

**Joke:** The pastor always used the phrase, “It could be worse,” when some calamity would come his way. One day a friend said to him, “I’ve something to tell you, and you won’t be able to that favorite phrase of yours this time. I dreamt last night that I died and went to hell.” “It could be worse,” said the preacher. The friend came unglued: “man alive, how could it be worse?” to which the pastor replied: “it might be true.”

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These last few weeks, we have discovered a God who never nor will ever change. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And just as He moved in the lives of people in the past, He moves in the lives of people today. He still is the I AM.

In this series, my prayer is to help you discover exactly how He moves and how we can experience Him in our life right here, right now.

Now, in week one, we spoke of God still speaking. . .and He does still speak to us today in a number of ways I gave you several of those ways. Last week, we learned how God is still hearing. . .and we talked about the beauty of serving a God whose ears are open to the cries of his people.

This week, we will be talking about a God who sees...the truth is God is Always Seeing.

Now, here’s the idea behind this message. The God who sees, means we have a God who cares. I want this message to be a message of hope – God has not forgotten you!

Have you ever had any thoughts like these? Before I share a few let me just say that my guess is we all have had them at some point:

- Your going through a situation or your in the midst of a trial and it appears like your the only one that has ever gone through what your going through.

- Or maybe you suffered some losses and they are adding up and you can't seem to catch a break.
- Or could it be you look around at work. And while you are working hard, trying to honor the Lord, it's the person that cuts corners, kisses up and doesn't honor God with their life that gets the promotion and the raise.
- Or maybe it's just the evil in our world. We read the news every morning of senseless murders, people being taken advantage of, lives lost due to a tragedy of some sort.

And the question we ask is, "God are you seeing this?" Is that just me or can you relate?

But if we take that question to its root the question really is, "God, do you even care?"

The disciples asked the Lord that when they found themselves in rough waters.

Mark 4:37–38 (NIV): A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. 38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

And we find Peter writing to the Christians in Asia Minor, modern day Turkey if you ever wondered, they were asking some questions. We find them living in intense persecution. They were being abused, discriminated against, taken advantage of. . .some dying for the faith they held to.

And Peter writes to encourage these believers to keep their trust in Jesus. . .to put their hope in him. He reminds them God still sees and cares about them.

1 Peter 5:6–11 (NIV): Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your

anxiety on him because he cares for you. 8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. 10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. 11 To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Peter tells them, God cares, and you're not the only one going through what you're going through, and if you will just continue loving the Lord, following Jesus he will restore you and make you strong.

Today, I want to share four truths with you. Four things that God sees? I know He sees everything, but let me give you four specific things that He sees.

## **1. God Sees What We Do.**

Psalm 33:13–15 (NIV): From heaven the Lord looks down and sees all mankind; 14 from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth— 15 he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do.

Maybe you're wondering what God is doing. He is sitting on his throne, looking out over His creation. . . working his plans for our lives out for our good and His glory. And He is observing all our deeds.

Listen to these proverbs:

Proverbs 5:21 (NIV): For your ways are in full view of the Lord, and he examines all your paths.

Proverbs 15:3 (NIV): The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.

Let me just say this out of the gate. God is not sitting on His throne looking down waiting for you to mess up so that he can make sure you suffer for them all.

Romans 8:1–2 (NIV): Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

The Bible says He is looking for those who are faithful to him.

In 2 Chronicles 9 the first half of that verse tells us, 2 Chronicles 16:9 (NIV): For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.

God sees everything. Listen to the words of Jesus:

Matthew 6:2–6 (NIV): So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. 5 “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Later in Matt. 25 Jesus tells us about eternal rewards.

So, when you:

- Feed the hungry.
- Clothe the naked.
- Visit the sick or imprisoned.

God notices. If you do these things and don't think anyone notices, God does. God sees our actions and obedience and will reward it.

Truth is however, he also sees our disobedience, our missteps and our sin.

Now I need to pause here and tell you what I'm not saying so that you understand what I am saying. . . I already mentioned He is not sitting on His throne looking down waiting for you to mess up so He can respond by beating you over the head with it.

That's not God's why. The enemy would like you to believe it is, but that's just not who God is or what He is like.

You all have heard of John 3:16 right? For God so loved the world that he gave. . .

But most stop there look at verse 17. . .

John 3:17 (NIV): For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Romans 4:7–8 (NIV): Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them.”

But let me say this as plainly as I can. God wants us to represent Him well, we need to be different so that those who don't know Him can see Him through us by how we live, how we act and respond in crises.

His grace is sufficient when we have a misstep.

But if you think. . .

- He won't notice that fudged expense report.

If you think. . .

- You can just close the door turn down the lights, and he won't see you clicking on that site you have no business being on.

Jeremiah 16:17 (NIV): My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from me, nor is their sin concealed from my eyes.

He notices. . .not to hold them against us, or to hold them over our head. But he notices so He can remind you that your better than the mistake. Your His kid, no longer a slave to those things.

Nothing is getting past him. He sees everything. He sees our faithfulness and obedience...as well as our unfaithfulness and disobedience.

And what Peter wants the believers here in the midst of persecution to know is that God sees whether or not they are going to "humble themselves" in light of the suffering because "at the proper time they will be exalted"

They will be stronger, better, if they will remain faithful to God through it all.

Andrea Crouch sang a song that said, through it all I've learned to trust in Jesus, I've learned to trust in God.

And Peter just wants to encourage them and us. Stay true to what is right.

And knowing God sees us should motivate us to stay the course.

He sees. God sees what we do.

And truth number two . . .

## **2. God Sees What We Do Not.**

Remember where God is positioned. He is ruling and reigning. . .sitting enthroned over all his creation.

That fact points to his sovereignty. He sees things differently than we do. He has a “birds-eye view of all of life.”

Because of where God is positioned, he has a different perspective than we do and He sees things we don't see.

He sees something none of us can. He sees the heart.

Remember when Samuel was called to anoint the next king of Israel? Jesse brings all of his sons in and the first one Samuel comes across is Eliab and Samuel is impressed with what he sees. Eliab is tall. . .handsome. . .looks like he should be a king.

Much like your pastor. . .Ok maybe not the tall part.

But God. . .he's not impressed. Why? Because He sees things we don't.

1 Samuel 16:7 (NIV): But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

God sees what we do not. And that is a good thing.

Let me give you a little more insight into this idea. We talked about having a God who hears our prayers last week.

And maybe a question you have is: why is it that sometimes He doesn't answer our prayer in the way we want him to or ask him to? And the reason is, It's because he sees what we don't.

God is the ultimate air-traffic controller!

Aviation Flight Companies like FlightAware keep track of most all of planes in the sky at even given moment. According to them in 2017 there were an average of 9,728 planes carrying 1,270,406 people in the sky at any given time.

And here's the thing about that. God sees all the pieces at play in our lives. . .he sees what will bring us harm. . .he sees what will bring him the most glory. . .he sees the cause and effect of every choice we make before we even make it. . .he sees what is best for us.

He sees what we don't see.

And that is why we can say and believe with confidence the promise of Rom. 8:28 maybe you heard this one a time or two. . .

Romans 8:28 (NIV): And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:28 (TPT): So we are convinced that every detail of our lives is continually woven together to fit into God's perfect plan of bringing good into our lives, for we are his lovers who have been called to fulfill his designed purpose.

Our seeing is limited. . .God's is not. That alone should be one of the reasons we worship him.

John Piper has said – “God is always doing 10,000 things in your life, and you may be aware of three of them.”

God sees everything, even what we don't. He even sees our adversary the devil prowling around like a roaring lion seeking to devour us.

He sees what is really real. . .and that's the spiritual battle we are in.

Peter here is encouraging the believers in persecution not to get so fixated on the outward circumstances of their life, concentrating on all those who are physically opposing them. . .he's reminding them of who the battle is really against – and it's not flesh and blood but rather Satan and the forces of darkness.



That's why Paul tells us. . .

Ephesians 6:10–17 (NIV): Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Are you understanding a bit more clearly why we desperately need God so much? Because he sees what we don't.

Peter tells these persecuted believers to stand firm in their faith because it's their faith that allows them to see with spiritual eyes what they could never see with physical eyes.

God sees what we do. God sees what we don't. And then thirdly:

### **3. God Sees What Has Us Down**

In our 1 Peter passage, God is very aware of the believers and the suffering and persecution they are going through. It hasn't caught Him by surprise. God sees.

I need you to know this: God still sees you right now.

- In the midst of your hurt and pain.
- In your struggle and hardship.
- in you your confusion and tears – God sees you.

This reminds me of the story in the Old Testament of Hagar. Do you remember her?

She was Sarah, Abraham's wife's servant. And God had promised Abraham and Sarah they would have a child, but like often in life, they were having to wait on God to deliver, and like us, they don't want to, or like to wait on God. . .they think God has forgotten them, so they do the thing many of us do and that is they take things into their own hands.

And so together, Sarah and Abraham make the decision that Abraham is going to sleep with Sarah's servant Hagar with the hopes that after Hagar becomes pregnant and has a child, Abraham and Sarah will raise it as their own.

Well, that happens. Hagar becomes pregnant and Sarah becomes so jealous and angry that the Bible says that she "dealt harshly with Hagar" and so Hagar ran away.

Hagar runs into the desert wilderness to get away from Sarah and honestly she is a broken woman: She is a servant. . .a servant that only did what she was told to do and is now being unjustly treated:

- She is tired.
- She is alone.
- She has absolutely nothing and no one.

Truth is church, that often happens when God has promised us an Isaac and we settle for the Ishmael.

And in that moment, when she may have been at the worst time in her life an angel of the Lord appears and tells her to go back and submit to Abraham and Sarah. And the angel of the Lord promises her in this that she will have a son. And listen to her response.

Genesis 16:13 (NIV): She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen the One who sees me.”

God often times revealed himself to his people through His names. And in that Scripture we see His name in the Hebrew it's “Jehovah Roi” – which means “the God who sees me.”

Hagar said, “You are a God of seeing. . .truly here I have seen him who looks after me.”

This is the God we serve. He is a God who sees you. He sees what you are going through and in seeing you is looking after you. Why? Because He cares for you.

Can I tell you how much comfort and hope this should bring us?

What is weighing on your heart?

- Is it a broken relationship?
- Did you have to go through some abuse in your past?
- Is it the secret sin you're struggling with?
- Is it that the bills are piling up and you don't know when relief is going to come?
- Is it the miscarriage?
- Or the inability to get pregnant?
- Is it an addiction?
- Is it an illness or injury?
- Is it the death of a loved one?

Whatever it is, listen to me: God sees. ..and in his seeing, He cares.

And so we read. . .

1 Peter 5:7 (NIV): Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Psalm 56:8 (NIV): Record my misery; list my tears on your scroll — are they not in your record?

Psalm 56:8 (NLT): You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book.

God sees every tear you shed. And your suffering. . .He sees.

But here's the good news. . .

Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes in the morning.

1 Peter 5:10 (NIV): And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

What a promise. . .

Jesus himself will restore, confirm, strengthen and establish us.

That should bring you hope.

God sees what we do.

God sees what we don't.

God sees what has us down.

The last truth about what God sees is:

#### **4. God Sees What Jesus Has Done.**

And because he has seen what Jesus has done he longs for the relationship between us and God to be restored. But that only happens when we put our trust in Jesus. There is no other way except through Christ.

Acts 4:12 (NIV): Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

What did Jesus do. . .that the Father still sees. . .

1 Peter 2:22–25 (NIV): He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” 23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. 24 “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” 25 For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV): God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

And when we place our faith and trust in Jesus, God no longer sees us in our sin, but instead sees the finished work that was His Son.

1 John 2:1–2 (NIV): My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. 2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Colossians 3:3–4 (NIV): For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

What does God see when He sees you? Does he see Christ in you the hope of glory. Because your trusting in his sacrificial, substitutionary death that happened on your behalf or does he see someone following their own rule and reign?

I do know this – God sees.

If you don't know this God that sees and cares in a personal way, I want to invite you to know Him today.

And if you do know Him, know with confidence that He is still seeing you. . .everything you do. . .and in his seeing is still caring for you like only He can.

**Show video view from above**

Let's pray.

Join us next week for God is still pursuing.