

# Seeing More of Jesus Christ in Our Lives

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The Savior invites us to see our lives through Him in order to see more of Him in our lives.

Brothers and sisters, how humbled I am to stand before you this morning. I knit my heart with yours in gratitude to be assembled, wherever you are across the world, to hear messages from prophets, apostles, seers, revelators, and leaders in God's kingdom. We figuratively become like the people of King Benjamin's day, pitching our tents and having our doors open and directed toward God's prophet on the earth, President Russell M. Nelson.

I've had poor eyesight for as long as I can remember and have always needed the aid of prescription lenses to correct my vision. When I open my eyes every morning, the world appears very disorienting. Everything is out of focus, grainy, and distorted. Even my dear husband is more reminiscent of an abstract portrait than the well-loved and comforting figure he really is! My reflexive need, before I do anything else at the start of my day, is to reach for my glasses to help me make sense of my surroundings and enjoy a more vibrant experience as they help me navigate throughout my day.

Over the years, I've come to recognize that this behavior illustrates my daily dependence on two things: first, a tool that helps me to clarify, focus, and ground the world around me; and second, a need for tangible guidance to continually point me in the right direction. This simple, routine practice mirrors to me a significant observation about our relationship with our Savior, Jesus Christ.

In our lives that are often filled with questions, worries, pressures, and opportunities, our Savior's love for us individually and as His covenant children and also His teachings and laws are available daily resources that we can depend on to be a "light which shineth, ... enlighten[ing our] eyes [and] quicken[ing our] understandings." As we seek for the blessings of the Spirit in our lives, we will be able to, as Jacob taught, see "things as they really are, and ... as they really will be."

As covenant children of God, we have been uniquely blessed with a rich supply of divinely appointed tools to improve our spiritual vision. The words and teachings of Jesus Christ as recorded in scripture and messages from His chosen prophets and His Spirit received through daily prayer, regular temple attendance, and the weekly ordinance of the sacrament can help to restore peace and provide the necessary gift of discernment that brings Christ's light and His understanding to the corners of our life and in a world that may be cloudy. The Savior can also be our compass and our pilot as we steer through both the calm and the turbulent waters of life. He can make plain the correct path that leads us to our eternal destination. So what would He have us see, and where would He have us go?

Our dear prophet has taught that "our focus must be riveted on the Savior and His gospel" and that we must "strive to look unto Him in *every* thought." President Nelson has also promised that "nothing invites the Spirit more than fixing your focus on Jesus Christ. ... He will lead and guide *you* in your personal life if you will *make time for Him* in your life—each and every day." Friends, Jesus Christ is both the purpose of our focus and the intent of our destination. To help us to remain fixed and heading in the right direction, the Savior invites us to see our lives *through Him* in order to see *more of Him* in our lives. I've come to learn more about this specific invitation through my study of the Old Testament.

The law of Moses was given to the early Israelites as a preparatory gospel, designed to ready the people for a higher covenant relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The law, rich with symbolism pointing believers to "look forward to the coming" and Atonement of Jesus Christ, was meant to help the people of Israel focus on the Savior by practicing faith in Him, His sacrifice, and His laws and commandments in their lives—it was intended to bring them to a greater understanding of their Redeemer.

Just as we are today, God's ancient people were invited to see their lives *through Him* in order to see *more of Him* in their lives. But by the time of the Savior's ministry, the Israelites had lost sight of Christ in their observances, setting Him aside and adding to the law unauthorized practices that had no instructive symbolism pointing to the true and only source of their salvation and redemption—Jesus Christ.

The everyday world of the Israelites had become disoriented and obscure. The children of Israel, in this state, believed that the practices and rituals of the law were the path to personal salvation and in part reduced the law of Moses to a set of protocols administered to rule civilian life. This required the Savior to restore focus and clarity to His gospel.

Ultimately a great portion of the Israelites rejected His message, even going so far as to accuse the Savior—He who *gave* the law and declared that He *was* “the law, and the light”—of breaking it. Yet Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount, speaking on the law of Moses, declared, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.” Then the Savior, through His eternal Atonement, ended the codes, regulations, and ceremonial practices observed by the people of Israel at that time. His final sacrifice led the shift from sacrificial burnt offerings to our rendering of “a broken heart and a contrite spirit,” from the ordinance of sacrifice to the ordinance of sacrament.

President M. Russell Ballard, teaching on the subject, said, “In a sense, the sacrifice changed from the *offering* to the *offerer*.” When we bring our offering to the Savior, we are being invited to see more of Jesus Christ in our lives, as we humbly submit our will to Him in recognition and understanding of His perfect submission to the will of the Father. When we fix our sight on Jesus Christ, we recognize and we understand that He is the only source and way to receive forgiveness and redemption, even unto eternal life and exaltation.

As an early follower of the gospel, I encountered many who observed and perceived changes in my behaviors, practices, and choices after I joined the Church. They were curious about the “whys” of what they were seeing—why I chose to be baptized and join *this* congregation of believers, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; why I refrain from certain practices on the Sabbath; why I’m faithful in keeping the Word of Wisdom; why I read the Book of Mormon; why I believe in and incorporate the teachings of modern-day prophets and apostles into my life; why I attend weekly Church meetings; why I invite others to “*come and see, come and help, ... come and stay,*” and “*come and belong.*”

At the time, those questions felt overwhelming and, transparently, sometimes accusatory. But as I grappled with people’s scrutiny, I came to realize that their probing was, in fact, my first invitation to pick up and put on a pair of spiritual lenses to clarify, focus, and solidify what motivated my adherence to gospel practices and standards. What was the source of my testimony? Was I only carrying out “outward performances” without allowing those practices connected to God’s laws to “strengthen [my] faith in Christ” or to demonstrate understanding that *Jesus Christ is the only source of power in my observances?*

Through rigorous effort to look *to and for* Jesus Christ in my every thought and deed, my eyes were enlightened and my understanding quickened to recognize that Jesus Christ was calling for me to “come

unto” Him. From this early season of discipleship in my youth, I can recall an invitation extended to me by the missionaries to join them as they taught the gospel to a group of young girls about my age. One evening, as we were seated in the family home of one of these young women, their tender question of why I believe pricked my heart and allowed me to testify to them with deepened understanding of the Lord’s vision about the spiritual motivations of my discipleship and has refined my testimony going forward.

I learned then, as I know now, that our Savior, Jesus Christ, directs our feet to meetinghouses each week to partake of His sacrament, to the house of the Lord to make covenants with Him, to the scriptures and teachings of prophets to learn of His words. He directs our mouths to testify of Him, our hands to lift and serve as He would lift and serve, our eyes to see the world and each other as He does—“as they really are, and ... as they really will be.” And as we allow Him to direct us in all things, we receive testimony that “all things denote there is a God,” because where we look for Him we will find Him—each and every day. This I testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.