



Lesson 12: The God Who Sees You

1. Have you ever felt unnoticed by those around you? Or that no one seems to appreciate or care about what you're going through?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

This is exactly how a woman named Hagar felt in the Bible.

2. It all began after Abram and his seemingly barren wife, Sarai, asked Hagar to become Abram's second wife so that he could finally "help God" fulfill His promise of Abram having a son. Unfortunately, going outside of his present marriage and marrying someone else, was never a part of God's plan; He was going to fulfill His promise at the right time and didn't need Abram's help to do so.

Can you relate to trying to "help" God "help you?"

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Sadly for Hagar, she ended up in the middle of this chaotic situation.

3. After she became pregnant with Abram's son, Ishmael, she and Sarai practically became enemies, and the disunity in the home became unbearable. Finally, Abram told Sarai, "Do with her whatever you think best" (Genesis 16:6, NIV).

What happened next left Hagar discouraged, disappointed, and feeling unworthy.

“

Then Sarai treated Hagar so harshly that she finally ran away.”

GENESIS 16:6 B, NLT.

Have you ever been in a situation so unbearable you just felt like running away and escaping it?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

4. Usually, in these types of situations, we seek comfort. Often, the best comfort is for someone to simply understand us, someone to simply say “I see you” and you ARE loved. This is exactly what God did to Hagar in her situation. He found her and called her by name.

“

The angel of the Lord found Hagar beside a spring of water in the wilderness, along the road to Shur. The angel said to her, ‘Hagar, Sarai’s servant, where have you come from, and where are you going?’

GENESIS 16:7-8, NLT.

5. In the continuing verses, the angel of the Lord pronounced promises from heaven to Hagar and her unborn son, even telling her what name to call him. In response, Hagar “used another name to refer to the LORD, who had spoken to her. She said, **‘You are the God who sees me’**” (Genesis 16:13, NLT).

When Hagar ran away, she felt worthless, unloved, and insignificant. Yet, she could not run away from God’s presence.

“

*Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
If I rise on the wings of the dawn,*

*if I settle on the far side of the sea,
even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.
If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me
and the light become night around me,"
even the darkness will not be dark to you;
the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you."*

PSALM 139:7-12. NIV.

In her darkest moment, God saw Hagar. God saw her struggle and the unfair circumstances she had been caught up in. He took the time to talk to her, comfort her, and give her hope, and in so doing helped her realize that she is valuable, and worth much more than she ever imagined.

6. In Episode 12 of *Story Encounters: The Chosen*, Nicodemus recalled the story of Hagar, when he was torn between his desire to follow Jesus and his obligations to his family and job.

Scan the code on the right to watch a video.



Do you think God sees your struggles, like how He saw Hagar's and Nicodemus' struggles?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Nicodemus took comfort in the thought that just as God saw Hagar, God saw his struggle.

God sees you too. Even when no one else sees or understands. Despite your struggles, He does not and will not abandon you. He has always had and still has a beautiful plan for your life, even when others around you or even you yourself can't see it.

“*For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord,
“plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you
hope and a future.”*

JEREMIAH 29:11, NIV.

7. There are other instances in this episode where God ‘sees’ the ‘unseen.’

One is the story surrounding the healing of Simon Peter’s mother-in-law (Luke 4:38-29). We know that Simon was married, and this likely meant that his wife was left at home for extended periods of time while her husband followed Jesus and ministered to others. It was an incredible sacrifice they both had to make. But Jesus saw Simon’s wife, and helped take care of the situation at home by healing her mother.

Scan the code on the right to watch a video.



In this world, doing what’s right can often entail a sacrifice. That sacrifice will often go unnoticed. Have you had to give up something for God, perhaps for your family or for the integrity of your character?

- ☐ Yes. Please elaborate.

- ☐ No. How do you think you can prepare for a time ahead when God might call you to give up something for Him?

As we follow Jesus, more and more, we will eventually face situations and circumstances where we are called to make sacrifices for His sake. While those sacrifices are not necessarily seen or understood by others, there is Someone who sees. The beautiful thing is that **God sees the sacrifices we make for Him and His cause**. He sees us. And He promises to bless us as we follow Him by faith.

“

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

2 CORINTHIANS 4:17-18, NKJV.

“

*Those who have living faith in Christ will pass through difficulties as did Paul...Paul measured the difficulties of the present with the glory of the eternal. And the glory to come so far overbalanced the suffering of the present, that he said it was not worthy to be compared with it. **We must keep our eyes fixed upon the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus, and as we do this, we shall receive comfort, and peace, and joy.***

- ELLEN WHITE, THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, MARCH 10, 1890, PAR. 8.

8. Though God certainly asks us to make sacrifices, there is something He desires much more than our sacrifices.

“

I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

HOSEA 6:6, NKJV.

More than making sacrifices for Him, what does God want from us most of all?

- ☐ Mercy
- ☐ Money
- ☐ Time

9. At the feast at Matthew's house, Jesus showed another incredible example of what it means to truly "see" the worth of people, despite what everyone else sees, and to show them mercy and love.

“

Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, 'Why does your Teacher

eat with tax collectors and sinners?’ When Jesus heard that, He said to them, ‘Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

MATTHEW 9:10-12, NKJV.

Scan the video on the right to watch a video.



At this feast were those who were considered outcasts, those who were rejected and avoided by society. But Jesus looked beyond their outward appearances, circumstances, and reputations, and saw them for who they really were underneath all that.

“*...For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”*

1 SAMUEL 16:7, NKJV.

10. If ever you feel unseen or somehow that you’ve gone too far away to get close to God, or maybe you believe nothing good or great can come from you, God sees YOU, just as He saw the people at the feast.

“*Jesus ...did not hesitate to accept the courtesy. He well knew that this would give offense to the Pharisaic party, and would also compromise Him in the eyes of the people. But no question of policy could influence His movements. With Him external distinctions weighed nothing. That which appealed to His heart was a soul thirsting for the water of life.*

*Jesus sat as an honored guest at the table of the publicans, by His sympathy and social kindness showing that **He recognized the dignity of humanity**; and men longed to become worthy of His confidence. Upon their thirsty hearts*

His words fell with blessed, life-giving power. New impulses were awakened, and the possibility of a new life opened to these outcasts of society.”

- ELLEN WHITE, DESIRE OF AGES, P. 274.

11. Jesus simply enjoyed spending time with Matthew, his fellow tax collectors, and even prostitutes, because He is the one who sees. He could see who they were and what they could become. This is something the Pharisees couldn't even fathom. They couldn't comprehend why a supposed man of God would choose to “defile Himself” with the “sinners” whom they had spent their whole lives trying to avoid. They prided themselves in the sacrifices they had made and felt this exalted themselves above all others.

“

The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’

LUKE 7:34, NKJV.

But Jesus saw each person at Matthew's feast as deserving of mercy, and He longed for the Pharisees to see others in the same way.

Speaker and author Tony Campolo relates an experience he had when he was delivering a lecture. He made a passing remark about Jesus and prostitutes but was challenged by a student who said, “Jesus never saw a prostitute.” Tony then proceeded to share Bible verses that clearly showed that Jesus had encountered prostitutes. But the student corrected him:

“Dr. Campolo, you see a prostitute in those Bible passages you just read... But do you really think Jesus saw them as prostitutes? When Jesus looked into the eyes of a prostitute, do you really think he saw a prostitute or did he see a beautiful child of God?”

—Colin McCartney, *Red Letter Revolution: If We Did Revolutions Jesus' Way*.

Jesus didn't see prostitutes, cheats, sinners—He saw His created children, lost sheep who needed kindness, love and mercy. He sees our struggles, our sacrifices, our hearts. And He longs for us to see others the way He sees them too.

How will you respond?

- ☐ I understand that, even in my darkest moments, when no one else cares or understands, God sees me.
- ☐ I desire to accept God's call to me to follow Him.
- ☐ I want to follow in Jesus' footsteps and "see" others as He does.

“*The disciple who loves Christ will love the souls for whom Christ has died, and will devote himself unreservedly to Christ. He will work as Christ worked; he will do as Christ did. He will go where the sinner is. He will educate all his powers, his tact and ability, that he may become a laborer together with God. He will hold the secret of the cross before those who do not know God. Every soul who is indeed united with Christ, will be a laborer together with God for the uplifting and saving of humanity. No other being in the world has the shadow of a claim upon our service. Every part of our nature, every moment of our existence, has been purchased with the precious blood of the Son of God.*”

- ELLEN WHITE, SIGNS OF THE TIMES, JUNE 23, 1898, PAR. 12.