

## ***Theme for 2020***

### **I AM WHAT ‘YOU’ SEE!**

#### **‘LORD, Open My Eyes, Help Me Believe, I Am What YOU See.’**

*“Your eyes are windows into your body. If you open your eyes wide in wonder and belief, your body fills up with light... Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out; you formed me in my mother’s womb. I thank you, High God—you’re breathtaking! Body and soul, I am marvelously made! I worship in adoration—what a creation! You know me inside and out, you know every bone in my body; You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit, how I was sculpted from nothing into something. Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth; all the stages of my life were spread out before you. The days of my life all prepared before I’d even lived one day. Your thoughts—how rare, how beautiful! God, I’ll never comprehend them! I couldn’t even begin to count them—any more than I could count the sand of the sea. Oh, let me rise in the morning and live always with you.”*

**Matthew 6:22 (MSG); Psalm 139:13-18 (MSG)**



#### ***This Week’s Thought – January 19, 2020***

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*“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.”* Romans 12:14 (NIV)

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There are some things Jesus commands His followers/disciples to do aren’t so easy. In fact, they can be downright challenging and difficult. One of those things is loving our enemies.

In Matthew 5:44-47 Jesus says: *“But I say, ‘Love your enemies. Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For He gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and unjust alike. If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that.”*

I think we can all agree that, sometimes *“loving hurts.”* Loving hurts because it hurts to sacrifice for someone who has done you wrong. It hurts to love someone who has taken advantage of you and feels justified in their injustice. But even though it hurts to love our enemies, we need to remember that the commands Christ gives aren’t to wound us, or to hurt us, but He has given them to us to set us free. His commands are for liberation. His commands are for life.

*“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”* (John 10:10, NIV)

In loving your enemies, you will be set free from the burdens of hatred, unforgiveness, jealousy, and revenge. Love sets the human heart free from the vices of evil that put the human heart in a vice. Keep in mind however, that the command Christ gives us to love those who persecute us and hate us, doesn’t mean you have to be best friends, forget what they have done, or even approve of their actions. It doesn’t mean you don’t have boundaries. But it does mean you unselfishly seek the best or higher good for them and pray for them. It does mean you ask God to give you a heart of forgiveness.

You may be focusing on what is good and right and fair, about getting justice and what you want. But perhaps you are called to be an instrument in the Father’s Hand for the benefit of someone who is hurting you—just like the suffering Savior was an instrument in His Father’s Hands for your benefit.

*“Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when they stumble, do not let your heart rejoice.”*  
(Proverbs 24:17)

**“I am who You say I am! I am God’s workmanship, created in Christ unto good works. (Ephesians 2:10) I am an ambassador for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20). I am part of a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people (1 Peter 2:9). I am greatly loved by God (Ephesians 2:4; Colossians 3:12). I AM WHAT ‘YOU’SEE!’”**

**Application:** There are people who have hurt you in your life. Ask God to please help you to respond with His heart of forgiveness. Ask Him to help you to pray for them and to bless them as He commanded. He forgave you when you hurt Him and when your sins put Him on the cross. Ask Him to help you do the same when others hurt you.

**Words from the Master during your time of reflection this week: “I AM calling you to trust in Me at all times, no matter what is happening. I understand what a difficult assignment this is, and I know that you will sometimes fail in this venture, but I continue to love you perfectly even when you don’t succeed. Let this assurance of My unfailing Love you’re your back to Me—back to trusting Me.”** (Isaiah 26:4; Proverbs 3:5 AMP; Matthew 11:28)

*“And then God answered: “Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what’s coming. It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait! And it doesn’t lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It’s on its way. It will come right on time.”* Habakkuk 2:2-3 (MSG)

Yours in Christ, Pastor King