

# Mark's Remarks

If you find yourself entering the church through the east door, you will notice a window now allows *you* to look into my office and, if you wish, out through the window to the north. Over the past months it was difficult for others to see if someone was visiting me and inevitably people would walk in while someone was engaging me with personal or delicate matters. We trust this window will eliminate those awkward moments. It does feel strange, since there are no blinds yet installed, to know anyone's eyes could be viewing my actions or inactions.

However, this window also allows me to look out. I can now see who enters or leaves through the infamous east-side door. I see some coming in casual and fully aware of their surroundings. Others come in hurried and dash past. Still others come in hanging on to mom or dad's hand, somewhat walking but struggling to keep up. Four quick steps, some taken three inches off the ground, to every single broad stride. This week, whether running, walking, or being towed, everyone is shaking off the cold, and stomping the snow off their feet.

A simple window. A piece of glass inserted into a wall allowing some to see in and others to see out. An addition that not only allows us to see things we could not see before, but serves as a reminder that we are always being watched. Yet, why do I write about something so mundane. Is there a deeper purpose? Do I need one?

Okay, here is the motivation behind these thoughts. Last week I heard this verse:

“For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him” (2 Chronicles 16:9a).

Like the bitter cold of this week, I can't shake this verse. Not that I want to, but it surfaces more persistently than most, reminding me of its presence. If you reflect or wrestle with this verse, it begins to reveal its mystery. The Lord is watching...always. He longs to give us good things...strength. He desires to be worshipped. He seeks those who are fully committed. We will need strength. It is and always will be a matter of the heart.

Like much of Scripture, this verse is both challenging and comforting. It is a bit scary, is it not, to be reminded nothing is hidden from God? He sees all as his eyes roam to and fro across the earth. Yet, while challenging my level of commitment, I find great assurance in these words. It does not say the Lord gives strength to only those who have it all together, or who can recite much of Scripture from memory, or to those who 'understand' deep truths. No, he gives strength to those committed to him. That entails struggles, frustrations, coming short of the mark, stepping over the mark, and yes, sometimes throwing our hands up in exasperation. Yet, we can remain committed. Leave the eyes of the Lord to roam the earth; we are called to fix our eyes upon him.

Our world is scattered with windows. Stores, homes, offices, and cars would not be what they are without these pieces of glass. Allowing us to perceive our world, we gain a better understanding. May this verse offer us the same as it serves as a window into the character of God.

Walking Together in Faith,

Pastor Mark