

## **The Eyes of the Lord**

*Dwayne Spradlin*

All of us have known a few people in our lives whom we deem extremely wise. Individuals such as those are deeply cherished by us. We seek their advice on many matters and especially those we consider very important. It is for that reason the book of Proverbs holds a special place in our hearts. We should each seek to glean from Solomon's wisdom at our every opportunity.

In Proverbs 15:3 we find these words; "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, watching the evil and the good." [All Scripture references are taken from the New American Standard Bible unless otherwise noted.] What greater words of comfort could a person find? In our everyday activities, there are countless times we surely should be thankful that the Creator of the Universe is watching us.

Good parents always watch over their children. God placed under their stewardship the responsibility of caring for those precious little souls. If we happen to hear of a parent who did not fulfill that duty, we are appalled! We cannot comprehend such negligence! Good parents watch their children even when the children are not aware of those eyes looking over them.

### **HE'S EVERYWHERE**

In one of his literary compositions, Andrew Murray told how he felt about God when he was a child. There were times he felt compelled to do something he

#### THE EYES OF THE LORD

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should not. He just knew that God was watching him no matter what he did. But, he felt that if he hid under the house, God could not see him!

Many adults are just like that writer. They may not hide under houses, but they want to hide just the same! So many today involve themselves in behavior they know very well is not pleasing to God. They seem to feel that if the *church* does not know, they have been able to “get away with it.” Satan certainly encourages thinking of that nature. He appeals to the “lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life,” according to 1 John 2:16.

Parents are said to have “eyes in the backs of their heads.” A *Family Circus* cartoon showed one of the children standing behind his grandmother, raising her hair. “What are you doing,” she inquired? “I’m looking for the eyes in the back of your head,” he replied. I never checked to see if my parents had eyes there, but they surely seemed to! Some may argue that God cannot have eyes because He is a Spirit, but the Scriptures tell me His eyes are upon us and that is good enough for me.

David wrote in Psalms 34:15-16, “The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and his ears are open to their cry. The face of the Lord is against evildoers, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.” *He’s everywhere!* We must understand that! John penned these words in the Revelation, “And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds” (Rev. 20:12). If our deeds are displeasing to God, no matter how much good we do, God will not be happy. Too many seem to feel that God will compare the good we do to the evil we do, and if

the good outweighs the evil, He will then ignore the bad! God does not “wink” at sin, no matter how much good we do!

There is not a single action taken by man that passes God’s attention! Too often mankind forgets that it is God who is the Creator and we are the created! Whether we are involved in things that are good or things that are evil, God is watching us and He takes every deed into account.

### HAS GOD QUIT LISTENING?

God’s eyes are always on us. The prophet Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 59:2, “But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.” Even though God is indeed *watching* us, we can act in a manner that causes God to quit *hearing* us. No one enjoys attempting to speak to another person and have that person ignore what he or she is saying. We certainly do not want God to ever quit hearing us.

Sin is in direct opposition to God. It is contrary to all that He is and all for which He stands. When we are living in sin, God *cannot* hear us. His ears are reserved for those who are walking in the footsteps of Jesus. At times, we hear people complaining that it seems God does not hear their prayers. Perhaps those individuals need to take a very close look at their relationship with God to see if they are in obedience to Him! A man once complained to his preacher that it seemed no matter how hard he tried when he prayed God never heard him. “Perhaps He is busy taking care of His regular customers,” the preacher replied.

We often think of sin as being only something “really bad” – something like stealing or hurting a child or

#### THE EYES OF THE LORD

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some such thing. Certainly those are horrible things to do, but the very definition of sin makes it far more inclusive than just those “horrible” things. God established a plan when He created man. He wanted man to live in a particular manner, much the same as the way we feel when we bring children into the world. We want them to live in a particular manner. When we fail to live up to God’s expectations, we “miss the mark,” or we sin! Therefore, any act of disobedience toward God is a sin, no matter how “big” or how “little” the act is in our mind. God sees our sins. We cannot hide them from Him.

Even someone as great as King David found that He could not hide his sins from God. David was a “man after God’s own heart,” yet he was still subject to weaknesses of the flesh, and he succumbed. Nathan was sent by God to David to confront him concerning the matter of his adultery. He approached David in a subtle manner. David was not aware that Nathan was speaking of him (2 Sam. 12:1-4). In that passage, Nathan told a story about a rich man and a poor man. The poor man had nothing but a little ewe lamb he had bought and nourished. It had grown up with him and his children. A traveler came and the rich man was unwilling to take from his own flock to prepare for the traveler. He took the poor man’s lamb and fed it to the traveler. David’s anger “burned greatly against the man” (2 Sam. 12:5) when he heard the story, and he declared that the man who had done such a thing deserved to die! What a shock it was when Nathan said, “You are the man” (2 Sam. 12:7)!

Too often we are far too much like David. James teaches in James 4:17, “Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.” Any attempt to hide any sin from the eyes of God is futile. Not only that, it is self-destructive! We *need* God’s eyes on us!

We should *want* God's eyes on us! We do *not* want Him to quit watching us and certainly we should never want Him to quit *listening* to us!

### WE WANT TO BE VICTORIOUS

James wrote, "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (Jas. 1:12). Life contains a series of trials! Paul writes in Romans 8:11, "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you." Far too many people look at the Christian life as one that is "attained" rather than one that is "obtained." They look at it as a life "changed" rather than one that is "exchanged." They look at it as a life of "suppression" rather than a life of "expression." All of these things affect the manner in which we go about our daily lives. All of us want to be victorious in our Christian lives! When the time comes, we want to be like the apostle Paul and be able to say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7). God wants us to be able to say that! He wants us to be victorious! For that very reason God's eyes are always on His children. It is as the psalmist wrote, "The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and His ears are open to their cry" (Psa. 34:15). When we are being tried, God is right there! He cares! We do not have to let Satan beat us down and make us feel guilty when we fail to obtain the perfection we so earnestly desire!

The apostle John reminds us that we can actually have a life that is free from sin! I did not say a life that is sinless; rather, I mean we do not have to bear the guilt of sin if we are in a covenant relationship with Christ! John

#### THE EYES OF THE LORD

---

wrote, "But if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). The word "fellowship" means "joint participation." We have "joint participation" with Christ, and His blood cleanses us from all sin! Paul wrote in Romans 4:3, "For what does the Scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.'"

Satan delights in seeing us "mess up." The more often we do that, the better he likes it. He is hoping that we will soon grow discouraged and no longer try to serve God. He is hoping that we will find it easier to just follow him. However, knowing that God's eyes are always on us should encourage us to never quit! Jesus did not quit when He was on trial. He did not quit when He was being beaten. He did not quit when He was on the cross. He had a task put before him and He was resolved to complete it! Such should be the case with each of us. In the latter part of Hebrews 12:2, the author said of Jesus, "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."

Jesus knew when He completed the task set before Him that joy was His! He was going to return to His Father's side and wait for the faithful to follow! He was the "first fruits" of the harvest. He paved the way. May we never put our hands to the plow and look back. We must keep our eyes on Jesus and look for the victory of which we have been assured. When we say that the Christian life is one "obtained" rather than one "attained," we mean that God offered eternal life to us because Jesus was willing to pay the price for us. It is ours to "obtain." If we trust in Jesus and the grace of God, it is ours. We can never earn nor merit it. Jesus told us in Matthew 11:28-29, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give

you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

All Christians want to have victory and are promised victory through the blood of Jesus. The apostle Paul made that abundantly clear in Romans 8:31, when he asked the question in a rhetorical manner, “What shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?”

### **WE WANT CLOSE COMMUNION WITH GOD**

What a wonderful relationship with God we perceive Adam and his wife, Eve, must have possessed before the Fall. Sin interrupted that wonderful experience. It does the same for so many today. When the Bible speaks of Satan being “like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pet. 5:8), it brings fear into our hearts! We do not want to have that wonderful relationship with God taken from us that we “obtained” from Him! For that reason we find tremendous comfort in the proverb recorded in Proverbs 5:21, “For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord, and He watches all His paths.” God did not create us, save us and then forget us! He is there! His eyes are on us and He will protect us! We do not have to live a life of suppression. Paul wrote in Romans 8:1, “There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” He also reminded us in Romans 8:37, “But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.”

What greater promises could we ask for? Again and again God lets us know in His word that He is right there! His eyes are on us! He will direct our steps if we will let go and let Him! He will “drive the car” and we will not have to fear any “wrecks.” One of our biggest problems is we let Satan make us think that God is not there and that

## THE EYES OF THE LORD

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God does not care. What a horrible lie! He will never leave you nor forsake you—never forget that. Proverbs 12:21 reminds us, “No harm befalls the righteous, but the wicked are filled with trouble.”

### **WE WANT TO BE SATISFIED WITH THE LORD**

A tremendous battle continually ensues in so many lives. Our “wanter” never seems to be satisfied! Satan is banking on that! He came to Jesus after Jesus had been fasting forty days and nights (Matt. 4:1-11). Every temptation Satan tried to use on Jesus was based on something he thought Jesus might “want” or desire. He does the same thing with us. The carnal flesh has an insatiable appetite. It is never satisfied. That is why we need to make certain we “exchange” our life!

When we receive a gift of some sort or make a purchase, there are times we find that what we received was not at all what we wanted. So, we take the item back to the store and “exchange” it. We take only the new item home with us; we do not take both the new and the old.

That is what Paul was writing about in Galatians 2:20. He wrote, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” We exchange our life without Christ for one where He lives in us! Jesus told the woman at the well, “But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life” (John 4:14). Note particularly that Jesus said, “whoever.” This means that every one of us will never be unsatisfied when we truly become God’s child! The Lord never writes a check with



funds insufficient to back it up! If He makes a promise, He will keep it. His "bank account" never runs dry!

Jesus made a wonderful statement in John 16. He said in John 16:18-19, "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you." The "world" that Jesus is speaking of in that place is the world where Satan dwells. It is the carnal world. The Christian has been "born again" and is now a part of the kingdom of God. There is nothing in that old world that the Christian should want or need. All that we want or need can be found in Christ. Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:3, "Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." What more could we want? What more could we ask? The "world" does not have the ability to provide for us what we truly need. Only God can do that!

### **WE WANT A LIFE THAT IS FULL OF INFLUENCE**

When you pause to think of the many people each one of us is acquainted with, it becomes almost overwhelming. Family members alone comprise a fairly large number without considering the friends, neighbors, business associates and others. Put another factor into the equation. How many of them are Christians? It is very likely you can see a large number of individuals who do not have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Hence, they will spend eternity in hell. That is a sobering thought!

What can be done? The answer lies close at hand. Each year I till the soil in my little garden. I rake it, fertilize

## THE EYES OF THE LORD

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it, prepare it and then I plant the seeds. Every day or so I take the hose and gently water the soil. That is all I can do. I cannot make the seeds grow; that is beyond my power, my control. One day, however, when I walk out to my garden, there will be tender young sprouts coming up from the soil. God gave the increase! I don't know who "mother nature" is, but I know who God is! He gave the increase!

God is concerned about making those tiny plants spring forth from the ground. Yet they only live for a short time and are either consumed or die. How much more concerned must He be about the souls of men who will live on forever? Jesus said in Matthew 6:26, "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?"

Every time we plant the Word of God into the hearts of men, God's eyes are on us! He knows that the seed has been planted and He cares! And He will do all that is within His power to see to it that the planted seed grows! Paul wrote to those at Corinth, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth" (1 Cor. 3:6).

If we are truly concerned about the souls of men, and well we should be, we should be equally as thrilled to know that God is looking over our shoulder. He is doing all that is within His power to cause a successful "planting."

An additional fact that we need to consider is revealed to us in the parable that Jesus taught in Matthew 13 about the sower. Jesus spoke in that place about seed that was sown beside the road, on rocky places and among thorns. None of those seeds matured and grew! Either the hearer did not understand the message, or was discouraged, or was "recaptured" by the world. We

understand that there are times we are powerless to do anything about these situations. However, I have great concern that there might be times when we do not exert the proper influence upon those individuals and hence they return to the world.

Peter wrote, "Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence" (2 Pet. 1:3). God has given to us everything that we need to make life what He designed! Nothing is lacking! Satan tries so desperately to make us think otherwise and we so often succumb! When we do, God is greatly disappointed in us and our soul salvation might well be in danger. However, what about those we have attempted to influence? In all likelihood *their* eyes are on us! What happens if we stumble? Do we in turn become a stumbling block for them? Unfortunately, in so many cases, that is exactly what occurs and God is fully aware! His eyes are on us! Often times I have heard teaching from Matthew 18, where it was limited only to "little children," referring to age. It can just as easily be applied to those who are "little" or young in the faith! What did Jesus say in Matthew 18:6? "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea." We have a duty, a responsibility to not only *lead* others to the Lamb of God who takes away sin, but to nurture and teach them.

I was always on much better behavior when I was aware of my parent's eyes upon me. I wanted them to be pleased. May it be equally so as we realize God's eyes are always upon us! May we fully realize that every action we manifest should be an expression of God *living* in us!

## WE DO NOT WANT TO DESPAIR

I often think of the prophet Elijah after he had defeated the prophets of Baal. What a tremendous victory! When he received the message that Jezebel sent to him, however, he became afraid! 1 Kings 19:3 says, "And he was afraid and arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there."

He went off into the wilderness, found himself a juniper tree and sat down and asked that he might die! That is despair! I have been pretty upset at times in my life, but to reach the point you want to die is the height of despair!

I know there are people in this world who get depressed! The world beats them down, woos them around, discourages them and disillusiones them, and they need some help! That is the very reason the self-help authors make millions writing books! People are looking for help!

Several years ago, the number one occurrence for people going to one of the largest hospital emergency rooms in Dallas, Texas, was women who had overdosed on Valium, a tranquilizer. They had problems and did not know where to turn! They were like the one woman I read about years ago. The parents of this young woman were very wealthy. She was a beautiful woman. She had been educated at the finest schools and lived in an expensive apartment in New York City. One day she stepped to the window of her apartment and threw herself to the street a number of stories below. A policeman saw the crowd gathered around her body and rushed to her side. When he saw her face, he immediately recognized her as the daughter of one of his acquaintances. Tears began to

stream down his face, as he heard someone in the crowd cry, "Why? She had everything!" The policeman quietly sobbed, "Yes, she had everything to live **on** but nothing to live **for**."

The author of Hebrews wrote in Hebrews 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, 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." The "sin" the writer spoke of was the sin of unbelief. It is so evident when you consider what the writer previously wrote. He wrote in chapter 11 about those who belong to the "Hall of Faith"!

God's eyes were on Elijah! His eyes are on us! He did not create us to fail! It is reported that one of the great female vocalists once said, "God don't make no junk." God cared about Elijah and he provided a way. He will do the same for us! Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that God will provide a "way of escape" when we are tested.

We were not created simply to occupy space. God created us for a reason. A great artist creates for a purpose. A great writer writes for a purpose. Our lives have a purpose; they have a meaning if Christ is in us. We are on a mission. We are ambassadors for Christ. God has given us everything to live for! The apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:11, "Also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will." We have an inheritance! We are Christ's "inheritance" and He is ours! We have no reason to ever despair!

## HE'S MINE!

Often times as we are raising our children, we will be at some event where they are participating. Whatever the event might be, if they have an opportunity to be recognized, we might well turn to the person sitting beside us and proudly proclaim, "That's my child!"

I feel that God must surely experience that same feeling of pride when He sees us living that holy life He ordained for us to live. He is so proud of us that Paul says in Ephesians 1:13, "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise."

May we do all that is within our ability to do to please our Heavenly Father! May we cause Him at every opportunity to look down at us with His holy eyes and proudly proclaim, "He's mine! She's mine!" May His heart always be filled with pride because His eyes are seeing the type of behavior He desires manifested in His children.

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