

## Ransom Notes

### Optic Challenges



The day was pleasant. A friend drove out to the lake to take a walk with me. I had been home from the hospital a few days following open heart surgery. Although gaining strength, I was still a bit unsteady on my feet. Having a companion join me was such a wonderful blessing.

Well, it was really a double blessing. We chatted, observed nature, and had just about reached the end of the lane when it happened. Somehow I instantaneously found myself flat on my face on the road. She offered to assist me up, but my pride indicated that I would be fine.

As I slowly got up, I realized that blood was flowing down my cheek. Oh! Me! We are about a mile from the house and no Kleenex, warm water, or band-aides. My friend found me a Kleenex or something to hold over the eye.

I'm still wondering about the return home trip, when a neighbor on her way to work stops, inspects the damage, and returns home for ice and paper towels. We get a ride back to the house, a trip to urgent care, several stitches, and the rest is history, plus this picture of the red eyed crazy lady. Incidentally my glasses were also history, but fortunately an extra pair resided in my dresser drawer.

Looking back on that event much later, my brain attempted to connect with God and the eye. He made our eyes to be an incredible camera-like image recorder and then sending that information to our brain. When working up to par, the telescopic-like ability allows us to instantaneously view a tiny flea in front of our nose and then with a blink and a slight movement of the head view a canary sitting on a bush many yards away. This image maker takes long naps, but snaps open with the slightest noise. We can cry, let our eyes twinkle, or even squint a bit, leaving the observer wondering if we are upset with them. Our eyes are the windows for our soul and our mind.

But, there are a number of challenges for eyes. Let's review a few of those, but in the context of our Christian life. For example, many people experience a common condition called dry eye syndrome. The eyes aren't able to provide adequate lubrication, thus making tears almost impossible. Sometimes in our Christian life, we find we are unable to cry tears for people who are lost and know not the Lord. Get out the spiritual, liquid Systane drops and then shed a tear for people who do not know the Lord. It is great to have Christian friends who walk with you, but we must be on the look-out for people who have not given their life to Christ.

Double vision is a very awkward eye challenge. Focusing on a single image or frame is almost impossible. Some must close one eye in an effort to view words or see clearly. As a Christian, we also have problems with double vision. We suddenly appear to focus on Satan, self and sin while at the same time attempting to bring into vision God, grace, and goodness. Our entire mind, soul, and body is focused on two paths in life. We need to medicate, refocus, and bring back single vision into our eyes. "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full darkness, how great is that darkness" (Matthew 6:22-23).

Macular degeneration (m.d.) is a degenerative eye disease. Damage to the macula can cause central vision loss. It doesn't affect your peripheral vision. Vision becomes blurry and eventually may cause blindness. We, too, in our spiritual life may begin to lose our focus on the main goal in our lives – to follow our King and His commands, such as develop the fruit of the spirit including attributes like love, joy, long-suffering, or gentleness. (Galatians 5:22-23) We may crank up our peripheral vision, looking out the side of our eyes, and begin to focus only on 'me-first,' careers, raking in hundred dollar bills, or snacking and napping in our recliners. Early signs of m.d. can be subtle. Likewise as Christians, we may skip the service project at church, or gently reduce our offering to the Lord. Then as the condition grows, we skip some Sunday worship, or forget to say our nightly, "Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep" prayers. Suddenly we realize God is no longer in our center focus. Even our peripheral view of the Lord might be limited to remarking to your grandchildren, while driving by a church, that this is where you went each Sunday when you were younger.

People with very normal eye sight, if driving, have several blind spots. These are areas of the road that cannot be seen while looking forward or through the rear-view or side mirrors. In our spiritual lives we often have a blind spot. There are simply things we cannot see. Perhaps in your Bible study you have skipped or misunderstood some challenge, or principle God expects us to follow. Suddenly you turn your eyes (re-read a verse or three) and realize that a change in your life is called for. The Holy Spirit might catch hold of your heart and mind and redirect your mind to greater understanding. Often a friend will even help you understand and guide you. The blind spot is gone for the moment.

Eyes are absolutely important to existing in our world. Certainly many people with blindness from birth would appreciate even limited vision. Never-the-less, let's each of us, humbly attempt to make our spiritual eyes as healthy and possible.