

Monday- SIGHT

When I was 7, I couldn't really see what the teacher put on the board in class, and I was having trouble seeing things that were far away. I got glasses for the first time, and those glasses made everything so much clearer! I felt like a new person.

Think about it. It wasn't that I got new eyes, but I got a new lens to look through to see the world. A lens that put everything in perspective and made things clear for me. With this lens I filtered everything I saw through it, and it helped me see the world differently.

READ Acts 3:1-10.

Peter and John were going about their daily life, when their day was interrupted. They noticed this man sitting outside the gate. Who knows how many people have walked past this man and no one noticed. But in this instance, Peter and John noticed him and gave him not what he wanted (money), but what he needed (the saving power of Jesus Christ).

Verse 4 tells us that Peter and John looked at the man and had the man look at them. Why do you think the writer of Acts points this out?

Why do you think Peter and John paid attention to this man? What might have made them different than the others who walked by and didn't notice?

Could it be said that Peter and John were looking through a God-lens instead of their own lens? Instead of only thinking about themselves, they were looking for what God could do during that day? Perhaps they were looking through Kingdom-lens, a lens that made them see the world differently because of their faith in God and His Kingdom.

Brandon Heath has a song called "Give Me Your Eyes." Here's the lyrics for the chorus:

*Give me Your eyes for just one second, give me Your eyes so I can see
Everything that I've been missing, give me Your love for humanity
Give me Your arms for the broken-hearted, the one that are far beyond my reach
Give me Your heart for the ones forgotten, give me Your eyes so I can see*

What would it be like if we had the eyes of Jesus as we looked at our world? Would we see people differently? Would we serve others more? Love them more?

Write out 2 specific ways that this week you will pay attention and have the eyes of Jesus.

Daily challenge: Go on a prayer walk around your neighborhood (or wherever you are for the week). Don't be on your phone while you're walking. Pay attention to what's around you. Pay attention to what you're seeing. Make a list of 5 things you saw on your walk that reminded you of God's presence. As you walk, ask God to give you the eyes to see those around you the way God sees them.

Tuesday- TASTE

I have a sign in my kitchen with **Psalm 34:8** on it- "Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him."

To taste and see that God is good is a reminder to pay attention to my life and see where He is working. Like yesterday as we talked about our eyes and seeing, it's important that we pay attention to where God is at work all around us, in our everyday life.

I've been trying to cook more, but I will not say that everything I cook or bake tastes good. Sometimes it's awful. Maybe I left out an ingredient or I put too much of something in there or I used baking soda instead of baking powder (yep, there's a big difference. Who knew?!)

Salt is an ingredient that might not seem important in a recipe, because it's so small, but it does make a big difference to enhance the flavor of your cooking. If you leave it out, you can tell. Or if you use too much, it makes a big difference.

READ **Matthew 5:13-16**.

What does Jesus say about salt? What does it mean to be the salt of the earth?

Just like in a recipe, salt might not seem like a big ingredient, but even a little makes a difference...the same can be said of our faith. Living a life of faith, one that points to Jesus in what we do each day, makes a big difference. Even something as simple as asking to pray for someone can be a big thing and a great way to point to Jesus.

Are you living a salty life? Why or why not?

READ **Colossians 4:2-6**.

Write out verse 6.

Let your conversations be seasoned with salt. Let what you say glorify God. Be ready to tell others why you live the way you live. Think about this: Why do you make the choices you make? As a Christ follower, we are to make decisions based on what Scripture would say and what Jesus commands us to do. My life should look different than a non-believer, because I'm not making decisions based off what I want but what God wants.

Daily challenge: Find a recipe and make something today (or this week). Perhaps ask your family to join you. Or make some cookies and take them to some first responders. Find someone you can bless with food this week. As you are making this, pray for whoever will receive this. If you're using salt in your recipe, let it be a reminder to live a salty life, pointing to Jesus in all that we do.

Wednesday- SMELL

What's your favorite smell in the world? What's your least favorite smell in the world?

My favorite smell: The Soarin' ride at EPCOT at Disney World- Fiji scene. Oh my. It just smells heavenly. I found a candle that smells just like it too.

My least favorite smell: a dirty diaper OR when I forget to take out the trash (yuck!)

When I first moved to Amarillo, there were a few days when the air just smelled. My apartment was next to the dog park in my complex, so I thought it was the dogs. But I began to notice that I smelled the same smell throughout the city on certain days, and I realized it was the cattle feed lots...or as others have said "the smell of money." That scent was strong and made the entire area smell like those feed lots.

READ 2 Corinthians 2:14-17.

Did you know that Scripture tells us what to smell like? Paul in 2 Corinthians tells us we are to be the pleasing aroma of Christ to the world.

What does that mean to you? What does it mean to essentially "smell like Christ"?

As we interact with people, the way we talk, the things we do, the lives we live, we all give off a "scent" or all of what we do points to something. Either we're pointing to and glorifying the Lord in all that we do. Or we're pointing to ourselves and glorifying ourselves.

Do our lives smell or give off the scent of Jesus, smells of life, smells of joy? Or do our lives smell or give off the scent of death, smells of sin, smells of pain?

When others are around us, do we give off the scent of Jesus or of death/ self?

Write 2 ways that would be giving off the scent of self or death. Write 2 ways that would be giving off the scent of Jesus and life. Be specific with your answers.

Think about this week and your interactions with others. Did you smell of life or smell of death?

READ Romans 12:1-2.

Paul tells us we are to be a living sacrifice, one that is pleasing to the Lord. Perhaps we could say our lives as living sacrifices should also smell pleasing to the Lord- give the scent of life.

Daily challenge: Find a scented candle and light it. Does it fill up the whole room with the scent? With the candle lit, spend some time praying that God would give you the courage to live a life that smells of Jesus. Look back over your answers and ask God to help you put into practice living a life that smells of Jesus.

Thursday- HEAR

Have your parents ever told you that you have “selective hearing”? Or maybe a teacher has said that before?

It means that you only hear parts of a conversation or parts of an instruction. Maybe your parents told you to clean your room by Monday but all you heard was clean your room. You missed some of the instructions, and when Monday comes and you didn't clean your room, oops!

Many places in Scripture, especially in the Psalms, we see people asking God to hear their prayers.

READ Psalm 102:1-2, Psalm 116:1-2, and Psalm 143:1.

These are just a few examples, but scripture is filled with instances of people asking God to hear them. And guess what? God doesn't have selective hearing. He hears our prayers and listens to us- all that we say, not just a part like we might do at times.

We also see in the New Testament examples of Jesus listening to those He met along the way.

READ Mark 5:24-34.

Jesus took the time to hear the woman's full story. We have no idea how long that might have taken, but in the midst of all that was going on, Jesus stopped and listened. How many people have walked past her these 12 years and never heard her whole story? Or how many would have pretended to listen or selectively heard her story? But Jesus, we're told He heard her whole story.

What would it look like for us today to listen to others? To hear their whole story? To instead of selectively hearing what they have to say, to actually truly listen to their story?

Who do you know that needs to be reminded that God hears our prayers? Write down their name and say a prayer for them.

Who do you know that needs to be heard? Write down their name and write out a specific way you can listen to them this week.

Daily challenge: Text, call, or meet up with a friend and ask them how they are doing. Really listen to them. Ask them how you can be praying for them. Listen to their story and hear what they have to say.

Bonus If you're out and about today, ask someone you don't know how they are doing and how you can be praying for them. Perhaps it's the cashier at the store. Or the waiter at the restaurant. Or the umpire at your baseball game. Don't be distracted as you listen to them. Then pray for them.

Friday- TOUCH

There are quite a few studies that have been done that tell us we each need meaningful touches to live healthy lives. Perhaps it's a high five or a side hug or a fist bump. It's a way that people show us they see us and care for us.

But as you know this past year has been difficult for this. We've been asked to distance ourselves and to not touch one another. Those meaningful touches have been limited.

READ Luke 5:12-16.

We aren't told how long this man has lived with leprosy, but because of how contagious this disease was, it is quite possible he had not been touched in a long time. People have probably walked past him and ignored him for a long time. But Jesus, he reaches out and touches the man.

Other instances in scripture Jesus speaks and people are healed. He never has to touch them, but they are immediately healed. Why do you think it's important that Jesus touched this man in Luke 5?

Jesus throughout scripture touches the untouchables, those that society has ignored. If we were to look at His life, we'd see that not every touch was a physical touch. Just reaching out to care for someone or to pay attention to someone changed people's lives when they encountered Jesus.

With Covid, we've had to find other ways to care for each other that were distanced. Personal touches looked like hand-written notes, zoom calls, and texts, instead of hugs, high fives, and fist bumps. But just as our research tells us, all of those touches were important and still are important. Reaching out to others and reminding them they are loved is so vital to their well-being.

READ 1 Thessalonians 2:8.

We're commanded to not only share the Gospel but our lives with others. What does it mean to you to share not only the Gospel but your life as well?

Daily challenge: Take some time to journal about what this past year has taught you. Touch has looked very different during this time and we've had to find creative ways to still reach out to another. What have you learned? What do you want to do differently in the coming year now that things are getting closer to normal?

Bonus Reach out to one person today who needs to know they are loved by God. Perhaps you send them a text or a note. Perhaps you ask to get coffee. Perhaps you clean your room without being asked. Perhaps you go through your clothes and find things you're not wearing and donate them (Colorful Closets is a great place to give gently used, in-style items!)
How can you touch someone's life today by serving them?