

# The eyes, the ears and the face of the Lord

## (Quality: Good)

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[ 0 : 00 ] Independence upon the Lord for all needful help in our meditations again this evening. I'll direct your attention to the first epistle of Peter, chapter 3, verse 12.

The first epistle of Peter, chapter 3, verse 12. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers.

But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers.

But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. Peter, when writing these epistles, was now an old man.

He was expecting shortly to be called home. To be called home to glory. We have this evidence in chapter 1 of the second epistle of Peter, verse 14.

[ 1 : 11 ] Knowing that shortly I must put on this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover, I will endeavor that ye may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance.

Peter was now a mature, gracious Christian. Gracious, mature Christian who had been sanctified by the grace of God working in his heart.

And the evidence of this is found in these epistles. He's touched by the power of the Holy Spirit to write these epistles. And in these epistles is much counsel, teaching, and doctrine.

You remember that earlier on in the year, that we looked at the text in Peter. And the first epistle of Peter, casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.

And at that time, we looked a little at the context of the epistle of Peter. And so just briefly, we'll just remind ourselves what some of those points we looked at before we come more particularly to the text.

[ 2 : 31 ] First of all, we have in the first epistle of Peter much doctrine. First of all, we have the doctrine of the Trinity. In 1 Peter 1 verse 2, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

There we see set before us the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

The three persons in the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. But also we see in this epistle the doctrine of the sufferings of Christ, who of his own self, bear our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed.

And this is the only way that we can be healed from our sins. It is through the sufferings of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. This is the only way to be healed.

It is through the Son of righteousness arising, with healing in his wings. But then again we see in this epistle the doctrine of Scripture, about the word of the Lord, endureth forever, endureth forever.

[ 4 : 07 ] Yes, what a mercy that is, in this world of change. When everything is changing round about us, the word of God doesn't change, does it? It is the same.

Yesterday, today, and forever. And then again, we have the doctrine of eternity for the Lord's people.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that faded not away, reserved in heaven for you.

What a blessed thought that is, that there is a place reserved in heaven for you. If you have a faith in the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, if you have cast your burden upon him, if your hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness, if you have been saved by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, there is an inheritance reserved for you, incorruptible and undefiled, and that faded not away, reserved in heaven for you.

In my Father's house are many mansions, Jesus said, I go to prepare a place for you, for you. What a blessed thing that is.

[ 5 : 40 ] Then again we have a doctrine of the sovereignty of God in this epistle. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you, called you by the power of his Holy Spirit, called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation. Well, there we have set before us a little of the doctrine of the epistle of Peter.

But what of the counsel? Well, as we go through this epistle, there is much counsel throughout this epistle. We are exhorted to be sober, to hope to the end.

We are called to a holy walk and conversation, to love one another, to desire the word, to abstain from fleshly lusts, to have an honest conversation, to be submissive, to fear God, to be subject to our masters, wives to be subject to their husbands, husbands to love their wives.

Be ye all of one mind. Do not render evil for evil. Seek peace and pursue it. Be ready to give a testimony. Be sober. Watch unto prayer.

[ 7 : 14 ] Have charity. Use hospitality. Be clothed with humility. And as we consider these exhortations this evening, how far short we come, don't we?

We look back over the past few days, how far short we come, don't we? And perhaps this makes us feel sad as we look over the past few days, and perhaps they've been difficult days, and perhaps we've been left to ourselves, and we've slipped and stumbled a little, and we've been left to our own spirit, and we feel sad.

We feel to be unworthy servants. Well, we read, Paul felt just like that. Paul, the mighty preacher, felt just like that.

Listen to what Paul says. Paul says, Paul says, for the good that I would, I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do.

And he goes on to say, oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death.

[ 8 : 27 ] The body of this death. Paul knew what it was to feel to be an unworthy servant.

And so will we. But you see, what this teaches us this evening is that the walk of the believer is a walk of dependence upon the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We are dependent upon the grace of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, working in our hearts to be truly fruitful. It is the life of the Holy Spirit working in our hearts that makes us fruitful, that we might bear the fruits of the Spirit.

It is then a walk of dependence, casting all our care upon him. You see, we are trying to walk in the pathway of a believer in our own strength.

We will sin and stumble yet the more. Oh, that our day might start with, Lord, help me. Lord, undertake for me.

[ 9 : 38 ] Lord, give me grace. Lord, give me wisdom to walk in the right way, to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ. And then finally on, as we look at the context of the epistle of Peter, what of the teaching?

We have seen a little of the doctrine, of the counsel, but what of the teaching? Well, there is a theme that runs through the epistle of Peter, and that is the theme of suffering.

The word suffering is mentioned 15 times in this epistle, and Peter has this theme of suffering, the teaching that there is suffering to be had in the life of a believer.

Just as Christ Jesus suffered, so will the Lord's people suffer. But he says, Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, because as Christ Jesus suffered, so will you suffer.

Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

[ 10 : 58 ] If ye be reproached with the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

Well, let us now come more particularly to the text before us this evening. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

I'd like to look at this text from three viewpoints. First of all, the eyes of the Lord, secondly, the ears of the Lord, and thirdly, the face of the Lord.

First of all then, the eyes of the Lord. We need reverence as we consider this evening the all-powerful God.

This text is descriptive of God's divine hearing and God's divine seeing. First of all then, what are the all-seeing God?

[ 12 : 11 ] God sees everything. There is no hiding from God. God sees everything.

There is no hiding from God. In Hebrews we read, neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

All things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. There is no hiding from God. No hiding from God.

What do we read in Jeremiah? Great in counsel and mighty and mighty in work. For thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men to give everyone according to his ways according to the fruit of his doing.

Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men. God then sees everything. My mind goes to this illustration in this theme we are considering this evening.

[ 13 : 30 ] You may have heard this story but there was once a man I read about in a true story and he was an atheist. And this man had a notice on his wall of one of his rooms in his bedroom I believe it was and on the wall on the notice it said God is nowhere.

And every day he would look at this notice and try and convince himself that God was nowhere. And he went through his life convincing himself that God was nowhere.

He was an atheist he believed there wasn't a God. And he had a notice there to remind him day by day God is nowhere. Well there came a time when that man fell ill and he came to the point of death.

and his little granddaughter came into his room and he asked his granddaughter to read out the notice on his wall to convince himself again that God was nowhere that he was going nowhere he was just going to die and go nowhere God was nowhere God was a myth and his little granddaughter read the notice like this God is now here not God is nowhere God is now here and that came with an arrow of conviction into that man's heart God used that little girl to send an arrow of conviction into that man's heart and it was a means of calling that man by grace God is now here God could see him God was everywhere well what was the first thing that Adam and Eve did when they sinned what was their first concern well we read of it in the account in Genesis the first thing

Adam and Eve tried to do when they sinned was to hide from God the Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him where art thou Adam and Adam said and he said I heard thy voice in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself I hid myself this was the first account in this world of someone hiding trying to hide and what was the reason they were trying to hide they were trying to hide because they had sinned and we cannot hide from God we are sinners and we cannot hide from God there is no hiding from God Adam and Eve first concern was to hide from God could they hide from God no because God is everywhere and as we go through the word of

[ 16 : 39 ] God we can use other illustrations of those that tried to hide from God something from God what of Achan Achan took didn't he of the spoil and he hid it in his tent and nobody else knew of the children of Israel they didn't know that Achan had taken off the spoil and they went to battle against the men of A and they were defeated and 30 odd people lost their lives and they were very upset and they wondered what had happened why this had happened and God said someone has disobeyed me and they had to go through the camp and eventually they came upon Achan and we see a very solemn end of judgment to that man's life and his family Achan tried to hide from God what of Gehazi Gehazi ran after Naaman didn't he why should

Naaman get away without giving a present Naaman's a rich man I'm only a poor man Gehazi said why should this man be let off without giving anything I will have something even if my master won't have anything so off he goes to Naaman and he tells him a lie and he comes back to his master and tells him a lie could he hide from God no God knew God knew what he had done there is no hiding from God no hiding from God what we read of in Jeremiah again on this theme of hiding from God of the all seen and the all wise God can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him saith the Lord do not I feel heaven and earth saith the

Lord so we cannot hide from these eyes the eyes of the Lord are all seeing what of our secrets we may have a secret that we've not told anybody we perhaps not told our parents we've not perhaps not told our husband or our wife and there is a secret that we're keeping and nobody else knows about it but God knows God sees our hearts God sees our thoughts we can hide from man but we cannot hide from God the psalmist reasons that God who made the eyes shall he not see and God who made the ears shall he not hear I believe it is in Psalm 44 verse 21 no shall not

God search this out for he knoweth the secrets of the heart we read in Zephaniah of Jerusalem being searched with candles and that's just like the searching of the Lord of our hearts he searches out our hearts with the light of his candle we read in Zephaniah of Jerusalem and going around with candles searching out Jerusalem and so it is with us in our lives God searches out our lives he searches out our hearts he sees our thoughts he reads our thoughts he sees our hearts well what are some of the lessons that we can learn from this passage of scripture for the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous well first of all we cannot hide from God we cannot keep secrets from

God naturally speaking we cannot comprehend the truth of God that is all seen throughout the world all at the same time we worship God God as a spirit but I remember as a little boy laying in bed sometimes in the evening and thinking well how is it that God can see me and God can see another little boy in Australia all at the same time and my natural mind tried to cope with this and naturally speaking we cannot come to terms with this we cannot comprehend the truth of a God that is all seen throughout the world at the same time but another thing to remember and this is very much in the context of this text this evening God sees our thoughts he knows all about our state and our pathway and our case now this is a solemn thought and yet a blessed thought if our hope is built on the

[ 21 : 48 ] Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ you remember we quoted the hymn in our hymn book 119 last time I think I was with you and on this theme when we are viewed by the eyes of the Lord through the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ when God views us with his eyes through Jesus we are protected by the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ because without Christ Jesus in and of ourselves we are black since I can hardly therefore bear what in myself I see how vile and black must I appear most holy God to thee but since my Saviour stands between in garments dyed in blood tis he instead of me is seen when I approach to God tis he instead of me is seen what a blessed thing it is to be viewed by God through

Christ Jesus our Lord but what a solemn thing it is to be viewed by God without Christ for the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous this speaks to us this evening of a blessed protection and overshadowing of the Lord over his people he will protect his people and he will land them safe at last in eternity in heaven not one of the Lord's people will be lost every one of them will come to glory Jesus has died for his people not one of them will be lost God then finally on this theme to remember that God the all seen God knows and reads the motives of our actions and our thoughts and our words

God can see by his all seen eyes what is at the foundation of our words and our thoughts and our actions whether it is our pride or whether it is God's honour that we are seeking for the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous the all seeing God the all the seeing God that we cannot hide from we cannot keep secrets from the all seeing God that protects his people the blessing of being viewed in and through the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ God sees our thoughts and our motives whether they are based on our pride or whether they are based on the glory of God on seeking the honour and glory of God well secondly what are the ears of the

Lord the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers the ears of the Lord in this world of communications that we live in this world of hustle and bustle in this very fast pace in which we live people demand instant access to us don't they in business many times many people have to have car phones now so that as they drive about their work can get hold of them or their customers can get hold of them and then phone in at home the home phones and we are at home in the evening sometimes we get tired when the phone keeps ringing and we get tired sometimes and perhaps we get irritable and tired of answering we get tired of listening we get short and irritable well

God's ears never tire God is never tired of listening to his people praying unto him what a blessed thought that is we get tired don't we when we get old we get hard of hearing and sometimes we have to have hearing aids to help us to hear but God's ear is never tired behold in Isaiah we read the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear it is open 24 hours a day day and night and it never tires what a blessed thought that is God can hear and answer thousands of prayers at the same time God can hear the faintest whisper and understand them he can understand his people's cry he can understand what they are saying and what they are crying we read in psalm 94

[ 27:17 ] I think this is the reference I was thinking of earlier on in my meditations he that planted the ear shall he not hear he that formed the eye shall he not see he that planted the ear shall he not hear he that formed the eye shall he not see God can hear the cries of his people God's ears are attentive and he listens and attends to our prayers you see this evening we may be hearing what I'm saying we may not be listening or attending to what I'm saying that may be because of the low standard of the message perhaps of my ministry but God God hears and attends and is attentive and listens to his people he listens to our prayers and he understands what we are saying

God is an all seeing God and an all hearing God and he listens to his people and his ears are open all the while 24 hours a day I remember when I first brought my wife and I first brought Penny home from hospital when she was first born and there we had this little baby this little life and there she was air responsibility at home and there we were on our own with this little life and I remember the first night that we had her at home that we kept getting up in the night just to see whether she was still breathing and we didn't sleep very well that night because directly she started crying we were there making sure she was alright well God is just like that all the while his ears never tire he's there attentive to his people's cries attentive to their sighs attentive to their groans attentive to their prayers he's there listening and he has promised faithfully promised to attend and answer his people's petitions we read in the book of chronicles that he promised

Solomon at the building of the temple that he would hear and answer the prayers of his people but there was a hallmark attending these prayers God listens to his people's prayers if my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves humble themselves here we see a vital hallmark in their crying in their prayers shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways you see it's no point praying to the Lord and then carrying on in their own way there is a turning a repenting a turning turn from their wicked ways then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land

God hears then the humble cry God hears the repentant cry what are the Pharisee and the publican the Pharisee came in the temple to pray he wasn't praying he was talking he wasn't praying and God didn't hear that prayer either his ears weren't open to that prayer because he was just talking but what of the publican he came in with a short prayer but a real prayer God be merciful to me a sinner and God's ears were open to that prayer open to that prayer God hears and answers and God's ears are open to the prayer of the humble then those that have a broken heart and a contrite spirit God's ears are open to the prayers of these afflicted ones we read of Hezekiah who turned his face to the wall and cried

Lord undertake for me Lord help me oh Lord I am oppressed undertake for me and we read as well in the epistle of James that the Lord hears the prayers of the oppressed people you see it may be that at your work at this time you're oppressed you're having a difficult time it's a tough time in this recessionary times and you're having a tough time you feel to be oppressed while the Lord hears the prayers of the oppressed people his oppressed people yes even the very worst of sinners can gain access to the ears of the Lord if they come in a true spirit of humility and repentance we read that Manasseh did Manasseh came with the true spirit of humility and repentance and God here heard his cry for the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers open unto their prayers over the righteous day these are not those that are righteous in their own estimation who are the righteous then they are those that have been washed by the precious blood of the

[ 33 : 22 ] Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ that have been saved by Jesus Christ that have been constrained by the grace of God to seek first the kingdom of heaven and their cry is all centered around the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ you remember that we read this morning in Revelation about the cry of the Lord's people those that are now reaping in joy those that will reap in joy in heaven the Lord's people after this are beheld and lo a great multitude which no man could number of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues stood before the throne and before the Lamb clothed with white robes and palms in their hands these are the righteous and what is their song and one of the elders answered standing to me what are those these which are arrayed in white robes and whence came they and I said unto him sir thou knowest and he said to me these are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the

Lamb the righteous are those that have been made righteous by the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers that the face of the Lord is against them that do evil all well finally this evening we have to consider a very solemn subject the face of the Lord here we see the God of anger the God of justice of purity of holiness of majesty the God who cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance the face of the Lord is against them that do evil those that continue to rebel against

God's word those that continue to walk in the way of unrighteousness those that continue to rebel and defy God the face of the Lord is against them that do evil oh the solemn awful state of the wicked those that continue to rebel against God we read of a very solemn separation between the sheep and the goats at the end of the world we read in the gospel of Matthew and before him shall be gathered all nations and he shall separate them this is an eternal separation shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats and he shall set the sheep on his right hand but the goats on the left then shall the king stand to them on his right hand come ye blessed of my father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world therefore be ye also ready are you ready to me

God are you made a real Christian washed in the redeemer's blood therefore be ye also ready for in such an hour as ye think not the son of man are coming and we read in Malachi the awful end of the wicked for behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven and all the proud yea and all that do wickedly shall be stubble and the day that cometh shall burn them up saith the Lord of hosts that it shall leave them neither root nor branch or the awful state of the wicked well I want to ask you this evening a question I want to ask myself the same question it has been a burden to me certainly very much in the last few weeks and months have I have you a concern for lost souls have you a concern for the lost souls in

Hindley one of the evidences that you are a Christian is that you will have a concern for the lost this is a very searching question I know but it is an evidence that you are a Christian if you have a concern for lost souls do we warn them you see we have been reading Peter of being always ready to give an account of our belief all by God's grace by God's strength may we be ready to warn you see we read something very searching on this subject in Ezekiel we read there of the watchman warning the people we read in Ezekiel chapter 3 verse 17 son of man

[ 39 : 16 ] I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel therefore hear the word at my mouth and give them warning from me give them warning from me when I serve the wicked thou shalt surely die and thou givest him not warning nor speak is to warn the wicked from his wicked way to save his life the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity but his blood will I require at thine hand or the solemnity of the word of God yet if thou warn the wicked and he turn not from his wickedness nor from his wicked way he shall die in his in in in in but thou has delivered thy soul and we go on to read in chapter 33 of Ezekiel of the trumpet of warning of the watchman of blowing the trumpet of warning blow the trumpet and warn the people blow the trumpet of warning warn the people

I remember recently going in the underground in London and there was a Trinitarian Bible Society poster the soul that sinneth it shall die and there were thousands of people going by that poster they were being warned the words on this poster was warning them the soul that sinneth it shall die do we warn the people you see if our child was running to the edge of the cliff would we just say nothing or we shout to them to stop how much more should we warn the people may God give us a gracious concern for lost souls well I see the time has gone now but in conclusion how does the living

God the all seeing God compare with with the God of this world well I think one of the major gods of this world at the moment is the God of materialism the God of money how many people's lives are governed by money well the psalmist says but our God is in the heavens he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased their idols are silver and gold the work of men's hands they have mouths but they speak not eyes of they but they see not they have ears but they hear not those of they but they smell not they have hands but they handle not feet of they but they walk not neither speak they through their throats they that make them are like unto them so is everyone that trusted in them O and their shield the idols that are set up in this world the gods of this world they are not living gods are they they are not living gods they are dead gods but our god is a living god and finally in this theme of our god being the living god how it was remarkably demonstrated in the illustration of

Elijah and the prophets of Baal how Elijah mocked the prophets of Baal what did Elijah say to those that were worshipping Baal Elijah mocked them and said cry aloud for he is a god either he is talking or he is pursuing or he is on a journey or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awakened well our god doesn't sleep our god is awake all the while they cried aloud and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lances till the blood gushed out upon them and it came to pass when midday was past and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice that there was neither voice nor any to answer nor any that regarded the gods of this world but Elijah prayed to his god the living god the god that i trust that we worship earth this evening hear me oh lord hear me that this people may know that thou art the lord god and that thou hast turned their heart back again then the fire of the lord fell and consumed the sacrifice the lord heard that prayer the all seeing all wise god our god is a living god but it is a very solemn thing to fall into the hands of the living god oh may you be given the grace to plead the intercession of

Jesus in your life as we come before an all seeing all hearing all wise god may the lord add his blessing amen