

“Eyes Wide Open”
September 2, 2018

Ephesians 1:15-23 (Highlight vv. 17-19a)

CORE- Our hearts have “eyes”—the capacity to seek & discover; to perceive & receive. Let’s pray that our eyes stay wide open (*“enlightened; illuminated; fully dilated”*).

WITH OUR EYES WIDE OPEN:

1. WE ARE PERCEPTIVE

- The *“heavenly realms”* are more “real” than the natural world.
- They are eternal, lasting, what really matters.
- *Luke 12:32- “Your Father delights to give you the Kingdom”*
- We expect to see more; our *“senses trained to discern” (Heb. 5:14)*

2. WE ARE INTENTIONAL

- *“Fixing our eyes on Jesus” (Hebrews 12:2)* involves intentionally believing:
 - We only grow as we connect with Jesus
 - We love His values & welcome His correction
 - We will follow His leadership
- We refuse SIN—anything that blinds us to Who He is, Who we are, Whose we are, and why we are here!

3. WE ARE RECEPTIVE

- Eyes RECEIVE
- Receiving is FOUNDATIONAL to a relationship with Jesus (i.e., receiving forgiveness, Lordship, outpouring of HS, His acceptance, gifts, opportunities)

4. WE GAIN NEW PERSPECTIVES

- See God as “GREATER” than our abilities, perceptions, limitations, and circumstances. (*He calls us to places that will deepen our trust & strengthen our faith*).
- See DIFFICULTIES differently:
 - “Suffering” produces character and hope
 - Character is formed in the “crucible”
 - More compassion and courage and insight and wisdom

5. WE WANT TO SEE HIM

- More important than knowing who WE ARE in Him—is knowing who HE IS IN US!
- Discovering who we are—is only found “in Christ”
- Until we “lose ourselves” in Him—we never truly “find ourselves”

6. WE WANT TO SEE HIM RECEIVE HIS INHERITANCE

- Jesus didn’t come to make us CONSUMERS—but SERVANTS
- His investment in us→His inheritance in us (i.e., that we grow increasingly closer TO Him)
- “Ease” is not our goal in life! PLEASING HIM is (2 Cor. 5:9)!!!

7. WE WANT TO EXPERIENCE THE SURPASSING GREATNESS OF HIS POWER

- The power of the One who:
 - CREATED all things
 - OVERCAME sin, hell, sickness, death, and ALL the power of the enemy
- His power is now “into us who believe” (Ephesians 1:19)→ to see Him move powerfully—both IN us and THROUGH us!
- NOTE: This is **not “instant”**—His Kingdom coming to & through us is like a **seed planted**. It must have obstacles removed, be watered, and nurtured as it grows!
- NOTE: God did not retire after completing the Bible. He is **still at work**—**filling His church with Himself (v. 23)**

SEE ACTS 19:11-20 Paul’s ministry in Ephesus—in both Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit