

Discipleship Moment

Text: 2 Corinthians 5:11-17

Every morning, when I wake up, I look around my room and can't see anything. It doesn't matter if the light is on or off, if it's dark outside or not, I can't see. Fuzzy blobs of color and light are the only things that fill my room as I look around. I reach over, past my phone and huge stack of books on my night stand and grab my magic goggles. I slip these goggles on and suddenly the fuzzy blobs become my furniture, lamps, and wife.

Many of you may be like me, you require a set of glasses to see anything in the world. When I don't have my contacts in or glasses on, I am pretty much useless. I have to grope around the room with my hands to make sure I don't run into anything. My feet shuffle carefully across the floor, so I don't stub my toe on my bed frame, rocking chair, or our new bassinet that we've had to move into our room. But, when I put my glasses on or my contact lenses in, I can move easily around a dark room. I can locate my phone on the floor that has been reminding me to wake up for the last 10 minutes, and I can easily navigate my way through life.

Seeing is one of the most important things in the human life. And the way that we see something changes what we *do*. Someone who is blind has to navigate the world in a radically different way than someone who has 20/20 vision. Not being able to see well drastically reduces our ability to operate well. But, when our sight is restored through corrective lenses, then the world opens up to us.

Just like you and me, the Church is a living thing. The Church is the body of Christ, it is a living thing. And, without vision, the Church just gropes around in the dark. Christ is the Head of the Church, and just like the body, the vision comes from the Head. A congregation is possible only when the body is attached to the Head.

Vision is an important thing. And congregations without vision are hopeless. The Spirit gives life by helping the church to see, by giving it vision. And this Sunday, after much prayer and work, Pastor Ben unveiled New Life's renewed vision. Pastor Ben helped us understand that this was not a NEW vision, in that he usurped the work that New Life had done in the past, but it is, in fact, a RE-NEWED vision. It's like putting on a pair of glasses: it helps us see where we are going. It enables us to engage with the world well instead of groping and shuffling around aimlessly.

Clear and concise, this new mission and vision statement restates what New Life has always been about, and helps us as we move forward, grow, love, and worship. Just like Paul said: "From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view..." We see now as Jesus, the Head, wants us to. We see the New Creation everywhere, and partake in that New Creation through...

Transformed Hearts. Transformed Lives. Transformed Community.
Transformed World.

Going Deeper

Use this resource to start conversations about this week's sermon for your personal devotions, with your family, or with your Life Group. You can use one question per day or all at once

1. Blindfold yourself and try to find your favorite app on your phone without sight. Now try to text your spouse or a friend with a blindfold on. Were you able to do it? How difficult was it?
2. Have you ever been part of an organization, a workplace, a church, or something else, that didn't seem to have a clear vision? What was that like?
3. Why do you think vision is important? How can vision help an organization or a person operate well?
4. This week, write out New Life's new mission and vision statement (Transformed Hearts. Transformed Lives. Transformed Community. Transformed World.) and think about transformation. What would it look like in your life to have this vision brought to life? What if your heart was transformed? and your whole life? and your community? and the whole world?
5. Pray that God would do that work of transformation in all those areas.
6. What are some of the ways that you can bring transformation to your heart, life, community and world? Do them.