



# Everyone Is a Gift

*Letting God Transform  
How You See People*

by Don Everts

Gene Thomas was one of my first spiritual heroes. Before meeting him, I grew up in the faith listening (and relistening) to recordings of Gene’s sermons. Gene was a gifted teacher and impacted my young faith, even though we had never been in the same room.

So, it was a true honor when I got transferred to the same town Gene lived in and got to become friends with him. It was memorable to sit and talk about God’s kingdom with this man whose teachings had shaped me in so many ways.

But what stood out the most to me in all those times of being in the same room with Gene was how he treated the people around him. I had heard plenty of stories in Gene’s sermons about how he and his wife, Gerri, invited homeless people, college students, and so many others into their home. I knew Gene was hospitable. But when visiting, I got to see *first-hand* how he treated the people around him.

Gene was so unhurried, so gracious, so attentive. It was as if whomever he was talking to was the most-important person in the world. This was something to behold. All these years later, I’d say it was Gene’s way with people—more than anything else—that has stuck with me the most.

What a huge surprise, then, when Gene shared with me on one of our visits that he had grown up an “elitist,” as he put it. I was shocked, so I pressed Gene for details. Gene told me he had grown up in a small town in rural Colorado, but had excelled early in life. He claimed he had read every book in the library of his small town before graduating from high school, and the more educated Gene became, the more elevated his tastes became. And so, as Gene narrated the story, by the time he entered college, he was an elitist: he attributed worth to people based on their wealth, their education, their clothing, their standing in society. And he treated people accordingly.

This was such a shock to me. How could a self-avowed elitist become someone who had such genuine grace and kindness towards people, from all walks of life? And so, I asked Gene what happened—and Gene told me.

## Letting God Transform How You See People

Gene told me he had grown up biased against Christians and anything having to do with the Christian church. But when he got to college, he decided that to be a truly educated man who understood the many biblical references and allusions





in literature and life, he needed to become biblically literate. And since Gene was certainly not going to be caught associating with a church or Christians, he started a Bible study himself that only non-Christians were allowed to attend. The story of everything that happened in that Bible study is pretty incredible, but one of the specific fruits of that study is that Gene became captivated by Jesus.

As a result, Gene read all the Gospels. He soaked up the teachings of Jesus, becoming more and more taken with the Person and life and teachings of Jesus. It was during this season of seeking that Gene heard about a Christian camp and decided to go to there to learn more about Jesus. While at the camp, Gene told me he heard about a fellow camper who had become a Christian there the year before. So, Gene pulled this young man aside and asked him, "Is it true that you are a new Christian?"

The young man smiled and nodded. "Oh, yeah!"

And so, Gene asked him, "Can you describe for me what has changed in your life because you are a Christian?"

The young man nodded and responded without much hesitation. "Sure. Well, now I don't smoke or cuss or play card games anymore."

Gene leaned forward as he related the next part of that conversation. "I told him: Don't tease me! I'm serious. I'm really seeking and want to know. How is your life different now because you are a follower of this Jesus?"

Apparently, his new friend looked confused and asked, "Well, what do you mean?"

And Gene's response reflected all the reading in the Gospels he had been doing: "Well, for example, this Jesus said that if you could trade your life for all the treasures in the universe, you'd be getting a bad deal! Think about that: He is implying that a human life is of infinite value: worth more than all the cash and jewels and gold bars and vacation homes and stock options, and all of it!"

The young man nodded slowly, "So ..."

Gene went on, "So, it seems to me that if you follow this Jesus who believes that every single human life is worth more than all the treasures in the world ... well, it seems that would change how you treat people."

Gene then confided in me that as an elitist, this teaching had been troubling him deeply for some time since first reading the Gospels. To follow Jesus, he knew would mean believing Jesus when He said that every human being was of infinite value. It would mean seeing *everyone* as full of worth and dignity. It would mean treating people accordingly.

This, Gene told me, was one of the big barriers that had initially kept him from becoming a Christian. Gene had developed a keen elitist people filter: he could tell, on first glance, who was refined and educated and, well, *worth* something. And he knew that to follow Jesus would mean having that whole way of seeing and treating people dismantled and transformed.

And that's exactly what happened. Gene became a Christian, and that transformed, forever, how he saw the people around him. A behavior I was struck and impressed by (Gene's unhurried, gentle, kind way with all sorts of people) was a natural outworking of God transforming how Gene saw people.



As a seeker, Gene saw something clearly that many of us who've been Christians our whole lives have perhaps overlooked: to follow Jesus means to see people how Jesus sees them—and to treat them accordingly.

I wonder: what if God could transform how Christians everywhere see people—just as He did with Gene? How would that shift in vision affect our lives, our habits, our relationships, our witness?

I saw first-hand how this transformation had a profound, lasting impact on Gene and the many people he met in his lifetime. Perhaps the same could happen for us. This small booklet is an invitation to ask these simple questions: How exactly does God see the people around us? And what would it look like for us to see them that way, too?

### **TIME TO REFLECT:**

*Is there someone in your life whose treatment of others strikes you as attractive? What do you find most compelling about how they treat people?*

## **God Sees Everyone as a Gift**

The words of Jesus that God used to begin a revolution in Gene's life can be found in the Gospel of Luke:

*"For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?" Luke 9:25*

As Gene, a businessman at heart, studied this passage, the words about value especially jumped out at him: "profit," "gains," "loses," "forfeits." From his businessman's perspective, Gene saw an implication embedded in Jesus' teaching: that humans are inherently valuable—so valuable that to trade your life for all the riches in the world would be a bad deal.

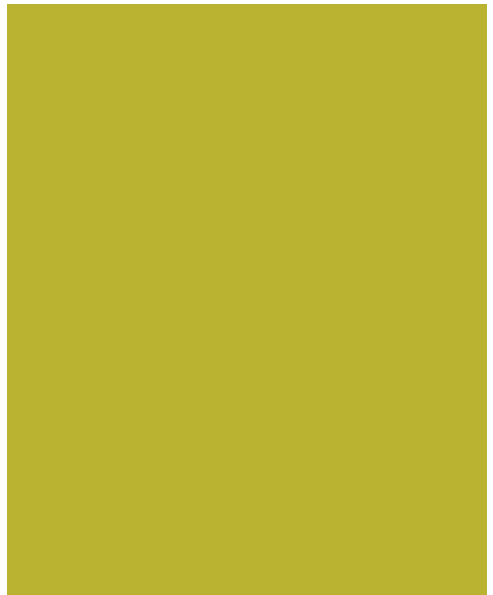
This view of human worth reflects the testimony found throughout Scripture: that God sees everyone as precious and valuable and filled with worth—like a precious gift given to this world.

We see this right from the beginning where the opening chapters of the Bible are unambiguous: all humans are created by God. Genesis is clear that God was and still is the Source of all life on earth, including every single human who has ever been created. There is only one Creator, and therefore all humans are fellow creations of God.

But humans, we're told, are *special* creations because, unlike everything else, humans are created *in the image of God*:

*"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." Genesis 1:26-27*

The repetition underscores the point: humans are not like other creatures. Human beings are special, marked out as different among all of creation. God created all life on earth, but only into humans does God Himself breathe His own breath of life. As it's put a few verses later, *"Then the Lord God formed the man of*







*dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature” (Genesis 2:7).*

Later, in the Psalms, David reflects on the fact that God *continues* to put special care into the creation of each human, marveling at the forethought and care and craftsmanship that God has put into our making:

*“For You formed my inward parts; You knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.” Psalm 139:13-15*

It is incredible to consider the personal care God has taken in His creation of every human who has ever lived. Every single person you will ever run into during your life has been “formed” and “knitted” by the Creator, “intricately woven” with great care by your God, whether they acknowledge Him as their Creator or not.

In fact, it is exciting (and a bit sobering) to consider that Jesus Himself has His hands in crafting each one of us. Remember how John clarified this significant point about the work of Jesus, the Word, when he wrote, *“He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:2-3).*

It is sublime to reflect on what these passages reveal about *our own* worth to God: He knit me together and intricately wove me. That is powerful to contemplate.

But it is also important to allow God’s role as the Creator and Shaper of *all humans* to show us that God sees *everyone* as precious and valuable and filled with worth. Everyone around you is a gift that God has given to this world.

### **TIME TO REFLECT:**

*What do you have a harder time truly believing: that **you** are an intricately woven gift to this world, or that **everyone you meet** is? Why do you think that is?*



## **God Sees Everyone as Gifted**

Not only does God see everyone as a gift, He also sees them as *having* gifts to share in a purposeful way.

Again, we see this inherent human purpose right from the beginning. Right in the garden of Eden, God charges humans with a mission. He gives them work to do, as we read in Genesis 1:

*“And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” Genesis 1:28*

It’s important to notice that as God sends humans to do their work, he *blesses them*. This is a powerful action communicated with a powerful Hebrew word, *barak*, which means to “bestow power for success, prosperity, fertility.”<sup>1</sup> God isn’t just wishing humans well (how we tend to think of “blessing”); rather, He’s

actually bestowing on them power for success. He's entrusting into their hands the gifts and resources they will need to do what He's created them to do.

So, every human is a gift entrusted with gifts to share through their work on earth. This means that people of every creed and no creed have talents and abilities and knowledge and resources given to them by their gracious Creator, whether they realize where those gifts came from or not.

Note we are not talking about "spiritual gifts" here—those special abilities and empowerments given to Christians by the Holy Spirit. Rather, Genesis is relating that God graciously gives gifts (we might call them "common gifts") to every human He creates. These gifts are not "common" in the sense that they are unimpressive or inconsequential, but they are "common" in the sense that they are given to all.

Just as God causes the rain to fall and the sun to shine on all people everywhere (see Matthew 5:45), so God distributes good gifts to all people everywhere. As we see in James, "Every good gift and every perfect gift" is given to us by God (James 1:17a). This includes common gifts, whether a physical skill, an intellectual aptitude, a creative flair, or material blessings of many kinds—every good gift is from God.

As Genesis makes plain, God blesses humans with these gifts so we can use them in our God-given work and purpose on earth. In this way, as humans of all creeds and no creeds use their common gifts, God Himself is a part of their work. As G.E. Veith reminds us, "God himself providentially works through human beings in their diverse callings, and this is the outworking of his love for his creation."<sup>2</sup> As Christians we can be so accustomed to reflecting on the spiritual gifts that God entrusts to followers of Jesus that it can be quite reorienting to consider the common gifts that God entrusts to all humans. Veith reminds us, however, that this understanding of God's providential work through all humans is an important part of our theological heritage. As he reflects on this biblical truth:

*"To be sure, God works providentially through the labors of nonbelievers as well as believers. Was the farmer who grew the grain for our daily bread or the police officer who kept us from getting robbed a Christian? Strictly speaking, as far as God's working through human beings, it does not matter, and there is no external difference in the work done by a Christian farmer or police officer and a non-Christian farmer or police officer."<sup>3</sup>*

How does God see people? God sees every single human being as a carefully designed gift entrusted with important gifts to share with the world around them. This explains the infinite value of a human life implied in that verse that stopped Gene in his tracks, all those years ago: God sees everyone as a gift with gifts to share.

### **TIME TO REFLECT:**

*What are some of the common gifts God has blessed you with? On a scale of 1 to 10, how quick are you to notice and appreciate the common gifts in those around you?*



## Showing No Partiality



Just as Gene suspected, this inherent worth has natural implications on how people should be treated.

If everyone is imbued with incredible worth by God, then they should naturally be treated with dignity and respect. We should not see some people as more valuable or worthwhile than others. We should not treat the wealthy or educated or well-heeled any differently than we treat those from humbler circumstances. We should not treat people who look like us or think like us any differently than those who don't.

The language in the Bible for this beautiful posture of treating *everyone* with dignity and respect is “showing no partiality.” Gene, by contrast, grew up “showing partiality”—he treated certain people with dignity and respect, and treated others with disdain. The Bible is very clear on this matter: we are called by God to show no partiality.



Unfortunately, since the fall of humanity and the entrance of sin into our world, we humans seem to be rather predisposed to partiality. Our fleshly default is to be elitists of sorts, though few of us would use that word to describe ourselves. We are tempted to treat certain people (or types of people) with dignity and respect, and treat other people (or types of people) in lesser ways. We tend to look down our noses at some people.

None of us are completely immune to this: we all look down our noses at someone. I remember distinctly how easy it was, as someone who grew up poor, to look down my nose at rich people. We're all elitists of some sort. We are all tempted to show partiality.

Since the fall we just don't see everyone as God does (as gifts with gifts to share). As a result, we don't treat everyone with the dignity and respect their worth rightly deserves.

This is why God so consistently has to explicitly call His people to a life marked by love. Consider how many of God's commandments are a call to treat the people around us with dignity and respect rather than lying, stealing, murdering, coveting, and all the rest. God's Law is a call, as Jesus summarized it, to love God and love your neighbor (see Matthew 22:37-40). God cares how we treat the people around us.

This includes God explicitly calling us to show no partiality, as we read throughout the Old Testament:

*“You shall not show partiality ....” Deuteronomy 16:19b*

*“He will surely rebuke you if in secret you show partiality.” Job 13:10*

*“Partiality in judging is not good.” Proverbs 24:23b*

*“To show partiality is not good ....” Proverbs 28:21a*



Jesus, too, called His disciples to show no partiality. He called His disciples to love *even their enemies*. Why? Because God Himself shows kindness to the evil and the good, the just and the unjust. Jesus taught people they shouldn't invite only friends and rich neighbors to dinner (an act of partiality). Rather, they should invite even the poor and sick to dinner (an act that recognizes their infinite worth).



Paul continued this call, writing to young Timothy that he should do nothing from partiality (see 1 Timothy 5:21). He also reminded masters in the church in Ephesus to stop threatening those in their charge, because God (who is the Master of all) shows no partiality (see Ephesians 6:9).

Paul's last point (that God Himself shows no partiality) was rooted in Scripture. As we read in Job,

*"[God] shows no partiality to princes, nor regards the rich more than the poor, for they are all the work of His hands." Job 34:19*

The fact that God Himself is not elitist really grabbed the attention of the earliest Christians, and they wrote of it often (see Romans 2:11; Acts 10:34; Galatians 2:6). Undoubtedly, this was a point of emphasis among Jesus' first followers since He Himself famously showed no partiality. Recall how Jesus caused a stir by the way He embraced social outcasts and the marginalized and the poor and sick, treating them with dignity and respect. And remember Jesus refused to show deference to the wealthy or educated or those who had positions of power. Jesus showed no partiality.

Just as I was impressed by how Gene treated the people around him, so people in Jesus' day were impressed by how He treated the people around Him. Even Jesus' enemies couldn't help but notice this surprising part of Jesus' life (see Luke 20:21).

And Jesus was very clear with His followers that they should treat people the same way. When encouraging His followers to love even their enemies, Jesus' logic was very simple: you should love even your enemies because your Heavenly Father is this way:

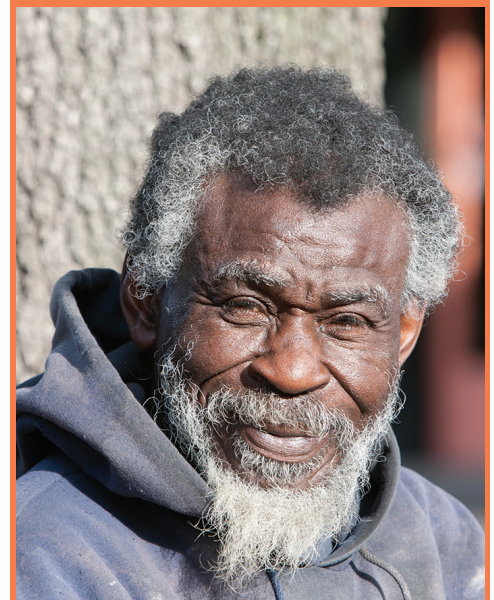
*"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." Matthew 5:43-45*

Jesus' view is clear here: because God the Father shows no partiality, neither should His people.

Perhaps the most detailed call to show no partiality in the New Testament comes in James' epistle. Knowing how tempted we all are to behave in elitist ways, James pulls no punches:

*"My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, 'You sit here in a good place,' while you say to the poor man, 'You stand over there,' or, 'Sit down at my feet,' have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?" James 2:1-4*

For James, how Christians treat the people around them is a central part of their faith. Just as Gene saw all those years ago, to follow a Jesus who sees every human as having infinite worth is to have your way of treating people transformed. James clarified how central this issue is:





*“If you really fulfill the royal Law according to the Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the Law as transgressors. James 2:8-9*

While it may feel natural in this fallen world to see some people as inherently more valuable than others, it is wrong. While we may be accustomed to treating some people better than we treat others, it is a sin.

Because we are all tempted to be elitists in this way, we all need to have God transform how we see and, ultimately, treat all the people around us. The good news, as I witnessed with Gene, is this is something God loves to do.

God can replace our broken, twisted, and elitist ways of looking at the people around us with a clear, clean, biblical vision. God can wipe away our confusion and help us see that everyone—regardless of class or creed or race or nation—is a gift with gifts to share.

### **TIME TO REFLECT:**

*What person (or group of people) are you most tempted to look down your nose at? Spend time confessing your sin of partiality to God. Receive His ready grace and forgiveness.*

## **Showing No Partiality Is Not Universalism**

At this point you may be wondering: if every human is infinitely valuable, does that mean there’s no difference between Christians and non-Christians in God’s eyes? Are we all really just the same?

The view of Scripture is unambiguous: showing no partiality is not the same as “universalism.”

Showing no partiality is about recognizing the inherent worth of everyone around you, and then acting accordingly. Showing no partiality means treating everyone (not just certain people) with dignity and respect. God sees everyone as a valuable gift with important gifts to share, so He treats everyone accordingly—and calls us to do the same.

Universalism, by contrast, is a heretical teaching that says everyone is going to heaven, whether they believe in Jesus or not. This is a patently unbiblical, false teaching. The Bible is clear: in this fallen world *everyone* deserves to be condemned for their sins. In fact, none of us are righteous before God (see Romans 3:10). But God so loved the world that He sent His Son Jesus so that whoever believes in Him will not be condemned for their sins (see John 3:16). And those who do not believe in Jesus?

*“... whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” John 3:18b*

In short, believing that everyone is going to heaven (universalism) is incompatible with Scripture. This doesn’t mean, however, that we can abandon the equally clear teaching that everyone is created by God as a gift with gifts to share.

Should it move us that such infinitely valuable humans would be condemned to an eternity apart from God? Yes! Understanding that everyone is a gift with gifts





to share should provide motivation to share the Good News of Jesus with those who don't believe in Him. Everyone is so valuable to God that He sent His only Son to save them, after all.

But does the fact that some people are saved and others are not give us license to see those who are not saved as having little or no value, and look down our noses at them? Absolutely not! God calls us to see everyone as He does: as gifts with gifts to share. And this should drastically affect how we treat everyone around us: whether they are Christian or not, whether they look like us or not, whether they speak our language or not.

In fact, the most powerful and fruitful acts of witness are those that are *rooted in love*. We can share Jesus graciously and openly knowing that God shows no partiality and *everyone* who calls on His name will be saved. As Paul put it in Romans:

*"For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing His riches on all who call on Him. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

Romans 10:12-13

Paul goes on to point out the obvious: for people to call on the name of Jesus, they need to hear about Jesus from a Christian. And how should we go about sharing the Gospel with people whom we know are infinitely valuable? As Peter wrote, we Christians should always be *"prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect"* (1 Peter 3:15b).

We share Jesus with others with *gentleness* and *respect* because we know we're talking with someone who has value and dignity and worth and purpose in life. This way of sharing Jesus turns out to be a refreshing and practical alternative to awkwardly forcing Jesus on others, or looking down our noses at non-Christians. To learn more about how to gently and respectfully share your faith, read the booklet, *How to Talk About Your Faith: An Introduction to the Spiritual Conversation Curve*. It's available from Lutheran Hour Ministries.

When God transforms how you see the people around you, this won't lead you into some odd universalism; rather, it will cause you to treat everyone with love and motivate your personal witness.

### **TIME TO REFLECT:**

*Are there non-Christians in your life that you think about or treat without dignity and respect because they aren't Christian? Spend time confessing any ways that "spiritual elitism" has become a part of your life. Receive God's ready grace and forgiveness.*

## **Using Our Gifts for the Common Good**

As God transforms how you see people, a door will be opened to you that you may have never noticed before: an incredible way of *partnering together* with all the gifted people who live right around you. When you begin to see people as gifts with gifts to share, not only will this cause you to treat them with dignity and respect, it will also begin to make you curious about what they have to offer.

Think, for example, of the people who live in your neighborhood. It's one thing to realize that every single person living near you is infinitely valuable. It's





another to then realize that each of them was “knitted together” and “intricately woven” with great care by your God, especially when you consider that God has purposefully entrusted gifts into their hands for them to use to bless others.

That’s enough to make you look at your neighbors a little differently, isn’t it? When you begin to see your neighbors as God sees them, you can’t help but become curious about what gifts they have and how God could work *providentially* through their labors, as Veith put it.

God crafted every single person in your neighborhood and blessed them with abilities and aptitudes and strengths and a variety of resources *so that they could be a blessing*. Realizing that opens a door to partnering with your neighbors in new ways.

This is exactly what I saw with Gene. In the many interactions I saw him have, not only was it obvious that he valued whomever he was talking to, but I also got the sense that he respected them and saw them as people who had something valuable to offer. One reason I got to see Gene relate with so many neighbors and friends and people he had recently met was because Gene was actively seeking to partner with the people around him.

Gene didn’t see his neighbors as people to wave at or ignore; he saw them as gifts with gifts to share. And that not only affected how Gene treated them, but it also affected how Gene began to partner with them for the common good of the neighborhood.

As God continues to transform how I see the people around me, I find this same door of partnership opening up in my own neighborhood. If I’m surrounded by gifts with gifts to share, how might God want us to use our gifts collectively for the common good of our neighborhood?

It is a real work of God that I am asking a question like this. I didn’t grow up an elitist like Gene, but I grew up as something of a recluse. Introverted by temperament, moving every few years while growing up, I had a tendency to curl in on myself and ignore the people around me.

But God has been changing me. Many of those changes are a result of God slowly transforming—just as He did with Gene—how I see the people around me. It is stunning and reorienting to realize the infinite value of the people I’m around. I can’t help but initiate more with others and treat people differently. And, perhaps even more surprising, God has opened this same door in my life: inviting me to consider how to partner with the gifted people all around me for the common good of our neighborhood.

To learn more about what the Bible has to say about you and your neighborhood, check out the booklet, *Love Thy Neighborhood: Rediscovering the Power of Sharing the Gospel with Our Deeds*. It’s available from Lutheran Hour Ministries.



### **TIME TO REFLECT:**

*On a scale of 1 to 10, how attentive would you say you are to your neighbors and their gifts? What small steps could you take to get to know your neighbors more?*

## Letting God Transform How You See People

If God can take an elitist like Gene and a recluse like me and transform how we see the people around us, what can He do with you?

The time couldn't be riper for God to do a transforming work like this among His people, here in our time and place. In a world where divisiveness has become commonplace and dismissing others as "garbage people" or "worthless humans" seems normal, what a perfect time for us to ask God to fully transform and heal how we see the people around us.

While Jesus was walking the dusty streets of Israel, He occasionally encountered people who were blind. They couldn't see, but Jesus was able to heal their sight. Matthew wrote about one of these encounters:

*"And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying aloud, 'Have mercy on us, Son of David!' When He entered the house, the blind men came to Him, and Jesus said to them, 'Do you believe that I am able to do this?' They said to Him, 'Yes, Lord.' Then He touched their eyes, saying, 'According to your faith be it done to you.' And their eyes were opened." Matthew 9:27-30a*

As fallen people who are tempted to show partiality, who are tempted to look down at others and behave like elitists or recluses, what would happen if we cried out to Jesus ourselves, "Have mercy on us!" What if we believed that Jesus could heal our eyes and transform our way of seeing the people around us?

There's one way of finding out: by asking. Would you join me in doing just that?

*Father, forgive me for the ways I look at people.  
I confess there are people that I dismiss.  
I confess my elitism and prejudice and divisive words.  
Forgive me for treating people You have created as less than me.  
Forgive me for the ways I look down on non-Christians.  
Have mercy on me, Lord.  
Help me see people as You see them.  
Help me treat people as You treat them.  
Heal my eyes, O Lord, and help me see aright again. Amen.*

## For Further Digging

If you want to spend more time reflecting on the call God gives us to pursue the common good, check out *The Hopeful Neighborhood: What Happens When Christians Pursue the Common Good*.

If you want to find out what it might look like to stand shoulder to shoulder with your own neighbors, using your collective gifts for the common good of your neighborhood, check out *The Hopeful Neighborhood Field Guide: Six Sessions on Pursuing the Common Good Right Where You Live*. It's available from LHM.

You can also find out more about people around the country who are doing just that as part of the Hopeful Neighborhood Project. To do this, go to [www.hopefulneighborhood.org](http://www.hopefulneighborhood.org).

### REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 171.

<sup>2</sup> Gene Edward Veith, *Working for Our Neighbor: A Lutheran Primer on Vocation, Economics, and Ordinary Life* (Grand Rapids: Christian's Library Press, 2016), xvi.

<sup>3</sup> Veith, 5.





Don Everts is an award-winning author of more than a dozen books about Jesus of Nazareth and the adventure of being one of his disciples. As a college minister, ordained pastor, and friendly neighbor, Don has been getting into conversations about Jesus for more than 25 years.



## EVERYDAY INSIGHTS

For free online courses and more information covering five faith-strengthening categories, visit [lhm.org/learn](https://www.lhm.org/learn) today.

660 Mason Ridge Center Dr.,  
St. Louis, MO 63141-8557  
1-800-876-9880 • [www.lhm.org](https://www.lhm.org)



Copyright © 2020 by Lutheran Hour Ministries

Unless noted otherwise, all Scripture quotations in this publication are from the Contemporary English Version Copyright © 1991, 1992, 1995 by American Bible Society. Used by permission. Capitalization of pronouns referring to the Deity has been added and is not part of the original text.