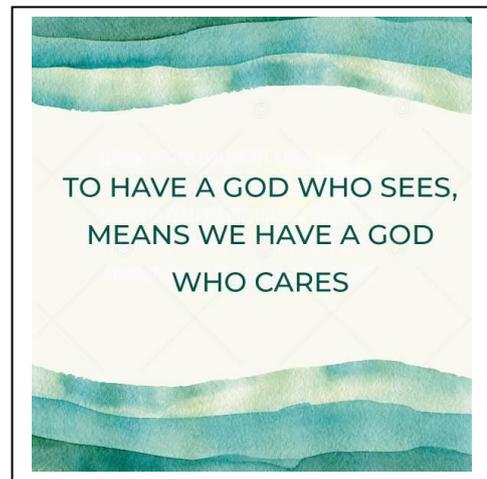


Sunday 17th October 2021 - The Always Seeing God

Scripture - 1 Pet. 5:6-11

These last few weeks, we have discovered a God who never changes. Just as He moved in the lives of people in the past, He moves in the lives of people today.



This week, we are talking about a God who sees and this means we have a God who cares. The title of the message today is **Always Seeing**.

I wonder if, as a child you tried to do something behind your parents or caregiver's back and then heard "I can see you doing that!" It was like they had eyes in the back of their head. I know sometimes I was in a different room and still the comment came – I can see you.

God sees everything but I want this message to be a message of hope not of "being found out."

Have you ever thought that you just don't seem to catch a break; that others are getting all the benefits and you are missing out, even though you try to honour God; that there is far too much evil in our world – it seems to go on and on. And you ask God the question – are you seeing this, do You really care?

This is what the Christians Peter was writing to in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey) were asking as they were living with persecution, abuse, discrimination and 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. Sometimes we may feel as if we are invisible that no one really sees us. But, the truth is that no matter where we live or who we are God sees us and knows every detail of our pain – whether physical, emotional, financial or spiritual.

God sees us in every moment of our lives and reminds us that He knows our hearts and our anxious thoughts. He sees us in the dark, wherever we wander. He is front of us, behind us, His hand is on us; He leads us' holds us; searches us and knows us.

I want to share four truths with you. Each truth revolves around this idea of God still seeing. What does He see?

1. God Sees What We Do.

Psalm 33:13-15 – “The Lord looks down from heaven; He sees all the children of man; from where He sits enthroned, He looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth, He who fashions the hearts of them all and observes all their deeds.”

That's mind-boggling to know that God is observing ALL our deeds.

Proverbs 15:3 – “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good.”

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

2 Chronicles 16:9a – “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward Him.”

God sees everything. Recall the words of Jesus:

Matt. 6:4-6 – “But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing; when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

God notices and if you do these things and don't think anyone notices, remember God does – He sees our actions, obedience and will reward it. But He also sees our disobedience and sin.

Jeremiah 16:17 – “For my eyes are on all their ways. They are not hidden from me, nor is their iniquity concealed from my eyes.”

Hebrews 4:13 – “And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”

Nothing is getting past Him. He sees everything – 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 they are experiencing so that “at the proper time they will be exalted.”

Knowing God sees us should motivate us to stay the course. God sees what we do.

2. God Sees What We Don't do.

Remember where God is positioned. He is ruling and reigning...sitting enthroned over all His creation. This points to His sovereignty. He sees things differently than we do. He doesn't just see our obedience or our disobedience...but He sees the very motives of our heart. He sees why we obey or disobey. He sees the heart.

Jeremiah 17:10a – “I the Lord search the heart and test the mind...”

God sees what we do not. I think of this in the context of **Unanswered prayer** – why is it that sometimes He doesn't answer our prayer in the way we want Him to or ask Him to? It's because He sees what we don't.

God is the ultimate air-traffic controller! He sees ALL the pieces at play...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 make it...as well as everyone else walking the earth!

And this is why we can say and believe with confidence the promise of: ***Rom. 8:28 – “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.”***

Our seeing is limited...God's is not. And this should be one of the main reasons we worship Him. 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.

Have you ever watched the National Geographic channel. Recently I watched one of lions. Lions attack sick, young and straggling animals. They choose their victims – those who are alone or not alert to danger. Peter wants us to watch out for Satan when we are suffering or in pain because when we are vulnerable that is when Satan attacks.

Peter 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 – Satan and the forces of darkness.

James 4:7 says: keep your eyes on Christ and resist the devil.

3. God Sees What Has Us Down

God is very aware of the believers and all of our suffering and pain. I need you to know this: God still sees you right now.

In the midst of hurt and pain; struggle and hardship; confusion and tears – God sees us.

This is revealed in the Old Testament story of Hagar. She was the servant of Sarah and Abraham. Although God had promised Abraham and Sarah they would have a child, they got tired of waiting on God to deliver. Like us, they didn't want to wait on God...they thought God had forgotten them, so they did the worst thing we can ever do and that is take things into our own hands. So Abraham sleeps with Hagar who becomes pregnant; Sarah gets jealous and forces Hagar out into the wilderness. Hagar was unjustly treated and was a broken woman.

- She is tired, alone and had done nothing wrong.

At this moment, 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 she calls God the Hebrew name "Jehovah Roi" which means the God who sees 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. He cares for you. Surely this should bring comfort to us all.

The issue is that most of our struggles come from a failure to remain constantly under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The secret to an effective Christian life is found in living in His strength, not in our own - living under His control and not under self-rule.

It is easy to serve the Lord when times are good and it costs us nothing to hold onto our faith. But when we grow weary, when we feel defeated, when it seems that the circumstances of life will surely overwhelm us – it is in those moments that we must make a choice – to deal with life in our own strength or remain dependent on the Spirit of God living within us. Whatever it is, God sees...and in His seeing, He cares.

1 Peter 5:7 – “casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you.”

God sees every tear we shed. And our suffering– whatever it may be will only be for a short time, even if it’s for the remainder of our years.

1 Peter 5:10 - “And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.”

I told you this is ultimately a message of hope. And what is most hopeful to me is the verse we just read...that Jesus Himself will restore, confirm, strengthen and establish us.

4. God Sees What Jesus Has Done.

When God looks down on us, He sees two categories of people...only two. There are those who are “in Christ” and those who are not.

When we place our faith and trust in Jesus, God no longer sees us and our sin, but instead sees His Son.

Col. 3:3-4 – “For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”

You can’t appear with Him in glory if your life is not hidden with Christ in God.

What does God see when He sees you? Does He see Christ due to you trusting in His sacrificial and substitutionary death on your behalf or does He see someone following their own rule and reign?

Be assured - God sees and what He sees is always certain. His purpose in everything that we experience is motivated by His perfect love for us. I would like to finish with 4 points. I wonder how your PECS are? Seems a funny thing to ask but these points spell out P.E.C.S. = PECS.

God's purpose is to:

Perfect us – to bring us to wholeness, nothing lacking, complete us in every way.

Establish us – to provide us with a foundation that is not shaky but is settled and firm.

Confirm us – to make us firm, rather than being uncertain and weak, we will be resolute and determined in our faith.

Strengthen us – He will use the difficulties to make us stronger, to enable us to face anything He allows to come our way.

What are you going through this morning? Maybe life hasn't turned out the way you planned. Perhaps the cares and burdens of life seem more than you can bear. Don't fight it. Let God use these things to humble you and cause you to depend entirely upon Him.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, You see me, You know me, You love me, You care for every aspect of my life. You are with me in every decision I make. And You stray with me when I sin and fall short. Thank You for Your gracious love and kindness. May I lead others towards that love and extend it to other people. In Jesus' name – Amen.

Closing Prayer end of Service:

I rise today through God's strength to pilot me.

God's might to uphold me

God's wisdom to guide me

God's eye to look before me

God's ear to hear me

God's word to speak for me

God's hand to guard me

God's shield to protect me

God's host to save me from snares of devils; from temptation of vices.

Christ with me – before me – behind me – in me.

Christ beneath me – above me.

Christ on my right and on my left.

Christ when I lie down, when I sit down and when I arise.

Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me.

Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me.

Christ in every eye that sees me – in every ear that hears me.

This is the prayer of St. Patrick.

In Jesus' Name – Amen.