

Let it Shine!

Matthew Ch 6 v 22/23

Percy Shaw was born in Halifax, West Yorkshire in 1890 and lived in the family home for the whole of his life until his death in 1976. He was an inventor and business man, being most remembered for inventing the life - saving 'cat's eyes' that illuminate our roads at night. Approval of these devices by the Ministry of Transport during the World War 2 boosted sales production and the road studs were exported all over the world. He was awarded the OBE in 1965. He never married, became an eccentric in later life and claimed to be an agnostic, although his funeral was held in a Methodist church! Essentially, the road studs reflect the light from the oncoming vehicle thus keeping it and its passenger's safe, guiding them on the correct path and keeping them from impending danger.

I can't help but think, that, as Christians, we may be asked to form the same function in life – reflecting God's light so that those around us may see the way He would have us live in the world today.

In Matthew Chapter 6 v 22/23 we read 'The eyes (not the cat's eyes!) are like a lamp for the body' and that if they are sound then our whole body will be full of light. These two verses are sandwiched between Jesus' reference to storing up treasure and his reference to money and so undoubtedly refer to our attitude towards material possessions. However, I think, they have more far reaching implications. In understanding the real significance of Jesus' comments on wealth we must go back to Moses' farewell speech when he outlined instructions from God to the Israelites. They were to set up two altars to be a constant reminder of the curses and blessing for either not obeying or obeying God's commands. It would be good for us to remember today that it is not the presence of wealth itself that is bad, for Abraham and Job were both wealthy men, but it is the prioritizing of storing up treasures on earth before first seeking out God's way of life and the riches that **that** can provide, that should be avoided. In Jesus' day, the eye was thought to be 'the window that brought light into the body'. In our reading, Jesus is probably referring to one's conscience or inner thoughts. In this way, if one is single minded, the eye will be healthy. I'm sure that we are all familiar with the saying that we cannot serve two masters - so possibly we need two good eyes, one eye for obedience and one eye for faith! Faith is confidence in what we hope for but cannot see. Our eye of faith is one that is quick to confess when we are wrong, however hard the circumstances. Our eye of faith can stand firm when faced with attack. Our eye of obedience is to be willing to obey God's commands completely - not to pick and choose as we would wish. To obey God, not with the intent of receiving anything, but to act with humble gratitude that he allows us to be his hands and feet and to reflect his presence as we go about our daily lives. Have you got two healthy eyes? If so, let them shine and make sure they are as useful as the cat's eyes on the road.

For Discussion:

1. Do you feel that you can be as useful as 'cat's eyes' in the world today?
2. Which is the easiest to follow; the eye of faith or the eye of obedience?
3. Do you think it is easier today, or not, to follow the eyes of faith and obedience than it was for the first disciples?

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