



*What are we missing while behind  
the veil? What is taking place on the  
other side? What things do we miss  
because we have been blinded by false  
colors and lies?*

## *Believing Our Eyes*

Riches Untold

**B**ack when we were searching for a house to call our new home here in Iowa, our real estate agent took us to see a very nice house located on the outskirts of Des Moines. In many ways the property was faithful to the list of requirements we had given her at the beginning of the process. The house was hidden from the road, tucked back into a wooded clearing, accessible by way of a long curving drive. The house was attractive, almost unique, with a well-manicured lawn surrounded by thick woods.

But the first thing I noticed was that standing on the lawn made me feel as if I were standing in a room with four walls. The trees—though lovely in themselves—created a virtual wall behind which nothing could be seen. The result was not “living with nature,” but rather living in isolation from it.

The property we eventually chose has much more open space (and the lawn is not nearly so well manicured). Even in the summer, the trees are sufficiently scattered about that one never feels actually entrapped by them. But still, there is a remarkable difference in the line of sight between the seasons.

In the late spring and summer, when the trees are loaded down with large green leaves, the view as I gaze out back, past the pond, is just that: green trees. They effectively form a visual barrier between the house and the interior of the woods and beyond.

But in the autumn, when the green color fades from those leaves and they begin to fall to the ground, thus opening the line of sight to the interior of the woods, suddenly a new world opens up. We can now see those things that all summer long had been shielded from our sight. Now the rich procession of life, previously hidden, is displayed for us.

With the green leaves out of the way, we can now see the groups of deer passing through the woods, and sometimes even pausing to settle into the bed of fallen leaves for a rest. Now and again a small troop of coyotes will pass by, snouts to the ground, intent on the trail of prey only they can smell. Sometimes wild turkeys will be spotted in amongst the trees—a harem of females accompanied by a fat, strutting tom. All these things and more have been passing by all summer long, but were hidden from our sight by the veil of trees with their beautiful, yet obstructive green leaves.

## *Behind the Veil*

There are profound depths to a relationship with the Lord; there are nuances, quiet subtleties, and gentle whisperings; there are grand and troubling mysteries that are never seen—much less experienced—when we are shielded behind the veil.

A relationship with God is not one-dimensional; it does not travel in a straight line. It has ups and downs, anxious veerings off-course, exhilarating climbs up the mount of holiness. And so much of how that relationship develops is up to us. God does not change or change direction in all this; He is the picture of constancy. Every bit of His fullness lies waiting for us to discover, to view, to experience. But we are deprived of that fullness through our own folly, when we listen to the lies that draw down the veil before our eyes.

Faith is not a once-done act, but a continuous gaze of the heart at the Triune God. Believing, then, is directing the heart's attention to Jesus. It is lifting the mind to "behold the Lamb of God," and never ceasing that beholding for the rest of our lives. At first this may be difficult, but it becomes easier as we look steadily at His wondrous person, quietly and without strain. Distractions may hinder, but once the heart is committed to Him, after each excursion away from Him, the attention will return again and rest upon Him like a wandering bird coming back to its window. God takes this intention for our choice and makes what allowances He must for the thousand distractions which beset us in this evil world. He knows that we have set the direction of our hearts toward Jesus, and we can know it too, and comfort ourselves with the knowledge that a habit of soul is forming which will become, after awhile, a sort of spiritual reflex requiring no more conscious effort on our part.

(A.W. Tozer)

## *Foresight*

The bright promise and hope for tomorrow is that there will come a day when we will no longer have to choose. There will come a day when righteousness will be as natural to us as breathing in the holy breeze of heaven.

Until then, however, it will be necessary for us to choose—to be ever vigilant toward keeping our gaze upon the things of God. How will we do this? How do we strengthen ourselves against the lies of the devil, so that we might remove his veil and see clearly our Lord?

Let's take a walk in the woods. The leaves have fallen, the obstacles have been removed, the veil lifted. Though the scene is less pretty than during the green and fertile days of summer, it is now more accessible to us. We can move through the trees unhindered by tall and groping weeds, and leaf-laden branches that would block our way. The droning flies and mosquitoes, so bothersome and distracting during the warmth of summer, have departed with the first killing frost. The air is sweet with leaf dust, and the light jacket feels good on our arms.

There, just up ahead, a squirrel busily—almost frantically—stores away his acorns for winter. Cheeks bulging from the nuts, he scurries here, there, scratching and sniffing the ground through the deep carpet of freshly-fallen leaves. Finally pausing, pleased with whatever mysterious qualities he has discerned, the squirrel digs and tugs with

strength traveling up through his entire frame, and creates a small hole into which he drops one, maybe two, acorns. Quickly, before anyone else sees him, he covers over the cache, then moves on in search of the next. He will repeat this routine day after day, week after week, until the snow comes, hiding away for safe-keeping the precious food that will keep him alive over the winter and into the next spring. When it becomes necessary, the squirrel will remember—with a mysterious radar known only by his Maker—the precise location of every nut stored. In a flash it will be uncovered and taken up to his nest high in the branches of the barren trees, there to become his small winter feast.

## *One Step at a Time*

Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory; the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; but just as it is written,

"Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard,  
And which have not entered the heart of man,  
All that God has prepared for those who love Him."

For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

(1 Corinthians 2:6-10)

One of the truly remarkable things about our God is that He does a lot of the work for us. It's true that He doesn't force Himself on us, but He nevertheless performs much of the advance work that smooths our way toward Him.

The Lord has tucked away in each of our lives the Holy Spirit, who counsels, explains, comforts, and describes our God to us. The Spirit blows away the veil and, like a beacon searchlight, cuts through the smog of lies to light the way to the Father's truth. But this is not to say that God does all the work for us. He smooths the way and sets the course that we are to take, but He doesn't carry us to our destination.

It would be a very stupid squirrel indeed who awoke one bright snow-covered morning to say, "Hey! I'm hungry. What am I going to eat?" And it's a foolish and short-sighted habit for the Christian to wait until the veil has already enshrouded him before crying out, "What do I do now?"

One small acorn at a time, the squirrel methodically plans ahead, putting aside those things that will keep him alive through the bitterly cold winter. When the snow hits, he knows exactly where to go for food.

We know where to go for those things that will keep the liar at bay; we know the location of every acorn of truth—and when we forget, the Spirit reminds us where they've been buried. One small truth at a time, we keep the pathway clear, we keep our vision clear and focused. One step at a time, we fill our lives with God, so that nothing can ever again hide Him from us. 