



March 25, 2018

Stars in the City

READ: 1 John 3:2 (Common English Bible)

“Dear friends, now we are God’s children, and it hasn’t yet appeared what we will be. We know that when he appears we will be like him because we’ll see him as he is.”

REFLECT:

Old Dominion’s, *Stars in the City* lyrics were written by Matthew Ramsey, Trevor Rose, Brad Tursi, and Josh Osborne. With imaginative lyrics accompanied by an infectious sound, this country song narrates a couple almost hitting another car while making a U-turn on a city street. The resulting swerve causes the driver to spill coffee on his jeans. He thinks they’re ruined, but the “girl” in the passenger seat says, “Naw, they’re better now. It’s just a matter of perspective.” She then leans over and kisses him and he ponders to himself, “I don’t know how she does it, but she could see the stars in the city. She sees a diamond when the world sees dust, finds the glitter in the gritty.”

It is here that the song makes a U-turn of its own. The driver moves from amazement; amazement that his friend can see something good when others see something unfortunate to an honest self-awareness: “I know I ain’t much but that girl sees something nobody else can see, when she sees something in me. Yeah, she could see the stars in the city.” Simply, the man fails to see much when he looks at himself. Yet, the girl in the passenger seat sees something so much more. The girl changes him. Her capacity to see more in life – and in people – than he results in an eager desire to share the same capacity: “The more I hang with her, the more I realize there can be beauty in the broken if you open up your mind.” And moments later in the song, “Well if she’s crazy, I wanna be crazy too. She’s the kinda girl that can break up a band. I wanna see whatever she can.”

Here, in 1 John, the apostle John has written a pastoral letter to several Gentile congregations. As, perhaps, the last living eyewitness of Christ, John seeks to instill in a new generation of believers a deep assurance and confidence in God’s capacity to change lives. John teaches in this one verse, 1 John 3:2, that the Christian life is a process of becoming more and more like Christ. This process remains unfinished, “and it hasn’t yet appeared what we will be.” But, it is certain, argues John, that the process is an unfolding one that will not be stopped by a disruption or force that seeks to defeat us. What Christ has begun in us will be brought to completion, “We know that when he appears we will be like him because we’ll see him as he is.”

These are good words for those who are easily defeated. As the driver, in this song, defaults to angst over spilled coffee, magnifying the brokenness and imperfections of the world, the apostle John invites a different perspective. John passionately desires that we see the world – and ourselves – as Christ sees us, as unfinished. Presently, God “sees something nobody else can see, when she sees something in me.” Those who are defeated look in the mirror and sees “dust” when God sees “a diamond.” None of us have become what we shall be. That is out in the future. But God sees the future, sees the diamond we will become, and knowing that this is our ultimate destiny, gives us eyes to see the stars while we make our way in the city of the present.

RESPOND:

1. How has this scripture or meditation spoken to you?

2. What insight can you apply to your life this week?

3. What one specific act do you intend to take, an attitude to change, a person to see, or prayers to pray?

PRAY:

Help me to see, O God, beyond what others see, to all that I am becoming in Jesus Christ. Amen.