 “By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.”

C. Christ Endured The Cross

Heb. 12:2 “fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

D. Paul View Of Afflictions

2 Cor. 4:17,18 “For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

All current afflictions “light” - in view of the “weight” of glory.

They are “but for a moment” in view of eternity.

The key is: “we look...at the things which are not seen.”

IV. Losing Sight Of The Unseen

Losing sight of or denying the unseen accounts for the actions and attitudes of many:

A. Atheist (Directly Denies The Unseen)

Ps. 14:1 “The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good.”

Yet the evidence of the unseen is as obvious as electricity, oxygen or gravity. (In fact, man knew about God long before He found about the others.)

Ps. 19:1 “The heavens are telling of [declare] the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.”

B. Modernist And Materialist Live Only According To What Is Seen

2 Cor. 5:7 “for we walk by faith, not by sight--”

To walk by sight is to be under the influence and persuasion of things seen and temporal.

It is the one essential characteristic of the worldly man that his judgments and decisions are made, his affections are ruled, and his conduct is ordered by “the fashion of this world” – even though God made man “in His own image.”

This is wrong on every level.

C. Reject The Necessity Of Baptism – Seeing Only Water

These see only the water not the form of obedience.

Rom. 6:17-18 “But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,

18 and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”

Rom. 6:3-5 “Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection,”

Col. 2:12 “having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”

D. Fall Away When The Unseen Is Forgotten

Luke 8:14 “And the seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity.”

When we forget what we know about the unseen we are in deep trouble.

2 Pet. 1:8-11 “For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.

10 Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

11 for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.”

V. Salvation In The Unseen

Christians must see the unseen – a man will not be a Christian until he takes his eyes off the seen and turn to:

A. An Unseen Savior To Obey

Heb. 5:7-9 “In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.

8 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

9 and having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation”

B. An Unseen Home Awaiting

Jn. 14:1-3 “Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.

2 In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”

Conclusion:

We must open our eyes to the unseen - keep them on the world to come.

Tit. 2:13 “looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus”