



THE NOBLE HEART™

Seeing and Hearing
December 3, 2008 eLetter

“Blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.” This is what Jesus said to his disciples, the ones who knew, believed and followed Him, and this is what He says to you. This verse speaks to us an immensely core and powerful truth. It is in this arena of “seeing” and “hearing” that most of us get side-lined and therefore do not see our calling and our place in this heroic story.

I believe that the entryway into offering what God has given us to offer comes through our ability to see and hear. One person immediately picks up that something is wrong in a group or a meeting or with the leadership. Another person quickly realizes that despite his friend’s appearance and up-beat words, he is not doing well. Someone else can see why her friend is stuck after a brief conversation about her life. And another person can see a needed and timely idea that no one could see, but all agree with when they hear it.

It is precisely at the point of seeing or hearing that we are attacked with the intent to shut us down. We see a need, whether it be a warning which must be sounded, a different process which is needed, a word of clarity to bring light or a touch to bring hope and love. But what often hit us during that moment of seeing or hearing is something like, “who are you to think you know anything” or “don’t judge the situation or the person” or “they really don’t want anything from you” or “things won’t go well if you act on what you are sensing.”

And the way we second guess our own hearing and seeing is a tough place to be in. I know. You see or hear something that feels weighty, consequential to you and then the internal conversation and battle begins. Oswald Chambers said, “A saint does not think clearly for a long while, but a saint ought to see clearly without any difficulty. You cannot think a spiritual muddle clear, you have to obey it clear.”

I know that we have all been the recipients of some poorly delivered and ill-timed words. The last thing we want to do is to inflict this kind of pain on someone else. But silence or disengagement is not the answer, because as Chambers said, you probably do see clearly. And if you do not act on what you see, you will not offer what you have, and therefore, will not know who you are and see your place in this heroic story.

We must walk with God. We must not diminish or dismiss what we see or hear, but rather ask God what we are to do with what we see. Scripture says, “All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, but the Lord weighs the motives.” (Prov. 16:2) We ask God to reveal our motive. Is it pride, arrogance, selfish ambition, vengeance or love? Are we judging the person or situation or are we discerning something?

Years ago, a mentor told me that there is a difference between discerning and judging. Discerning is seeing the reality, cause and effect of something. Judging is to write someone or something off, to pass verdict, to condemn without hope.

We are all alert to the danger of pride and judgment. We have heard and experienced verses like: Prov. 26:12 “Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.” Prov. 29:20 “Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.” Prov. 16:18 “Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.”

And then there is widely quoted verse: Matt. 7:5 “You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”

These verses are of course, completely true. But I believe that the spirit of this age (tolerance and relativism) and the kingdom of darkness have translated these truths into “to see and act on something that you think is wrong is judgmental.” And so we do not act on what we see, we do not offer what we have, therefore we do not know who we are and our place in this heroic story. And our “brother” continues to live with a “speck” in his eye. Jesus’ admonition is for us to have unobstructed sight so that we can see clearly for our brother.

Dallas Willard said, “The world can no longer be left to mere diplomats, politicians and business leaders. They have done the best they could do no doubt, but this is an age for spiritual heroes, a time for men to be heroic in faith and spiritual character and power. Holiness and devotion must now come forth from the closet and the chapel to possess the street and the factory, the schoolroom and the board room, the scientific laboratory and the governmental office.” Willard’s words are SO true. We must move on what we see and hear, for “the hearing ear and the seeing eye, the Lord has made both of them.” (Prov. 20:12)

We must not only own and honor our “seeing” and “hearing”, but we must be trained in how to use them. Paul said, “I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.” (Eph. 4:1,2) Paul’s words describe the character and strength of a trained heart. A person with this kind of character courageously offers their “seeing” and “hearing” with humility and patience, speaking with hope, focusing on the heart and cunning with timing for, “The wise heart will know the proper time and procedure.” Eccl. 8:5

So, let me encourage you to not diminish or dismiss what your heart sees and hears. The world needs you. I need you.

In the training with you,

Gary