



THEN the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face. ³² And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me: ³³ And the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times: unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive. ³⁴ And Balaam said unto the angel of the LORD, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again. ³⁵ And the angel of the LORD said unto Balaam, Go with the men: but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak. So Balaam went with the princes of Balak. (Numbers 22:31-35)

Of all five senses, the most important, by far, is that of sight. Some 80% of learning, especially in young people, comes via the media of sight – a picture literally is worth a thousand words. To be blind is great disability to learning. Moreover, the joys of a multicolored sunrise or the blooming of a spring rose goes unnoticed by the blind. Physical blindness is a handicap that must be accommodated both in greater reliance upon the other four senses as well as assistance from others around us. The blind cannot find a new path without another's assistance. They cannot read popular road signs, and there are no road signs in Braille.

How similar is this to the spiritually blind! They cannot see God because they are spiritually blind. We are all born that way, more or less. There is no point in losing our patience or anger when others to whom we witness simply cannot see our points of the Gospel. They are BLIND!

Those who are physically blind will not simply trust any stranger who comes along – trust must be established before they will trust you to take them to their desired destination. The same is true of the preaching of the Gospel. Shouting, screaming, pulpit pounding, Bible-slapping will avail nothing to the spiritually lost and blind. As our Lord Jesus said, *If the blind be leaders of the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.* Matthew 15:14 As good salesmen of a product, we must be thoroughly knowledgeable and convinced of the quality of the merchandise we market. The same is true of the Christian professor. We must be thoroughly grounded in faith, knowledge and wisdom in evangelization. We must establish trust by our living witness and example. The love must be genuine and unfeigned. Then in love, we teach and preach, share and minister. But the results of our sowing is not our concern in the end – it is the work of the Holy Spirit. Even an illiterate Christian, convinced of the truth of the Gospel he knows, can often lead one to Christ though only by the concurring witness and testimony of the Holy Ghost. We do not need to use a profusion of technical theological terms – just teach as Christ taught in simple language and moderate voice.

If the intercession of God is required to open the eyes of the pagan prophet, Balaam, He can open the eyes of any lost sinner whom He has chosen from the foundation of the world!

Do we need proliferation of witnesses to the above point? What of Hagar in the Wilderness? *14 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. 15 And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. 16 And she went, and sat her down opposite to him a good way off, as it were a bow shot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat opposite to him, and lift up her voice, and wept. 17 And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What disturbs you, Hagar? fear not; for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. 18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in your hand; for I will make him a great nation. 19 And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.* (Genesis 21:14-19) Note, the well of water was there from the beginning, but Hagar could not see it for her tears – then her eyes were opened and she saw it. The same happens to the lost sinner whose eyes the Holy Ghost opens and gives spiritual vision.

The eyes of sinners are always opened at some point to the plight of their ways. What of our first parents at Eden: *3:7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.* Once they had disobeyed the Lord their God, they became intensely aware and ashamed of their sin.

Similarly, our precious Mary Magdalene (John 20) was blinded by tears at the Garden Tomb until the Lord called her name. And we too, may be blind until we hear the Lord call our name.

What of our friend Saul who persecuted the Church of God in Acts. He was guilty of the stoning of Stephen and a multitude of other Christians. Yet, he was chosen by God to be a useful tool in His Kingdom. God told Ananias to go to Paul after he had been struck down by the Lord on the Road to Damascus and lay hands on Saul and heal him. Ananias resisted: *9:13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem: 9:14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on your name. 9:15 But the Lord said unto him, Go your way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 9:16 For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. 9:17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto you in the way as you came, has sent me, that you might receive your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. (o. pneuma) 9:18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.* (Acts 9:13-18) Do you feel that any are so blind as they cannot be made to see the beauty of the Lord when God touches that person? God renamed Saul, Paul – one of the greatest Apostles.

There is another set of eyes that are always opened and everywhere – the eyes of the Lord: *16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run back and forth throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.* (2 Chronicles 16:9) He KNOWS the Way. He KNOWS the Truth. He KNOWS the LIFE for He is the Giver and Sustainer of Life and no secret is kept from His eyes.

Who can we follow, even in our limited vision, more trustfully than the One who is the Way, the Truth and the Life – and no other can meet that high standard?

Before we can see, our eyes must be opened. Perhaps we are sleeping along with the greater majority of the Church. We are the Virgins without provision of oil. If we have

healthy spiritual eyes, they are useless unless we OPEN them to see the great error prevailing in the Church of today and deceiving many. Certainly, Fanny Crosby had no physical vision, but her spiritual vision surpasses that of the most enlightened Christian who sees primarily with physical vision and clouded spiritual vision.

The physically blind become more sensitive in other senses to compensate for the lack of vision. So must the spiritually blind resort to diligent study, loving kindness, sacrificial compassion, and prayer to hone the spiritual eyes to see that which escapes the casual bystander.

The deep, heart-felt yearning to know and love God are the genuine evidence of the presence of the beckoning of the Holy Ghost to your soul. It is not a work of the lost, but of the Spirit. He draws, incessantly, until the Christian fish has been brought to shipboard. *119:18 Open you mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law. 119:19 I am a stranger in the earth: hide not your commandments from me.* Consider all the wonders of God's wonderful works that escape the eyes and knowledge of the lost, or casual Christian. *Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you* is treasured counsel given by our Lord and Savior. Our search begins with 'seeking' and then in 'knocking' at the very door of faith – finally we find our Haven of Rest in the Ark of Christ ere the storm devastates all that is left behind of worldly ruin; and we are drawn to that Ark just as surely as the animals that *went in unto Noah*.

What of your spiritual eyesight, Friend? Have you measured that vision against the claims of Christ to study and show yourselves approved of God? Perhaps we need regular vision checkups of preaching and hearing to confirm our vision needs no corrective biblical lenses.