

Is Your Eye Healthy?

Matthew 6:22-24

Introduction:

George Bernard Shaw once said, "We all live lives of quiet desperation."

Charles Allen described our culture as follows.

"We Americans have more to make life easy than any people who have ever lived. We live in the finest houses, wear the nicest clothes, and eat the best food that any generation has ever known; yet, at the same time, today we have more suicides, more divorces, more people in jail, more mental illnesses than any people of all time. For many people, life is a grim, desperate, unhappy affair."

What is missing in people's lives? The world says we just need more.

If I can just find the right person and get married, then I will be happy...

if I can get that new house or new car or new boat or new job, then I will be content

if I can just get pregnant and have a baby, then I will be satisfied

if I can quit my job and stay home with my kids, then I will be fulfilled

if I can just lose 15 pounds...if I can travel more...if I can afford to retire, then I will be content

Proverbs 27:20 (NKJV) Hell (Sheol) and Destruction (Abaddon) are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.

Ecclesiastes 6:7 (NKJV) ⁷ All the labor of man *is* for his mouth, and yet the soul (*fn. appetite*) is not satisfied.

Jeremiah 2:13: "they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water"

Jeremiah 6:13 (NKJV) ¹³ "Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them, everyone *is* given to covetousness; and from the prophet even to the priest, everyone deals falsely.

God has a different answer than the world.

1 Timothy 6:6-19 (ESV) ⁶Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, ⁷for we brought nothing into the world, and[£] we cannot take anything out of the world. ⁸But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. ⁹But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

¹¹But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before[£] Pontius Pilate made the good confession, ¹⁴to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

¹⁷As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. ¹⁸They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

I. Why Something's Missing (Covetousness)

The Greek word is pleonexia, a compound of pleon, more, and echo, to have. Thus, pleonexia is literally “a desire to have more” (W. E. Vine) or “seeking to possess what is not possessed” (Trench).

A. Covetousness is a root of all the evils.

Colossians 3:5 (NKJV)⁵Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

Colossians 3:5 is a regression analysis of sin:

fornication < uncleanness < passion < evil desire < COVETOUSNESS.

B. Covetousness is idolatry. Colossians 3:5; Ephesians 5:3. If we are not content with God's providence, we are saying that we need or want someone or something other than God.

C. Covetousness is a liar. It tells us we'll be satisfied when we get what we desire. We won't!

D. Applications:

1. I challenge anyone to name even one sin that isn't rooted in covetousness.

2. Covetousness is the primary reason people are unfulfilled.

Jeremiah 2:13 (NKJV)¹³ “For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, *and* hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.

3. Contentment is a root of every form of good, just as covetousness is a root of every form of evil.

Compare a regression analysis of righteousness.

fornication < uncleanness < passion < evil desire < COVETOUSNESS

abstinence < purity < self-control < good desire < CONTENTMENT.

II. What Does NOT Prove That Our Eye Is Healthy?

Studying/Knowing the Bible:

Matthew 23:27-28 (ESV)²⁷“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

Praying Daily:

James 4:3 (NASB)³You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

Attending Services Consistently:

3 John 1:9-10 (ESV)⁹I have written something to the church, but **Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority.** ¹⁰So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, **he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.**

Zeal for Righteousness:

Romans 10:2-3 (ESV)²I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. ³For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

Generous Giving:

1 Corinthians 13:3 (NKJV)³And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

Love of Brethren:

Matthew 5:46 (NKJV)⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

Demand for Sound Doctrine:

Philippians 1:15-18 (NKJV) ¹⁵Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: ¹⁶The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains;

Active Evangelism:

Matthew 23:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.

Matthew 23:5-12 (NKJV) ⁵But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. ⁶They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, ⁷greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi.’ ⁸But you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your Teacher, ^εthe Christ, and you are all brethren. ⁹Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. ¹⁰And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. ¹¹But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. ¹²And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

III. How Can We KNOW That Our Eye Is Healthy?

BIBLE STUDY: I Want to Know God Better and Better

Psalms 119:171-174 (NKJV) ¹⁷¹ My lips shall utter praise, for You teach me Your statutes. ¹⁷² My tongue shall speak of Your word, for all Your commandments *are* righteousness. ¹⁷³ Let Your hand become my help, for I have chosen Your precepts. ¹⁷⁴ I long for Your salvation, O Lord, and Your law *is* my delight.

1 Peter 2:2-3 (NASB) ²like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, ³if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

DAILY PRAYER: I Want to Draw Near to God

James 4:8-10 (ESV) ⁸Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

ATTENDANCE: I Want to Worship God and Lift Up My Brethren

Psalms 122:1 (NKJV) ¹ I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go into the house of the Lord.”

Psalms 84:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For a day in Your courts *is* better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

Hebrews 10:24-25 (NKJV) ²⁴And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

RIGHTEOUSNESS & PURITY: I Want to Please God

Ephesians 5:3-11 (ESV) ³But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. ⁴Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. ⁵For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷Therefore do not associate with them; ⁸for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

GENEROUS GIVING: I Want to Serve God to His Glory

1 Peter 4:10-11 (NKJV) ¹⁰As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹If anyone speaks, *let him speak* as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

1 Timothy 6:17-19 (ESV) ¹⁷As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. ¹⁸They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

LOVE OF BRETHREN: I Want to Love God for His Love & Mercy

John 13:34-35 (NKJV) ³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

1 John 4:20-21 (NKJV) ²⁰If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, ²¹how can he love God whom he has not seen? ²¹And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God *must* love his brother also.

SOUND DOCTRINE & WORSHIP: I Want to Honor & Respect God’s Authority

Leviticus 10:1-3 (NASB) ¹Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. ²And fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. ³Then Moses said to Aaron, “It is what the LORD spoke, saying, ‘By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, and before all the people I will be honored.’” So Aaron, therefore, kept silent.

Matthew 15:8-9 (NKJV) ⁸*These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. ⁹And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”*

EVANGELISM: I Want to Fulfill God’s Purpose

Luke 19:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Ephesians 3:21 (NKJV) ²¹to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Acts 8:4 (NKJV) ⁴Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.

Matthew 9:36-38 (NKJV) ³⁶But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were ³⁷weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few. ³⁸Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”

Proverbs 11:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ The fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life, and he who wins souls *is* wise.