

Eyes on God

Eyes on God

I. Fear

I. Fear – Peter

- Matthew 14:22-33

- ²² Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. ²³ And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. ²⁴ But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

²⁵ Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. ²⁶ And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out for fear.

²⁷ But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, “Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.”

I. Fear – Peter

- Matthew 14:22-33

- ²⁸ And Peter answered Him and said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”

²⁹ So He said, “Come.” And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.

- Peter asks to walk on the water

- This is *Peter's* idea, not something Jesus suggested
- He knows it's storming, knows what he's getting into

I. Fear – Peter

- Matthew 14:22-33

- ³⁰ But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!”

³¹ And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” ³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

- Peter underestimates his courage

- “It seemed like a good idea at the time”
- He lets his fear get the best of him – it probably looked easier from the boat!

I. Fear – Elijah

- 1 Kings 19:1-4; 8-10

- ¹ And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword. ² Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.” ³ And when he saw that, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

⁴ But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, “It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!”

I. Fear – Elijah

- 1 Kings 19:1-4; 8-10
 - ⁸ So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God. ⁹ And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and He said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” ¹⁰ So he said, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.”
- From Carmel to Horeb
 - Fear overshadowed faith
 - Like Peter, he took his eyes off God, saw danger, and panicked

I. Fear

- Facing Fear

- 2 Corinthians 1:8-9

- ⁸ For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. ⁹ Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead
 - Paul expected to die – done to remind them to keep focus on God!

- Psalm 56:1-4

- ¹ Be merciful to me, O God, for man would swallow me up; Fighting all day he oppresses me. ² My enemies would hound me all day, for there are many who fight against me, O Most High.
³ Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You. ⁴ In God (I will praise His word), In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?

- David puts things into perspective – “what can *flesh* do to me?”

- Proper focus on God trusts in Him rather than giving into fear

Eyes on God

I. Fear

II. Anger

II. Anger – Moses

- Numbers 20:1-12

- ¹ Then the children of Israel, the whole congregation, came into the Wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh; and Miriam died there and was buried there.

² Now there was no water for the congregation; so they gathered together against Moses and Aaron. ³ And the people contended with Moses and spoke, saying: “If only we had died when our brethren died before the Lord! ⁴ Why have you brought up the assembly of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our animals should die here? ⁵ And why have you made us come up out of Egypt, to bring us to this evil place? It is not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates; nor is there any water to drink.”

II. Anger – Moses

- Numbers 20:1-12

- ⁶ So Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and they fell on their faces. And the glory of the Lord appeared to them. ⁷ Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ⁸ “Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals.” ⁹ So Moses took the rod from before the Lord as He commanded him.

- God gives a solution

- Specific, straightforward instructions
- No clarifying questions recorded

II. Anger – Moses

- Numbers 20:1-12

- ¹⁰ And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, “Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?” ¹¹ Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank.

- Psalm 106:32-33

- ³² They angered Him also at the waters of strife,
So that it went ill with Moses on account of them;
³³ Because they rebelled against His Spirit,
So that he spoke rashly with his lips.

- Moses looks at the people, not God

- Rashly speaks and strikes – lets his anger get the best of him

II. Anger – Moses

- Numbers 20:1-12

- ¹² Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.”

- Moses’s unbelief

- In his rashness did not *act* with belief and trust
- Actions showed a trust in himself in his striking, not a trust in God in his speaking
- Momentary lapse, lasting consequences
 - “If our leaders don’t treat God as holy, why should we?”

II. Anger

- Avoiding Anger

- Proverbs 14:17, 29

- ¹⁷ A quick-tempered man acts foolishly,
And a man of wicked intentions is hated.
 - ²⁹ He who is slow to wrath has great understanding,
But he who is impulsive exalts folly.
 - Moses's quick temper cost him dearly

- James 1:19-20

- ¹⁹ So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; ²⁰ for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.
 - It can be tempting to be quick to speak and quick to wrath, like Moses

- Ephesians 4:26-27

- ²⁶ "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, ²⁷ nor give place to the devil.
 - Clear danger even in righteous anger, an opportunity for temptation

- Proper focus on God keeps us from acting foolishly

Eyes on God

I. Fear

II. Anger

III. Desires

III. Desire – Eve

- Genesis 3:1-6

- ¹ Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?” ² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’ ” ⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

- First temptation

- Targeted at Eve’s desires
- Draws her attention away from God

III. Desire – Eve

- Genesis 3:1-6
 - ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.
- The “forbidden fruit”
 - Tree was a *danger*, but she saw only *desire*
 - Saw the physical, not the spiritual

III. Desire – David

- 2 Samuel 11:1-5

- ¹ It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

- ² Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold.

- “In the wrong place at the wrong time”

- Should have been leading his people as he had done before
 - Instead, he finds himself watching a woman bathing

III. Desire – David

- 2 Samuel 11:1-5

- ³ So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, “Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?” ⁴ Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her, for she was cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house. ⁵ And the woman conceived; so she sent and told David, and said, “I am with child.”

- David piles on sin after sin

- By the end of chapter 12:
 - Bathsheba’s husband is dead
 - The “sword shall never depart” from David’s house
 - Their first child dies
- *David’s* “forbidden fruit”

III. Desire

- Denying Desire

- 1 John 2:15-17

- ¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

- We cannot allow the things in this world to divert our attention

- James 1:12-15

- ¹² Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

- The source of temptation is the desires that entice us

III. Desire

- Denying Desire

- 1 John 2:15-17

- James 1:12-15

- James 4:1-5

- ¹ Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? ² You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. ⁴ Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously”?

- Proper focus on God requires looking away from temptation

Eyes on God

I. Fear

II. Anger

III. Desires

IV. Pride

IV. Pride – Nebuchadnezzar

- Daniel 4

- Nebuchadnezzar has another dream, asks Daniel to interpret

- Daniel 4:24-27

- ²⁴ this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: ²⁵ They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.

²⁶ “And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules. ²⁷ Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.”

- David gives Nebuchadnezzar a direct warning: remember that *God* rules and blesses those He chooses

IV. Pride – Nebuchadnezzar

- Daniel 4:28-32

- ²⁸ All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁹ At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. ³⁰ The king spoke, saying, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?”

³¹ While the word was still in the king’s mouth, a voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! ³² And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.”

- He claims God’s blessings as a result of *his* power

IV. Pride – Laodiceans

- Revelation 3:17-18
 - ¹⁷ Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— ¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.
- Laodiceans thought they were fine!
 - Physical riches or perceived spiritual ones, both can lead to self-satisfaction and complacency
 - Likely would have said they *did* have eyes on God
 - Complacency quickly turns to lukewarmness – no motivation

IV. Pride

- Preventing Pride

- 1 Timothy 6:6-8; 17-19

- ⁶ Now godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. ⁸ And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. . . .
 - ¹⁷ Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. ¹⁸ Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

- Not a call to *forsake* riches, the danger is being dissatisfied
 - For those who *are* well-off, the danger is also complacency
 - Riches are *uncertain*, could suddenly be without these blessings
 - Solution is being rich in *good works* – keep zealously serving
 - Proper focus on God includes storing treasures in heaven

Eyes on God

- Many things can take our eyes off God:
 - Fears, anger, desires, pride...
 - Philippians 4:8
 - Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.
 - What is it that *we're* looking at?
 - Hebrews 12:1-2
 - ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.