



*Swirling, multi-colored, multi-shaped
dancers pirouette through the air,
falling then blowing about, cascading,
tumbling frantically over each other,
finally to give up the dance, to nestle
quietly together into a gathering,
moldering pile.*

Believing Our Eyes

Blinded

It is the time of year when deciduous trees transition from their luxurious gowns of green, through brilliant Joseph-robos that dazzle the eye, to drying, faded brown smocks and, eventually, an almost embarrassed nakedness.

Just a short while ago, what has been a solid wall of emerald hues behind our home, is now a jumbled pastiche of rust and brown, and scattered pockets of blue sky where all summer there have been none. Every day a little more of the woods' interior is revealed; every day we see a little further to the clearings and fields that lie beyond. Though the sun may shine, the air stays crisp and clean except for the light powdering of leaf dust that fills the nostrils with the fragrance of melancholy autumn.

All summer long the tree leaves have played false with us. We have seen their predominant green as their true color, attributing the transient earth hues of autumn only to the fading of their life before falling to the ground to die and be mashed under the cold weight of snow.

Not commonly known, however, is that it is the colors of *fall* that are the true ones. The brilliant reds, warm oranges, and rich musky browns are the true colors of the leaves. For most of the year, the presence of chlorophyll—which absorbs red, violet and blue light, but reflects green—masks the true color of each leaf. It is only in the autumn of the year, when the chlorophyll fades, that the true color is revealed.

a Spiritual Chlorophyll

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

(2 Corinthians 4:3-4)

The spiritual “chlorophyll” of this age—Satan himself—has shielded the true revelation of God from those who do not recognize

Jesus as Christ, while that same truth is revealed and illuminated by the Spirit who comes to dwell upon the occasion of our trusting in Him. The nemesis of God blinds the hearts and minds of those who do not yet know God, so that all they see is the deceitful brilliance of this angel of light. The true colors of God—the eternal, unchanging truth of His nature, His character and personality—are never seen at all.

But even with the resident Spirit, the believer can be temporarily blinded by the Father of Lies. Even with the words of God in our hands and the Holy Spirit's ready counsel in our ear, we can be fooled into believing the pretty "greens" that shield us from the truth of our God.

There remains a part of us always tuned to his lies, for we will not be completely remade into Christ's image until the day our feet rise above this temporal plane. Until that day, there will always be at least a small part of us that gives ear to the one who wishes us no good, the one who seeks only the best for himself—the one who never seeks the best even for those who have sworn to his allegiance.

The believer may not have sworn that oath, but that only means that Satan will try all the harder to veil our gaze as we search for God amidst the false colors of the forest.

Finding the real God in the tangled weeds of this age is not an occupation for the faint of heart—nor for the lazy. Take it for granted, let down for just a moment, and the world will rush in, painting glorious pictures out of colors that should not be believed. Satan, and the blinded oafs who don't realize they belong to him, will sweetly hope to convince you that they are in sole possession of the truth—that surely we may pick and choose among the many gods available, that only a fool would settle for just one.

We needn't pay any attention to them. The gods of this world are made of papier mache. Like dying leaves falling from a tree, they are blown about by the capricious wind, casting about according to the whims of those poor souls who bow before them.

the Veil of Self

When we think too much of ourselves, it is easy to think God too small. When we become consumed with our small and transient trials, the result is that we fill our world with self. The more room taken up by self, the less room remains for God. Contrarily,

While we are looking at God, we do not see ourselves—blessed riddance.
(A.W. Tozer)

From the days of the first man, mankind has been preoccupied with self. And from those early days, his blindness to the truth has been encouraged by the devil.

The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

(Genesis 3:4-6)

God intimately revealed Himself to Adam and Eve more fully than He has to anyone since. They communed with Him in ways

that more completely illumined the truth of Deity than has ever been revealed to man. But even with that, they voluntarily listened to the wiles of the serpent and turned a blind eye to the truth of their Maker.

Then, as always happens with humanity, the sin of selfishness was handed down to the next generation.

Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

(Genesis 4:4-9)

Preoccupation with self casts a veil over our eyes that blinds us to the things of God. But the opposite can also be true. Our blindness toward the things of God causes us to draw inward, and to become preoccupied with self. And Satan has a hand in both circumstances.

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

(Romans 1:21,25 niv)

Jesus Christ, of course, came to lead us in a superior direction.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor.
He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set free those who are oppressed,
To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord."

(Luke 4:18-19)

God's immensity does not change based on our perception of Him. The truth of God is that He is (in the true sense of the word) great—He is grand and glorious.

There are gods who wish us to remain blind to the truth about them. They revel in deceit, and present themselves to us as angels of light when in truth they are vermin of darkness. But the Lord God of heaven desires that our eyes be kept fully open. He has nothing to hide. He knows that the more we see Him as He is—the more fully we comprehend His truth—the closer will be our communion with Him. And that is His true desire.

The common belief is that all other senses of a physically blind person become more acute because of the absence of sight. But when we are blind to the things of God, *all* our senses become dull. dsj