

## International Day of Older People 2023

### Sermon Outline

# *I See You!*

### **Message illustration: What do you see?**

You can choose to use one or both of the following illustrations:

1. This short game is to reinforce the need to see other people and their worth. Invite two volunteers to come to the front. Ask them to take a five-second look at one another, and then have them turn and stand back-to-back. Have them take turns at answering the questions below.

Questions:

- What colour hair does your friend have?
- What colour are their eyes?
- What colour(s) is your friend's outfit?
- What shoes are they wearing?
- Are they wearing any jewellery or accessories (eg a watch, earrings, necklace)?

(You could give a chocolate bar or some kind of small prize to the winner who gives the most correct answers.)

2. Download and play the IDOP 2023 'What do you see?' video and see if people can correctly guess the different zoomed-in items before they are revealed.

### **Introduction**

To remember things about people, we have to actually look carefully. To be honest, remembering what someone is wearing isn't important, nor whether they have blue, green or brown eyes, or even if they colour their hair or have no hair at all! But what is important is really **seeing** someone for who they truly are.

When we take a closer look at each other, we learn things that perhaps we never knew before. We learn what is important to someone. We learn what someone's values are, and most importantly we begin to recognise the true value of that other person.

Today we are going to think about a time when Jesus really 'saw' someone, and it is actually a very short story but a very important one with two themes of seeing clearly. So let's start with the first part as we find Jesus at the Temple.

### **1. Seeing who is real**

#### **Read Luke 21:1-4**

'As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. "Truly I tell you," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.'"

## International Day of Older People 2023

### Sermon Outline

Imagine the scene. Jesus is sitting on the floor, probably tired from many conversations and trying to teach those around him, when he looks up. He uses his eyes, he looks, and he sees. Yet he doesn't just see a woman putting money in the Temple collection pot; he sees 'her'. The real 'her'. He sees her background, her difficulties, he understands her financial situation, and he sees the value she places upon her own selfless giving to God. He sees her, the real woman that she is. He sees her value and he sees how valuable she is to God. Jesus himself has lifted his head, used his eyes and seen the beauty in this individual woman.

Then we listen to the next part of the story...

### 2. Seeing What is Real

#### Read Luke 21:5-6

'Some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. But Jesus said, "As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down."'

Back to using our imagination to help us think about that scene. Jesus has just told his disciples that the woman had given out of her poverty all that she had – and what does he find? He finds his disciples admiring the beautiful stones adorning Herod the Great's new Temple, the gifts that have been left from those much wealthier than the poor widow, and you might be able to imagine the bling and sparkle of the Temple in contrast to the poverty of the widow. Jesus is obviously not as enthusiastic about the bling of the Temple like his disciples, and you can feel the air of frustration in his voice. Imagine Jesus pointing to the bling as he tells them that what they are looking at won't last. The Temple will one day cease to exist, whether that be at the end of the age or simply because it is a man-made structure that is counted worthless next to the beauty of an open, giving heart. (Herod's Temple was actually destroyed in AD 70, less than 40 years after Jesus was speaking, and has never been rebuilt.)

### 3. Seeing the Value of Looking

What do you see? What do you put your value on? There is nothing wrong with having nice things to make our lives a little easier, but what is the value of earthly treasures if we don't have the ability to see the beauty of Kingdom values? Earthly treasures will fade and lose their bling, but the value that is held within each of us when we are grounded in the beauty of God lasts for ever.

Imagine you're back in the Temple, and there are beautiful gems and there is an old widower. What would catch your attention?



## International Day of Older People 2023 Sermon Outline

### *Conclusion*

Take a look around at the people sitting next to you and across the other side of the room. Do you really see them, or can you just remember what they're wearing? What we wear, how we cut our hair or even the colour of our eyes does not give the true picture of the wealth that is held inside our souls. From the youngest to the oldest, we all have value. We all have a place in the Kingdom, which means we all have a place in our corps/churches, communities, towns and cities.

Is it time to look a little closer – without the barriers of age, seeing beyond an outfit or whichever part of the town people have come from and where they live? Take away the barriers of economic status. Take away the barriers of employment and unemployment. Take away the barriers of working or retired. Take away the barriers, and instead see the value in one another and celebrate one another's values.

'The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.' – 1 Samuel 16:7

Jesus is not interested in the bling; he's interested in the heart.

If Jesus is interested in the heart, in the poor widow and those like her, then we should be too. Our lesson must be to never overlook another person, because that person is valuable to God and is therefore worth far more than any precious stones. So just like Jesus, it's time to lift your head, use your eyes and see the beauty in one another.