

## THE SIXTH SENSE

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Thanks to Netflix and Clearplay, my oldest daughter and I watched a movie last night from 1999 called “The Sixth Sense.” It is about a young boy with a disturbing ability. He can see dead people. From their wounds, the people are obviously dead, but the dead people don’t realize they are dead. Wherever he goes, he sees them coming up to him and trying to talk to him. The boy’s reaction at the appearance of a dead person is always one of terror, and he immediately tries to run whenever he sees one of these walking corpses. He lives a solitary nightmare until a determined child psychologist convinces the boy that the dead people are really talking to him because they need his help. So the boy begins to conquer his fear by forcing himself not to run. Instead, he starts listening to the dead people who approach him and he begins to try to help whatever their need is that keeps them restlessly roaming about. When the boy learns how to handle his “sixth sense,” it ceases to be a curse to him.

Fortunately for us, that kind of scary thing only happens in the movies, right? Well, think about it in New Testament terminology. If you are a member of the Lord’s church, you are alive by virtue of the indwelling Spirit of God (Rom. 8:11). But, compared to the population, we who are spiritually alive are few and far between (Matt. 7:14). That means most people we see walking and talking all around us are spiritually dead (Col. 2:13). They bear the deadly wounds of sin in their souls, but they don’t realize they are dead. Instead, they go about as if everything were fine.

As living children of God, we have the rare ability to see dead people for what they are. They ring up our groceries at the checkout counter. They surround us at the mall. They work next to us. They pass us on the sidewalk. They serve our meals at the restaurant. They live next door. They are “the dead” and what they need more than anything is our help. We know they need the gospel and we know that God wants us to help them. Yet, too many times our reaction is one of terror. Instead of helping the dead, we run away. Maybe we are repulsed by their being covered with sin (cf. Rom. 5:8). Maybe we are too spiritually immature to offer competent help (cf. Heb. 5:12). Maybe we are afraid of displeasing the dead and ending up hurt (cf. Gal. 1:10). Maybe we are too lazy and comfortable to put forth the effort (cf. John 9:4). How can we help the church if we are unwilling to look into the eyes of a dead man and offer him the bread of life (John 6:58)? As Christians, we need a keenly developed “sixth sense” that alerts us to the walking dead who surround us. It is a rare and significant ability. Do you have it?

