

FALLING IN LOVE

with
the



COMMUNITY

Pastor Hanke's Blog

August 26, 2018

Falling in Love with the Community: EYES UP

Bible Reference: Mark 8:22-26

I can often be caught starring out a window or just looking into space. When I'm doing that, I'm usually digging through files in my brain or thinking through images. Sometimes I am digging into the creative part of my brain to write a blog, email, or sermon. It seems like I can't put words into a paragraph until I've entered this alter universe. Other times, I "space out" to escape my current reality, which is sometimes painful, and think through a memory of the past. A great song can take my mind to some place else, and remind me of places Jesus has taken me and people He has put in my life. The practice of "spacing out" often comes with a behavior that is necessary to fall in love with the community—lifting our eyes up.

Time and time again I've found the importance of keeping my eyes up. I love to listen to music during the day, even while I work, but I've found it's best to only use my headphones in one ear rather than both ears. This allows me to still hear what is going on around me, whether it's with my kids or a server in a restaurant. Staying tuned into my surroundings keeps my eyes up. There have been plenty of times when a server has had a bad day and just needed to talk, or I've needed to step into a situation and help my kids. Looking up, I'm ready and able to help. If I have both headphones in, I'm often looking down and disengaged with my community, and then I miss those opportunities. (I try to only use both headphones when I'm in a restaurant outside of mid-county, or when I need to hide to get a lot of work done.) You may not be a person who listens to music as often as I do, but I bet there are other areas or behaviors you use to disengage with what is right in front of you.

Jesus, Himself, is our example of keeping our eyes up. When He was with the people in the community, His eyes were up—seeing the people who needed His help. He took time to rest and pray (also an example He set for us), but He didn't allow it to blur His vision when it came to the people in front of Him.

The Gospel reading this week is unique; it's a double miracle, or a miracle that seems to take two tries. Why would Jesus, who is perfect & all-powerful, only partially heal a blind man the first time, and then need to do it a second time? Well, nothing Jesus did was

without a lesson, so I'm positive there is a very good reason. But to us, people with blurry vision, the lesson is not clear. Time and time again, various aspects of our lives are blurred by this world. Yet, the more we lift our eyes up to Jesus, the more they become clear. This weekend we'll talk about the final piece of falling in love with the community—keeping our eyes up to see what Jesus is putting before us.

God's Peace,
Pastor Will