

## Lent 4A - 2026

### Christlike Sight

Anybody here have selective hearing or seeing? Sure, we all do. Every second, our brain is bombarded with sensory data from all five senses. You just sat down, but already your brain has probably stopped consciously focusing on the feel of the seat.

You're probably not thinking about the temperature of the room, although you probably did at one point this morning. There are all kinds of sounds that you're not focusing on right now - the faint hum of lights, somebody shifting beside you. Our brains would go crazy if they had to process every piece of data that our bodies sensed.

We think we're seeing everything, but we're all being selective all the time. Today, you've probably noticed who's not here, who's sitting in a different spot, who's sitting with whom. You may have wondered what it means that so-and-so is sitting with that person. Years ago, before I dated my wife, I brought a date to a function that my wife also attended. She could tell you exactly what my date was wearing. I don't have a clue. I never did, not even that night. It's the same with cars. You get interested in a car, and all of a sudden you notice them everywhere. They were there before, but you never noticed them.

The part of the brain that filters all this information is called the Reticular Activating System. It's continually at work, even though we never think about it. Today's story is about our spiritual Reticular Activating System. The goal for all of us, if we're followers of Jesus Christ, is to see the same things that he sees. We want to notice what's important to him. (by Darryl Dash from *Spiritual Eyesight*)

### Distract the Christians!

All too often we miss what God is doing because we are either too busy doing something else or we have a better idea of what God would do. Someone sent me the following in an email this week: Satan called a worldwide convention. In his opening address to his evil angels, he said, "We can't keep the Christians from going to church. We can't keep them from reading their Bibles and knowing the truth. We can't even keep them from forming an intimate, abiding relationship experience in Christ. If they gain that connection with Jesus, our power over them is broken. So let them go to church, let them have their conservative lifestyles, but steal their time, so they can't gain that experience in Jesus Christ.

This is what I want you to do, angels. Distract them from gaining hold of their Savior and maintaining that vital connection throughout their day!" "How shall we do this?" shouted his angels. "Keep them busy in the nonessentials of life and invent innumerable schemes to occupy their minds," he answered. "Tempt them to spend, spend, spend and borrow, borrow, borrow. Persuade them to work for long hours, to work 6 - 7 days a week, 10 - 12 hours a day, so they can afford their lifestyles. Keep them from spending time with their children. As their family fragments, soon, their home will offer no escape from the pressures of work." "Over stimulate their minds so that they cannot hear that still small voice. Get them addicted to their phones.

Pound their minds with the news 24 hours a day. Invade their driving moments with billboards. Flood their mailboxes with junk mail, sweepstakes, mail order catalogues, and every kind of newsletter and promotional offering free products, services, and false hopes."

"Even in their recreation, let them be excessive. Have them return from their recreation exhausted, disquieted, and unprepared for the coming week. Don't let them go out in nature to reflect on God's wonders. Send them to amusement parks, sporting events, concerts and movies instead."

And when they meet involve them in gossip and small talk so that they leave with troubled consciences and unsettled emotion."

"Let them be involved in soul-winning. But crowd their lives with so many good causes they have no time to seek power from Christ. Soon they will be working in their own strength, sacrificing their health and family for the good of the cause."

It was quite a convention in the end. And the evil angels went eagerly to their assignments causing Christians everywhere to get busy, busy, busy and rush here and there. Has the devil been successful at his scheme? You be the JUDGE.

(by Ray Osborne from *Here's Mud in Your Eye!*)

**Remember Archie Bunker**, that curmudgeon of curmudgeons, and his ditzy wife Edith from the old television comedy *All in the Family*? In one episode, the two of them are attending Edith's high-school reunion. Edith runs into an old classmate of hers by the name of Buck. In his younger days Buck had been very handsome but now, decades later, he's put on a lot of weight and is no longer what anyone would describe as good-looking. None of this matters a bit to Edith, who's having a great time visiting with Buck and laughing about the old days. Through it all, Edith doesn't seem to notice how extremely heavy Buck has become.

Later on, when Edith and Archie are talking, she remarks in her whiny voice, "Archie, ain't Buck a beautiful person?"

Archie looks back at her with his trademark curl of the lip and replies: "You're a pip, Edith. You know that. You and I look at the same guy -- and you see a beautiful person and I see a blimp."

Edith suddenly loses the smile from her face. She displays a puzzled expression that slowly turns into sadness. "Yeah," she says wistfully, "ain't it too bad."