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Seeing the Invisible 1Cor. 4: 16-18

A few years ago, I had my heart x-rayed. For the first time in my life I saw a clear picture of my own heart. But I did not see my soul. The soul was invisible.

Of course, we all know that.

And yet, we often fall into the illusion that only the empirically observable and verifiable are true.

Paul reminds us of this danger when he wrote to the Christians in Corinth, "What is visible is temporary, but what is invisible is eternal."

Paul is saying to us, "You cannot be truly human as long as you are interested exclusively in what you can observe, touch, feel, and measure. You must look at what is eternal."

What is Paul talking about? He is talking about the grace of God. But there is one problem. We cannot see the grace of God like we see trees, mountains, and clouds. We can see it only when we put on the pair of glasses that Jesus wears.

Jesus emphasized the same point when he spoke the following well-known words.

"Look at the birds in the air. Look at the lilies of the field." Your naked eyes can tell that they are innocent and beautiful."

"But look again," said Jesus. "There is more to what your naked eyes can see. Behind their beauty and innocence, there is the leading hand of a gracious and loving God. So look again."

Let us apply this "look again" principle to our present situation.

Today we are all grieving for Japan. A devastating earthquake, the tsunami, and the partial meltdown of the nuclear reactors in Fukushima have shaken us to the core.

If we see only what our naked eyes can see, all we are able to say is that we are powerless before these tragedies. These things happened before and they will happen again. History is a cycle of events. Self-preservation is the only option left for us.

However, when we wear Jesus' glasses, we can see something profound. Through the eye of faith we can discern the guiding hand of God.

Let me explain.

A New York Time's reporter recently wrote an interesting article. He says that he can see a new spiritual awakening among university students in Japan.

Before the tragedy, all they were concerned about was how to get ahead in society. They were interested almost solely in landing a job at a prestigious company.

But now, many of them are volunteering to help others. They are interested in solidarity with others. Selfishness is being taken over by mutual concern.

Now these new phenomena are observable to the eye of a New York Times reporter. What the eye of faith sees is the grace of God that is behind this spiritual transformation of Japanese university students.

What we Christians need is the pair of glasses that Jesus wears. We need to look at what is invisible, this transforming grace of God.

So let us look closely at what is invisible. Let us look closely at the truth that nothing can separate us from God in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Thanks be to God.