

## Eyes of the Lord Jesus<sup>1</sup> 'Unser Herr lebt', issue 23 Gotthold Beck

Psalms(International Standard Version)

32:7 You are my hiding place; you will deliver me from trouble and surround me with shouts of deliverance. Interlude.

32:8 I will instruct you and teach you concerning the path you should walk; I will direct you with my eye.

32:9 Don't be like a horse or mule, without understanding. They are held in check by a bit and bridle in their mouths; otherwise they will not remain near you.

32:10 The wicked have many sorrows, but gracious love surrounds those who trust in the Lord.

32:11 Righteous ones, be glad in the Lord and rejoice! Shout for joy, all of you who are upright in heart!

Those who look up to Jesus are given an unimaginable blessing.

We are blessed according to how often and how sincerely we look up to Jesus. However, the Bible clearly states that even after being saved and accepted as the children of God, some people lose the joy of salvation. The growth of faith is hindered when believers look to other people or are captivated by the temptation of the devil, instead of just looking up to the Lord Jesus. When people stop looking up to Jesus, they begin walking down the wrong path. However, the Bible says even such people will eventually be recovered and taken back to Lord. The verses cited above explain two different ways of bringing people back to the right path.

Psalms

32:8 I will instruct you and teach you concerning the path you should walk; I will direct you with my eye.

32:9 Don't be like a horse or mule, without understanding. They are held in check by a bit and bridle in their mouths; otherwise they will not remain near you.

In one way, the Lord directs the lost with his eyes and shows them the path they should walk. There is also another way, where people are held in check by bit and bridle.

Even among believers of the Lord there are some people who cannot be guided by His eyes. The Lord needs to use a bit and bridle to make such people obey Him. This way is very often accompanied by pain and anxiety. Your life will be much easier and free of pain when you give up your drive for self-

determination and self-governance and walk the faithful path of looking up to Jesus alone.

However, the Lord still loves those led by bit and bridle. This does not mean that He has given up on them. Thus, in any situation, believers of the Lord will be pleased when they feel the love of the Lord Jesus and will be grateful for the Lord. People are divided into two groups according to the direction they look: some people are filled with joy and others have to live in darkness.

The Toshogu shrine in Nikko is famous for the carving of the three wise monkeys, those who hear, speak and see no evil. This represents the traditional moral lesson that you won't get into trouble if you carefully avoid seeing, hearing or talking about bad things. In other words, when people are put into situations where they can neither see, hear, nor talk, for example, if someone is blind, deaf and mute, they are protected from everything.

The Bible also states that all sins arise from humans 'seeing' something.

Job

31:1 I made a covenant with my eyes; how, then, can I focus my attention on a virgin?

Matthew

5:28 But I say to you, anyone who stares at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

As we can see from these verses, it is extremely important to be careful about what we see and how we see it. The greatest dangers in our lives come when we are blinded by something we see and lose sight of Jesus. Let's look at some of such examples from the Bible.

Numbers

13:30 Caleb silenced the people on Moses' behalf and responded, "Let's go up and take control, because we can definitely conquer it."

13:31 "We can't attack those people," the men who were with him said, "because they're too strong compared to us."

13:32 So they put out this false report to the Israelis about the land that they had explored: "The land that we've explored is one that devours its inhabitants. All the people whom we observed were giants.

13:33 We also saw the Nephilim, the descendants of Anak. Compared to the Nephilim, as we see things, we're like grasshoppers, and that's their opinion of us!"

The men who went up with Caleb disgraced themselves when they said to the people of Israel,

<sup>1</sup> 主は生きておられる 23 号、『主イエス様のまなざし』

*We're like grasshoppers, and that's their opinion of us.* However, Joshua answered to them,

#### Numbers

14:9 However, don't rebel against the Lord or be afraid of the people who live in the land, because we'll gobble them right up. Their defenses will collapse, because the Lord is with us. You are not to be afraid of them."

As we can see from these verses, the reality they saw must have been exactly what these men said. However, they could not see the truth that eyes cannot see. They totally forgot to look up to the Lord. Unfortunately, just like these men, many believers today cannot see the truth and are just like moles. They are tied up in their own lives and cannot look up the Lord Jesus.

On the other hand, when people look up to the Lord they experience unimaginable power. Bach wrote in his famous Cantata, based on Isaiah 40:31, *Those who keep waiting for the Lord will renew their strength. Then they'll soar on wings like eagles.*

When we look up to the Lord, how will His eyes appear? Let's think about it.

### 1. The Eyes of Jesus, filled with love.

#### Mark

10:17 As Jesus was setting out again, a man ran up to him, knelt down in front of him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

10:18 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus asked him. "Nobody is good except for one—God.

10:19 You know the commandments: 'Never murder.' 'Never commit adultery.' 'Never steal.' 'Never give false testimony.' 'Never cheat.' 'Honor your father and mother.'"

10:20 The man replied to him, "Teacher, I have obeyed all of these since I was a young man."

10:21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. Then he told him, "You're missing one thing. Go and sell everything you own, give the money to the destitute, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come back and follow me."

10:22 Shocked at this statement, the man went away sad, because he had many possessions.

It is written that Jesus looked at him and loved him. It was because his heart was filled with hunger and thirst that this man ran up to and knelt down in front of Jesus and asked him what he had to do to inherit eternal life. Although he was a very wealthy man, his heart was empty. He wanted to know about eternal life because he understood that the things in this world which his eyes could see were all transient and would someday vanish.

#### Men can only be truly fulfilled by eternal life.

However, for men to obtain eternal life, they have to admit that they are all heading toward destruction and understand that their salvation is absolutely necessary. To make this young man understand this, Jesus drew upon the Ten Commandments of Moses: *Never murder. Never commit adultery. Never steal. Never give false testimony. Never cheat. Honor your father and mother.* This man answered that he had been faithful to all of these commandments since he was young. This meant that he was totally blind to his own situation. It is an indisputable truth that if you do not recognize your own sins, you cannot confess your sins. And if you do not confess your sins, your sins will never be forgiven. Those who do not obtain forgiveness for their sins will never have eternal life.

#### John

3:36 The one who believes in the Son has eternal life, but the one who disobeys the Son will not see life. Instead, the wrath of God remains on him.

Most people living today claim that they obey all of these commandments, just like that rich man. After all, they say that they are not wrong, that they do not need salvation, and that they themselves know what they need. When people think this way, the eyes of their hearts are blinded by the devil, and they do not realize what is actually happening to them. What we don't realize is that this tragedy can happen to all believers of Jesus. The next verse from the Revelation refers to the people who have accepted the salvation of the Lord.

#### Revelation

3:17 You say, "I am rich. I have become wealthy. I don't need anything." Yet you don't realize that you are miserable, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked.

Now, although Jesus perfectly understood this rich man's state of mind and knew that he was blinded by the devil, He never abandoned this man. It is written in the Bible:

#### Psalms

34:18 The Lord is close to the brokenhearted, and he delivers those whose spirit has been crushed.

#### Psalms

51:17 True sacrifice to God is a broken spirit. A broken and chastened heart, God, you will not despise.

#### Psalms

147:3 He heals the brokenhearted, binding up their injuries.

#### Isaiah

57:15 For this is what the high and lofty One says, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:

He lives in the height and in holiness, and also with the one who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite.

Isaiah

61:1 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed and to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, and release from darkness for the prisoners;

Isaiah

66:2 ....declares the Lord; But this is the one to whom I will look favorably: to the one who is humble and contrite in spirit, and who trembles at my message.

The Lord looks favorably on those who are humble. This rich man did not know the true state of his mind; nevertheless, Jesus looked at him with immeasurable love and said, *You're missing one, most important thing.*

Jesus said to him, "If you want to come with me, you have to sell everything you own, then bear my cross and follow me." Jesus loved this man from the bottom of His heart. His 'true and deep love' commanded this man to sell everything he had, then come back to carry the cross and follow Him.

Jesus still looks at us with the same deep loving eyes He used to look upon this man. Jesus not only wants to save sinners, but invites them to follow Him as well. Those who are forgiven for their sins are saved and will have eternal life. Jesus always cares about us and is willing to show those He has saved the supreme purpose of their lives. In this sense, it is totally wrong to believe that you have reached your goal when you have obtained His salvation.

## 2. The Eyes of Jesus, filled with hope.

Luke

19:1 As Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it,  
19:2 a man named Zacchaeus appeared. He was a leading tax collector, and a rich one at that!  
19:3 He was trying to see who Jesus was, but he couldn't do so due to the crowd, since he was a short man.  
19:4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see Jesus, who was going to pass that way.  
19:5 When Jesus came to the tree, he looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down! I must stay at your house today."  
19:6 Zacchaeus came down quickly and was glad to welcome him into his home.

19:7 But all the people who saw this began to complain: "Jesus is going to be the guest of a notorious sinner!"

19:8 Later, Zacchaeus stood up and announced to the Lord, "Lord, I'll give half of my possessions to the poor. I'll pay four times as much as I owe if I have cheated anyone in any way."

19:9 Then Jesus told him, "Today salvation has come to this home, because this man is also a descendant of Abraham,

19:10 and the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost."

When Jesus came to the tree, he looked up and said, Zacchaeus, hurry and come down! I must stay at your house today.

The town called Jericho, where all of these incidents occurred, was known as a place cursed by the Lord God. Zacchaeus lived in this town as the chief of the tax collectors, and had certainly been living his life in pursuit of money. Presumably, he had been increasing his wealth through illicit means. Although he was very wealthy, his heart had been dominated by emptiness. For some reason, he came to believe that Jesus would fill the emptiness in his heart, and he desperately wanted to see Jesus and meet Him. So Zacchaeus, being a short man, climbed up into a sycamore tree to see the Lord. Jesus also looked up to Zacchaeus, and they looked at each other. Zacchaeus heard Jesus calling his name and met Him for the first time. At the same time, he realized that Jesus cared about him too. When Zacchaeus saw the eyes of Jesus, he found true hope. Furthermore, the Lord Jesus told him that He was already planning to stay at Zacchaeus's house, and that He would sit down and have communion with him. Zacchaeus, being prepared in his soul to accept Jesus into his house, was so pleased and welcomed Him.

John

1:12 However, to all who received him, those believing in his name, he gave authority to become God's children.

This was exactly what Zacchaeus discovered first hand.

1 John

5:13 I have written these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Zacchaeus came to understand that staying close to the Lord Jesus is itself a wonderful blessing. Those who have met the Lord Jesus will never again reside in the darkness because the Lord Jesus is light itself. Zacchaeus couldn't help but confess all his sins to the Lord. When he did this, he was told that all his sins were forgiven, from the mouth of Jesus Himself.

Zacchaeus' life was completely turned around by this. He, who had been living such a self-centered life and had been captivated by hunger for money, now came to have only one earnest desire: to please Jesus and follow Him.

### **We too need to find hope in the eyes of Jesus.**

When we think of our own futures it may seem as if, as humans, our situation is hopeless and that there is no comfort in our lives. Sometimes we feel unrelieved, disappointed or desperate. Please look up to Jesus when you feel like this. If you do, just like Zacchaeus you will find the eyes of the Lord, filled with hope. Jesus' hope filled eyes are inviting us to have fellowship with Him. Fellowship with Jesus is the same as walking in the light with Jesus, just like Jesus Himself once walked in the light. Having communion with the Lord means depending on Him alone. He is life itself. When we have communion with Jesus, we must express our desire from the bottom of our hearts in order to please the Lord.

### **3. The Eyes of Jesus, filled with compassion.**

Luke

7:11 Soon afterwards, Jesus went to a city called Nain. His disciples and a large crowd were going along with him.

7:12 As he approached the entrance to the city, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow. A large crowd from the city was with her.

7:13 When the Lord saw her, he felt compassion for her. He told her, "You can stop crying."

7:14 Then he went up and touched the bier, and the men who were carrying it stopped. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!"

7:15 The man who had been dead sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

This mother was such a pitiful woman who had been carrying a heavy burden throughout her life and was so tired. She had already gone through the tragedy of losing her husband when she lost her son, who was her only source of joy and emotional support. When Jesus saw this lady in deep sorrow, He sympathized with her. He told her to stop weeping. This lady then looked up to Jesus with tears running down her face. They looked at each other and she saw the eyes of the Lord filled with deep compassion. Jesus did not offer any empty words of consolation to her. Instead, He only said to her young dead son, *Young man, I say to you, get up!* The dead man then arose and began to talk.

This lady, until she looked into the eyes of Jesus and saw them filled with sympathy, was devastated and had been living in desperation. She was going to have a funeral ceremony for her only son. This is an example of an extreme situation where all hope is

lost. From the human perspective, everything was too late and there was nothing anyone could do to heal her. However, it is never too late for Jesus. Even in the worst situations, when everything seems hopeless, Jesus can help us.

You might be feeling right now that your life is on the edge and that all hope is gone. However, even in the most desperate times, nothing is impossible for the Lord Jesus. No matter how awful our pains are now, Jesus' eyes, which are full of love and compassion, are always there looking at us. All we need to do is to turn our faces up to His eyes and we will find the comfort we are looking for.

### **4. The Eyes of Jesus, which rectify.**

The eyes of the Lord Jesus are the 'eyes of love', the 'eyes of hope' and the 'eyes of compassion'. In addition, His eyes are also the 'eyes which rectify', which persuade the lost people to head once again in the right direction. We can find an example of the 'Eyes which rectify' in the conversation with Peter.

Luke

22:61 Then the Lord turned and looked at Peter.

Peter was filled with confidence when he declared to Jesus.

Matthew

26:33 But Peter told him, "Even if everyone else turns against you, I certainly won't!"

26:34 Jesus told him, "I tell you with certainty, before a rooster crows this very night, you will deny me three times."

26:35 Peter told him, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you!" And all the disciples said the same thing.

When Jesus warned His disciples to stay awake and to not stop praying so that they wouldn't be tempted (Matthew 26:41), Peter was confident in himself and did not take these words seriously. After Jesus was arrested and taken into the house of the high priests, Peter was in the courtyard of the house sitting with the guards. They were not believers of Jesus; actually, they were the ones who had participated in the arrest of Jesus. Peter was sitting with these people. Peter was not like he was a few moments ago, filled with confidence. Instead, he became so cowardly and denied knowing who Jesus was. This incident is described in the following verses from the Bible:

Matthew

26:69 Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard when a servant girl came up to him and said, "You, too, were with Jesus the Galilean."

26:70 But he denied it in front of them all, saying, "I don't know what you're talking about."



26:71 As he went out to the gateway, another woman saw him and told those who were there, "This man was with Jesus from Nazareth."

26:72 Again he denied it and swore with an oath, "I don't know the man!"

26:73 After a little while the people who were standing there came up and told Peter, "Obviously you're also one of them, because your accent gives you away."

26:74 Then he began to curse violently. "I don't know the man!" he swore solemnly. Just then a rooster crowed.

26:75 Peter remembered the words of Jesus when he said, "Before a rooster crows, you will deny me three times." Then he went outside and cried bitterly.

When people are too confident about themselves, they become arrogant and the eyes of their hearts are dazzled. Consequently, Peter neglected the warning of Jesus. When we don't stand firm on the words of God and refuse to respect His words alone, we are actually standing on the side of the devil. When we are overconfident and disregard the words of the Bible, we are likely to fall into sin in communion with non-believers. The Bible says,

2 Corinthians

6:14 Stop becoming unevenly yoked with unbelievers. What partnership can righteousness have with lawlessness? What fellowship can light have with darkness?

Jesus warns us to stay awake and to not stop praying in order to avoid the temptation of the devil.



When we become overconfident of our own faith we will likely fall into the devil's trap. This was exactly what happened to Peter. From a human's perspective, Peter failed at this very moment. However, Jesus prayed for him.

Luke

22:31 "Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has asked permission to sift all of you like wheat,  
22:32 but I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail. When you have come back, you must strengthen your brothers."

Jesus wanted to give tribulation to Peter, and He actually gave the devil a permission to do so. But Jesus then prayed for Peter so that his faith wouldn't fail. When Peter denied Jesus three times saying he did not know such person, Jesus turned around and stared at Peter. These eyes of the Lord Jesus were exactly the eyes which rectify those who have stepped off the right path, those which guide them back on again. The eyes of the Lord Jesus penetrated Peter's heart and brought about his repentance instantly. Peter then went out of the courtyard, was separated from other people and cried bitterly alone. He must have been in utter darkness for the next three days, and must not have thought about anything. But this was not the end. Peter was changed. Peter, who was so weak and denied Jesus, then changed into the most courageous witness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he became afraid of death no longer. It is recorded in history that he was martyred for his faith in the Lord Jesus.

We too have to be very careful so that instead of relying on ourselves, we always act based upon the words of the Scripture, as Peter in his later life did. We must not compromise with others or conform to the opinions of the non-believers.

## 5. Jesus' eyes of acceptance

Finally, let's discuss how the eyes of Jesus are the 'eyes of acceptance', those which 'accept everything as good'.

John

1:45 Philip found Nathaniel and told him, "We have found the man about whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets wrote—Jesus, the son of Joseph, from Nazareth."

1:46 Nathaniel asked him, "Out of Nazareth? Can anything good come from there?" Philip told him, "Come and see!"

1:47 Jesus saw Nathaniel coming toward him and said about him, "Look, a genuine Israeli, in whom there is no deceit!"

1:48 Nathaniel asked him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, while you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

1:49 Nathaniel replied to him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

1:50 Jesus told him, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than that."

1:51 Then he told him, "Truly, I tell all of you with certainty, you will see heaven standing open and the angels of God going up and coming down to the Son of Man."

Nathanael is characterized by his honesty, purity and sincerity. Jesus accepts people like him. Contrarily, the present time we are all living in is characterized by dishonesty, evil and impurity. Actually, Nathanael did not believe in the Lord Jesus right away; he was skeptical at the beginning. He believed that the Messiah would rise from Bethlehem. This is why he said, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" But regardless of whether Jesus was from Nazareth or Bethlehem, Nathanael decided to come and see for himself who Jesus really was. When Nathanael met the Lord Jesus, he realized that He was truly the Son of God. He had been absolutely skeptical that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, but the moment he met Jesus, he believed 100 percent that the Lord Jesus was the promised savior, the Son of God.

Humans do not innately have such faithfulness, purity or sincerity. We all more or less have the nature to pretend and lie to ourselves. But Jesus is totally different. A true encounter with the Lord Jesus wipes away our nature of deceiving ourselves and others.

If you don't have a sincere heart, you will never obtain true hope or blessing. Those who have a sincere and pure heart will see heaven opened before them. This is the promise of the Lord Jesus. To see heaven opened before you is to come to know Jesus better by inspiration from above. It is only the cross of the Lord Jesus which can release us from all kinds of untruth and deception. It was for this reason that the Lord Jesus commanded us to accept and bear the cross and follow Him. Paul was a man who was prepared to bear the cross and follow the Lord Jesus. He testified in the epistle to the Galatians, 2:20: *I have been crucified with the Messiah. I no longer live, but the Messiah lives in me.* We too have to encounter Jesus and look into His eyes. The eyes of Jesus, filled with His deep love, tell us about the cross. Jesus' eyes of hope invite us to have fellowship with Him. Do we also have the strong desire to have fellowship with the Lord Jesus? People are hopeless if they are indifferent to this fellowship. The eyes of Jesus are full of compassion and they are even capable of bringing back the dead.

In addition, the eyes of Jesus which rectify us are indispensable. They are the only eyes that can show us the right road to recovery. Aren't there so many

things in our lives that we have to repent about, which will return us to the right path? If you are indifferent about repentance, your mind will be hardened unknowingly, and eventually you will be made blind. Finally, the eyes of Jesus, those of acceptance, are the promise of the Lord, that we will see heaven opened before us.

If you only look at yourself or other people you will eventually become occupied by an inferiority complex and become obsequious, or conversely, you will be filled with a feeling of superiority and begin to act arrogantly. When your mind is in this kind of state, you cannot serve the Lord; you actually will be an instrument of the devil.

The next verses explain clearly how David fulfilled the Lord's intentions and how he came to be used by the Lord.

#### Psalms

16:8 I have set the Lord before me continually; because he stands at my right hand, I will stand firm.

16:9 Therefore, my heart is glad, my whole being rejoices, and my body will dwell securely.

We always have to look up to Jesus no matter what the circumstances, instead of looking to ourselves or other people. This is the path that leads to a life of victory.

#### Isaiah

48:10 Look, I have refined you, but not like silver; I have purified you in the furnace of affliction.

#### Isaiah

48:17 This is what the Lord says, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the Lord your God, who teaches you how to succeed, who directs you in the path by which you should go.

48:18 Now if only you had paid attention to my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your success like the waves of the sea.