

Nearsighted Christians

INTRODUCTION.

- A. *“For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.”*
- B. “Shortsighted” or “nearsighted.” - The word used here, which does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament, means to shut the eyes; i.e., to contract the eyelids, to blink, to twinkle, as one who cannot see clearly, and hence to be near-sighted.
- C. He, whether Jew or Gentile, who professes to have FAITH in God, and has not added to that FAITH virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love; is blind. His understanding is darkened, and cannot see afar off, shutting his eyes against the light, winking, not able to look truth in the face, nor to behold that God whom he once knew was reconciled to him. Thus it appears he is willfully blind, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. His faith ceasing to work by love, lost the evidence of things not seen.
- D. Men have always thought of the present and neglected the future. This is the point that Peter is suggesting.

I. EXAMPLES OF NEAR-SIGHTEDNESS.

- A. Let's look at some Old Testament examples of nearsightedness.
1. Esau selling his birthright. (Genesis 25:27-34)
 - a. Because Esau was nearsighted he lost:
 - 1) A double portion of goods. (Deuteronomy 21:15-17)
 - 2) Esau also lost the blessing given by Jacob. (Genesis 27:26-30)

- 3) Because of Esau's nearsightedness, he lost the right to be an ancestor of Christ. (Genesis 26:4)
 - 4) Finally, Esau lost the right to have his name mentioned many times where Jacob's name was mentioned.
2. The trespass of Achan is another good example of nearsightedness.
 - a. In the story of the destruction of the city of Jericho that is an important statement to set up the story of Achan. (Joshua 6:17-18; 7:19-25)
 - b. Because of Achan being nearsighted, Israel lost the battle. Think of how many lives were lost because of this nearsightedness. (Joshua 7:1-5)
 - c. Achan lost his life because of his nearsightedness. (Joshua 7:25)
 3. Another Old Testament example is the disobedience of Saul.
 - a. The story begins in 1 Samuel 15:1-21.
 - 1) God told King Saul to destroy the Amaleks for what they did to Israel. He told him to destroy everything and not take anything with him. (1 Samuel 15:3)
 - 2) Saul thought he knew better than God. (1 Samuel 15:9, 13-22)
 - b. Because Saul was nearsighted and did not obey God, God rejected him as king. (1 Samuel 15:22-28)
 - c. Of course that neighbor (fellow Israelite) was David.
- B. Now let us look at some New Testament examples of nearsightedness.
1. Ananias and Sapphira are good examples of nearsightedness.
 - a. The people were giving their possessions to the Apostles so that they might help those of the church who were needy. (Acts 4:34-37)
 - b. Ananias and Sapphira also sold of their possession but they kept

back part of it and then lied to the Apostles by stating that they gave all of the proceeds to them. (Acts 5:1-10)

- c. As a result of their sin, they lost their lives.
2. Simon the sorcerer is another good example of nearsightedness.
 - a. There is no doubt that Simon was pricked in his heart and obeyed the gospel. (Acts 8:9-13)
 - b. Simon was nearsighted when he tried to purchase the gift of laying on hands. (Acts 8:14-19)
 - c. When his sin was pointed out. Simon repented and asked for prayers. (Acts 8:20-23)
 3. The church of Corinth in corrupting the Lord's Supper is another good example of nearsightedness.
 - a. They were guilty of making a meal out of the Lord's Supper. They actually came together to eat a meal rather than take the Lord's Supper. Paul reminded them that they had home to eat in and that they were not properly worshiping God. (1 Corinthians 11:20-34)
 4. The church of Laodicea was guilty of nearsightedness in becoming lukewarm. (Revelation 3:14-17)

II. HOW CAN WE BE NEAR-SIGHTED?

- A. What are some ways that we can be nearsighted? Let us suggest nine ways and you may think of a few more.
 1. We become nearsighted when we fail to study the Bible. (2 Timothy 2:15)
 - a. The KJV uses the word "study" rather than "be diligent" When you think of the word diligent, it takes right back to the beginning of our series of study in 2 Peter 1:5 -- "*But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, . . .*" The word diligence means - that we ought to make this a distinct and definite object, and to apply ourselves to it

as a thing to be accomplished. We cannot rightly divide the word of truth if we fail to study. (Hebrews 5:12-13)

- b. Studying the word of God is not just the duty of preachers. (Hebrews 6:1) – Christians also must study the word of God and we must be diligent about our studying the word of God.
2. We are nearsighted when we neglect the assembly of the saints. (Hebrews 10:24-29)
3. We are nearsighted if we fail to contribute. (1 Corinthians 16:1-2)
 - a. We clearly see from Paul’s statement that: (1) That we must give each first day of the week. (2) That it is a personal responsibility between you and God. (3) That we must give according as we are able.
 - b. *“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.”* (2 Corinthians 9:8) - The word grace, in the connection in which the apostle uses it in this verse, signifies a charitable gift. God is able to give you, in his mercy, abundance of temporal good; that, having a sufficiency, ye may abound in every good work. This refers to the sowing plenteously: those who do so shall reap plenteously-they shall have an abundance of God's blessings.
4. We are nearsighted when we see others faults instead of seeing our own faults. (Matthew 7:1-5)
5. We are nearsighted when we return evil for evil. (Romans 12:17-21; cf. Matthew 6:14-15)
6. We are nearsighted if we do not love our brethren. (1 John 2:11; 4:20)
7. We are nearsighted if we think too much of our self. (Romans 12:3)

8. We can be nearsighted if we have interests centered on worldly things. (1 John 2:15-17)
9. Finally, we can be nearsighted by backsliding. (1 Timothy 1:15; 4:1; 2 Peter 2:20-21)

CONCLUSION.

- A. So what is the remedy to avoid be nearsighted?
 1. This takes us back to 2 Peter 1:5-7.
 2. We have thoroughly discussed each of the Christian graces and those studies can be viewed on our web site. We invite you to view each of the studies and give us feedback on your thoughts and or questions.
 3. When these Christian graces are applied, nearsightedness disappears and cannot reappear as long as we continue to grow in these Christian graces..