**Spiritual Cataracts**

**By Bob Wilkin**

Do you know people who have had cataract surgery? Maybe you have. Likely we all will need it if we live long enough.

Cataracts are physical impairments to our vision. The lens of the eye stops working correctly. The result is decrease in vision, especially at night. The repair is simple: replace the lens. Cataract surgery takes about fifteen minutes and the recovery is minimal.

I haven’t had the surgery yet, but I probably will in the next year or two.

As I’ve reflected on this malady, I hit on the fact that there is a spiritual type of cataract. If our spiritual lens through which we read the Word of God is not working properly, we will not understand or apply correctly.

There are three types of physical cataracts: subcapsular, nuclear, and cortical. I think that there are least three types of spiritual cataracts: Arminianism, Calvinism, and Cultic.

The Arminian cannot see any verse in the Bible which teaches eternal security. I recently read a blog from Shawn in which quoted a leading Arminian author who said there is not one such verse in the Bible. Well, the reason he thinks that is because of his Arminian cataract. John 3:16 is clear that whoever believes in Jesus has everlasting life and will never perish. John 5:24 says the same thing and adds the promise that the believer will never come into judgment regarding his eternal destiny. John 6:35-37 repeats the promise of ever-lasting life over and over again. So does John 11:25-26. Chafer found over 150 such promises in the Bible.

Many think that the opposite of an Arminian is a Calvinist. But that isn’t quite true. While they disagree on many points, they agree that only those who persevere in faith and good works will ultimately gain something called *final salvation* (an expression not found in the Bible). Calvinists too have damage to the lens of their spiritual eyes. They too cannot see a single verse that teaches that the moment a person believes in Jesus he is secure forever, whether he perseveres or not. Yet all of the verses I just cited show that. So do Acts 16:30-31; Rom 4:4-5; Eph 2:8-9; Rev 22:17; and scores of other verses.

Cult members are Arminian in their basic view of Scripture. But they are not really Arminians for they deny things like the full deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Trinity, and the Bible as the one and only book that God has given. Major cults like Mormons (Latter Day Saints) and Jehovah’s Witnesses, like Arminians and Calvinists, do not believe that the Bible teaches eternal security.

One day two young men came to my door. I did not really want to talk with them. I think I was working on a sermon or an article. So I was honest with the one talking: “I really don’t think you want to talk with me.” He insisted that he did, so off we went.

However, instead of him directing the conversation, I took charge. I asked, “What would happen if you were not faithful in your church? Say you didn’t go to church, didn’t give money, and didn’t live for the Lord. Where would you go when you die?”

He hemmed and hawed for a minute and finally said, “Well, I’m not God. But any child that does not do what his parents tell him to do is going to be punished. If I wasn’t faithful to the Lord, I suppose I’d miss the kingdom and would end up in hell.”

There was the Cultic cataract in action. I shared a few verses like John 3:16; 5:24; and Eph 2:8-9 with them. Guess what? Suddenly they weren’t interested in talking with me anymore. When things started getting uncomfortable for them, when they didn’t have an answer for me, and worse, when they started thinking maybe I might be right about the Scriptures, they fled for their lives.

I think our job as spiritual surgeons is to take out their cloudy lenses and replace them with new clear ones. Of course, we can’t do that. But the Holy Spirit can. He did that for us one day in the past. See Acts 16:14. He will do it for those to whom we witness if they are open (see Acts 13:46, 48; 17:27).

Of course, in order to grow in our faith, we may need some ongoing improvements to our spiritual vision. But that comes in time if we sit under the clear teaching of God’s Word. The more we fall in love with the Lord Jesus Christ, the more our lives are transformed (2 Cor 3:18).