

## GOOD EYE

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Rev. Richard Maraj

*So this rich man goes on a month-long vacation and calls his butler to check in on things. And he says, "So how is my favorite dog doing?"*

*And the butler says, "Well, sir; your dog is dead."*

*And the man says, "What?!? My precious, beautiful dog is dead? How could you be so cold and insensitive? Just blurting it out like that without giving me any warning?"*

*The butler says, "I'm so sorry, sir. How do you think I should have done it better?"*

*And the guy says, "Well, you could have eased me into it by first just saying, 'Sir, your dog is stuck on the roof, but everything's going to be okay. Nothing to worry about.' And the next day you could have said, 'While helping the dog off the roof, it fell and broke its leg. But the vet said it will be alright; it just needs to stay there for awhile.' So you getting all this?"*

*"Yes, sir; I'm getting it."*

*"And then the third day when I called, you could have said, 'The dog had some internal bleeding that the vet couldn't pick up on, and peacefully passed away. Not suffering at all at 2 a.m. in the morning.' And that way, it wouldn't have been such a shock to me. Does that make sense?"*

*"Yes, sir; it does."*

*"Okay. So how is my grandmother doing?" [Congregation laughs]*

*And the butler says, "Your grandmother is stuck on the roof." [Congregation laughs]*

So ... Alright! We're not talking about dogs or grandmothers or roofs today; we're talking about eyes! We are talking about the power of our eyes.

You know, I love eyes! I always enjoyed looking at eyes. I'm a bit of an "eye guy." But besides the fact that eyes are beautiful to look at, the truth is: It is through our eyes that we make connections. It is through looking into our eyes that we get to know each other and understand each other and feel closer to one another. In relationships, by looking into our eyes, there can be a greater sense of closeness and intimacy. In business, they say, *"Shake a man's hand and look him right in the eye so you build trust."* Even as a speaker, one of the things -- even though there's so many eyes -- it is important to make eye contact so you feel that connection and there's a flow, and so the message can actually land.

One of the things I also love about eyes is they come in all different sizes and shapes and colors. You can have brown eyes, blue eyes, green eyes, grey eyes, hazel eyes; big eyes; bright eyes; bug eyes; beady eyes; bedroom eyes. You can have shifty eyes; sad eyes; sparkly eyes; tired eyes; bloodshot eyes. You can have a glass eye; a lazy eye; a wandering eye. You could be cross-eyed and have teary eyes.

You know, eyes are so important in our language and our culture, they appear in all different kinds of phrases. If someone is good-looking, you say they're "easy on the eyes." And if you catch someone's eye, you might become the apple of their eye! And they will look at you with googly eyes and wandering all day looking starry-eyed. But if they drop you in the blink of an eye, you might want to give them the evil eye. [Congregation laughs] Or a black eye! [Congregation laughs] Or hire a private eye to get even, because -- you now -- it's an eye for an eye. Or you can just forget it and turn a blind eye. Or eat a nice, juicy ribeye and have a drink and say, *"Here's mud in your eye."* [Congregation laughs]

I remember when ... Like, I was born in the Caribbean, so I didn't have baseball. We had cricket there. And so I started learning about baseball, and somebody caught a fly ball, and somebody said, "Good eye! Good eye!" And I'm thinking, "Good eye? You caught it with your hand! How can you say, 'Good eye'?" And then I realized "good eye" means your ability to focus and concentrate and keep your eye on the ball so that, when it comes to you, you know the best thing to be able to do. And one could be to catch a fly ball. Or if you're a batter, having a good eye means you can tell when the ball is going in the strike zone or outside of it, so you could either take it for a ball and walk or you can get a hit. In baseball, it's important to develop a good eye.

Ever heard people say things like, "So-and-so has an eye for this thing"? They might have an eye for fashion; or an eye for decorating; or an eye for business; or an eye for talent; or an eye for bargains. Having a "good eye" means that you have an awareness and a keen sense and good judgement, and that you have developed a perception -- you're able to perceive -- and see things that others may not see. To see a situation and know what's best -- what's right or wrong -- so you can make the best choice for the highest and best outcome for your life for whatever situation that is.

In the Book of Luke, Chapter 11, Verse 33, it even takes the power and the importance of the eye to a higher level. It says:

*"Your eye is the lamp of your body. If your eye is healthy, your body is full of light. If your eye is unhealthy, your body is full of darkness."*

And so what this Scripture is saying is that your eye symbolically -- not only physically, but spiritually -- plays a tremendous role in how we use it to affect the quality of our lives. What we create; what we attract; what we experience. A healthy eye -- or a good eye -- brings in more light. It brings more good into our lives. And an unhealthy eye -- or a bad eye -- attracts things that aren't as good, that make us unhappy or unfulfilled, and we can sometimes be feeling in the dark.

The Aramaic word for evil is "diseased." It actually means disease. The word is "bisha." And it means disease. So sometimes we can get a disease in our eye so that we can't see clearly. We can't see the good. We can't see the light. And sometimes an unhealthy eye is diseased by an eye that sees life as unfair. That sees that we are not lovable and not worthy. An eye that sees only anger or bitterness or hopelessness or self-pity.

Having a good eye is actually able to see things clearly: see the good; see the positive; see the truth in all situations. And the more that we have a good eye, the more we let light and goodness into our lives.

So do you see your life with a good eye? Or a bad eye? Is there some situation that you are looking at pessimistically and negatively as a bad eye? Or are you able to see the good in the situation and the good that could be in the situation?

So today, we're going to look at: How do we improve our lives and increase our level of joy by developing a good eye.

So the first thing we're going to look at is the importance of our EYESIGHT.

When I was a kid, we'd come home from school; look in the fridge; look in the pantry; and yell like all kids yell, "Mom! There's nothing to eat in the house!" [Congregation laughs] My mom would come five minutes, 10 minutes later, beautiful meal; eating delicious food. It's fabulous! We were acting like we were starving and there was no food to be found! Five minutes later, we're eating a really good and fabulous meal.

And so the question: Was there no food? Was there nothing to eat? Were the cupboards really bare? Or is it the fact that we just could not see it?

And that sounds so silly and obvious, doesn't it? And yet, as adults, we look through the cupboards of our own lives and sometimes think it's empty. There's not enough love; there's not enough happiness; there's not enough success; there's not enough appreciation; there's not enough support in our lives. Sometimes we look at things and we just cannot see. Jesus said:

*"You have eyes, but cannot see."*

Sometimes it's so obvious and right there, and we can't see it!

A friend of mine was telling me about her friend who was looking all over the place for her phone. And then she said, *"Yeah; it's right in your hand!"* [Congregation laughs] And that sounds ridiculous, but sometimes it's right there in front of us. Right in front of our eyes! And we cannot see the good.

I would suggest that there is more love than we believe is there. There is more support and encouragement. There's more abundance. There's more success in our lives than we sometimes allow ourselves to see or believe that it's there. And so we need to begin to look at our lives through the eyes of a good eye: to see the good; to see all the things that are there.

Hey, have you ever had, like, a really good day, or you're having a really good week, and then you get a parking ticket? Or a flat tire? Or you have an argument with your partner? Or your boss kind of chewed you out? And that night, or at the end of that week, you close your eyes; you go to lay down in bed. And the whole thing you could think of -- even though the week went really well -- was the ticket; or the flat tire; or the argument. Sometimes we let one thing blind us to the good that is there.

Do you know the word "hades" -- "hell" -- it actually means "to be blind." Hell is to be blind to the good and the beauty and the love and the blessings that are always all around us. It's all there! We just sometimes don't allow ourselves to see it.

John Powell wrote a book called *Happiness is an Inside Job*. And they did a study of the 100 most successful people -- what are the common traits. And one of the most common traits is: Successful people are good "finders." They are able to see the good in situations. Not just all the things that go well -- and the love and the support and the care. But also, they're able to see the good, even in times when they fail or lose or make a mistake, or things don't go well. They're able to see what they can learn or grow, or how they can change and maybe move things in a new direction.

Having a good eye sees the things that aren't going well, but chooses to focus on the good.

Jesus, with the loaves and fishes. There he is: not enough fish; 4,000 people to feed. Could be a panic situation! But instead, the first thing he did was: Acknowledge and bless what he had. He had a good eye to see the good that was already there, instead of complaining about all the things that aren't there and all the things that aren't working as well.

The very first Unity service I ever attended was at a time when things weren't going very well for me. I wasn't feeling great about my life; just focusing on what I'd lost and what I didn't have. And the minister said something very profound. She said:

*"You have to be thankful for the things that you have in your life right now. if you cannot be grateful and appreciate what you have now, you will never be able to be thankful for the things that you think will make you happier."*

Does that make sense? She said:

*"Today is the measurement of how happy you are. And if we cannot be grateful for what we have today, we will not be able to suddenly cultivate gratitude when we get things that we think will make us happier."*

I would suggest everyone in this room ... Everyone has enough stuff in their lives to be happy and fulfilled if we were to look at it all through the lens of a good eye. To see the positive; to see the good; to see the blessings.

So when you look at your life, what do you see? Do you see joy and abundance? Do you see opportunities and blessings? Do you see people who care for you and people whom you care for? Or do you see lack? And do you see that you're not enough? Or do you see roadblocks.

In the Book of John, Chapter 4, Verse 35, there's a powerful line. It says:

*"Lift up your eyes and see that the fields are already ripe for harvest."*

And that is a line for all of us. Lift up your eyes and see how ripe your life is with blessings and goodness and abundance.

One of the things I always say is, *"Count your blessings."* Acknowledge the good things. Sometimes our days go so fast that, at the end of it, we don't really remember all of the good things that happened, because we zipped by so fast and then focus on what didn't go so well. So sometimes just counting your blessings -- looking at what's working well; things that make you feel good; or made you smile or feel happy or grateful. Just to focus on them and write them down. Think about them. I say 20 things. And you're thinking, *"Twenty things? That's so much!"* Are you kidding? There's probably hundreds of things that happened that are good in our day.

Let me just give you a few things that happened; this was a fabulous week for me. I had a great week! I had some fabulous days and meetings at work that were so productive. I ate really, really well, which means somebody cooked for me. [Congregation laughs] And the highlight of it was this blueberry risotti with smoked salmon. It was smokin' good! [Congregation laughs]

And I had a card game with friends; we've been doing it for 10 years, every couple of months. We laugh like crazy; it is such a good and joyful bonding experience. I watched the Cardinals game; that was a miracle last week! They beat the Cowboys! I spend more time trashing the Cardinals than I do cheering for them. But it was miraculous! I haven't watched a full Cardinals game; it was an incredible game!

I got the gift of taking someone to the airport at 4 a.m. this week. [Congregation laughs] And that was a sign of three things: there's someone in my life who's been so good to me that I woke up to go the airport at 4. The second thing: I had no idea that there was so much traffic and people were actually awake at 4. And the third one: Hopefully, that will never happen again. [Congregation laughs]

Something good was: I reconnected to a therapist who's fabulous. She'd stopped doing massage therapy. And it was just really, really a wonderful thing. Finally, after two years, my neighbor had his palm trees trimmed, because it was blocking my view of the mountain. I meditated three times outside, looking at the mountain. And I'm enjoying how fabulous and wonderful the weather is.

First time since Covid, I bought some tickets to the Phoenix Suns games; I've never done that since Covid. So I'm looking forward to getting back there. I have a friend who's been gone for four or five months. I haven't seen them, and I get to spend some time with this dear individual really soon. I had another friend who got some not-so-good news, but we had the faith and prayer, and know that things will heal and get better.

There's some areas in my life where things are not progressing as well as I'd like them to ... but I'm thankful that I get every day to be able to work at it and improve myself and improve my life.

That was easily 20 things! And there are probably way, way more for every single one of us. Lift up your eyes and see that the fields are already ripe for harvest! Lift up your eyes and realize how blessed, how abundant, how joy-filled your life already is! And you know, by spiritual law, as we focus -- whatever we

focus on will attract and increase even more. So are you willing to think or write down 20 things every single night that happened to you? And I tell you, it'll be easy to find once you start finding it and doing it.

Paul said:

*"In all things, give thanks, for this is God's will for you."*

And what he's saying is: In all things, recognize how much good is in your life, because that's God's will for you ... is to rejoice in the good; rejoice in how blessed you are. And to appreciate this incredible gift of life that we have all been given. The first thing is to use your eyesight to see the good and blessings that are in our lives.

The second one is **INSIGHT**.

In 2 Corinthians it says:

*"We fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."*

This is about turning your eyes, not to the outer world, but to get insight, to turn it within. Turn to the unseen; turn to Spirit.

In Proverbs 4, Verse 7, it says:

*"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom and in all thy getting, get understanding."*

Solomon was a very young king. He was the king after his father, David. King David. And he was asked by God: *"Anything you want ... anything you want, I'll give it to you!"* And so he asked, not for riches, not for honor. He asked for an understanding mind.

I'm thinking, *"Who the heck is gonna ask ...?"* If God gave you 10 wishes, I bet none of us would ask for understanding. Is it just me? Maybe it's just my own selfish self that is thinking this way! [Congregation laughs]

And yet, his brilliance was that -- to get wisdom and insight and understanding of ourselves and others, our relationships, our difficulties, our situations -- is the greatest thing. It is an unseen gift. It is insight! And it led him to be a great king; a great leader. And interestingly, even though he didn't ask for wealth and riches, because he had great understanding he actually became a great builder. And he was a good negotiator and good at trading. And he became the richest man in the Bible! Not because he was going after the outer thing of money; it is because he had insight and wisdom and understanding, and made really good choices. Because he was able to discern and use good judgement.

I'll be there isn't anybody in this room who couldn't use a good dose of discernment and good judgement and wisdom and insight and understanding yourself and your decisions and all of your relationships.

How many people have heard of or practiced your "third eye"? Anybody heard that? And it is a concept for many cultures that really talks about the third eye being an invisible spot here [points between his eyebrows] that is really the gateway to higher consciousness. The gateway to intuition and spiritual insight and understanding that can help us tap higher realms of wisdom and knowledge and understanding and insight.

And one of the keys, they say, to opening your third eye is that you must have a dedicated practice of meditation. Of mindfulness; of quieting your mind and immersing your mind in the Mind of God so that wisdom and insight can come forth. It's not so much a mystical concept as it shares the spiritual potential that everyone has to tap into higher levels of wisdom and knowledge. And we should be just

like Solomon; when we pray, we should pray for understanding. Not just to get our way, but to pray for understanding. To pray for discernment. To pray for good judgement. To pray for wisdom. In all you're getting, get understanding! You can see through Solomon's life all the great things that can happen if we first seek insight to get that greater understanding so we can get greater inner clarity.

George Bernard Shaw said this. He said:

*"Keep the window of your soul shiny and bright, for that is the perspective through which you see the world."*

Keep the windows of your soul shiny and bright by looking for insight, for wisdom, for discernment and good judgement.

And the final one ... So there's eyesight, insight, and the last one is **FORESIGHT**. And that is the ability to see ahead. To see towards the future.

Foresight is that incredible ability to use the power of your imagination to see beyond what is currently here to something greater and better that you desire. To see in your mind's eye; to use your spiritual eye to see the unlimited possibilities and good. And there are unlimited possibilities of good that are available to all of us!

To me, foresight is the combination of two important things. It is desire and imagination. It is: What is your heart's desire? And can you see a picture and shape what that good will look like? Shape what those possibilities and blessings will be for you.

Einstein said that:

*"Imagination is more powerful than knowledge."*

And the reason he said that is that knowledge represents what is; imagination represents everything that can be. "What is" is limited; "everything that can be" is unlimited.

One of my favorite Scriptures from Genesis is this: 13, 14 and 15. It says:

*"The Lord said to Abram after Lot parted from him, 'Lift up your eyes ...'*

Interesting, again!

*"Lift up your eyes and, from where you stand look north and south and east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever."*

And that's a message to all of us. Look from where you stand right now in your life. How far to the north? How far can you see for your health and your relationships? How far can you see to the south? For your finances and your career? How far to the east can you see for your spiritual awareness and understanding? How far to the west can you see for your health and fitness? I mean, how far can you see for your level of happiness and fulfillment? How far can you see?

And can you use the power of your imagination to cultivate and create a greater and better picture of what is going on right now? It's an incredibly creative tool that God has given every one of us. And sometimes we use our imagination in the negative way to look for the worst case scenarios, rather than the amazing possibilities that lie ahead of us and within us.

Incredibly successful people have all used the power of their imagination. Jack Nicklaus in golf; Tiger Woods; Walt Disney; Jim Carrey. You know, the famous thing of him writing himself a check for \$10 million. You know, he put out his vision there. Arnold Schwarzenegger envisioned his body growing strong and being ripped like crazy. He won three Mr. Universes. Everybody know Treanor and Walsh? The volleyball team; the USA volleyball team? They say that it is visualization and meditation that is the

key to their three Olympic golds. Lindsey Vonn, one of the greatest skiers in history, said it is visualization. Oprah said:

*"Create the highest, grandest, vision possible for your life, because you become what you believe."*

Imagination and foresight is powerful, because it engages our creative energy and our spiritual power, and gives it a channel and direction to call it forth and attract those greater things.

Sometimes you ask people, "Hey, what do you want out of life?" "I don't know. I don't know." No! It's important to know! To hold that vision and then begin to create with your imagination the possibility of what that will look like.

Hey, what did Jesus do for a living? [Congregants call out answers] Carpenter! And you know what? Carpenters have to cut and be precise and measure. And for them to be successful, they need to have a good eye. And it is a powerful message!

If you want to build a good life, you've got to have a good eye. We've got to make sure how well we see -- outwardly, inwardly and beyond.

The eye is the lamp of the body. And we need to use it wisely, first with our eyesight to see the good. Write up to 20 things a day of the things that make you feel good and happy and blessed. That are going well. Two: insight. Use your third eye to look within and to pray for wisdom, understanding and a heart of compassion. And finally: Use your foresight. Use the power of your imagination to see the possibilities. As far as you can see, God will give you now and always.

To be happier, to be more successful, and to be more spiritually fulfilled, it behooves us all to develop a good eye.

God bless you all! [Congregation applauds]

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