



Thursday, 8/22/2019

[Luke 13:10-17](#) (Click to view Bible text below.)

Years ago, during a small-group retreat, the facilitator began with an activity called "I see you." He explained we would each take a turn, look directly at another, and, with the help of their nametag, say, "(Name), I see you," until each person had been *seen*. I confess, my initial reaction was a whole-body eye roll. I also confess the activity was disarmingly affirming and undeniably transformational. No longer individuals among strangers, we had been *seen* into a new community.

It all begins with seeing. Though not looking her in the eye, Jesus sees the woman bent over for eighteen years. He calls to her and proclaims that she is set free from her infirmity. He lays hands on her and she stands up straight and pours out words of praise.

In our small group, the transformation depended on mutual seeing. What happened that day in the synagogue did not depend on the woman's ability to see Jesus (how could she? -- all she could see was the floor), but only on Jesus seeing the woman. It changed everything.

*Freeing God, thank you for coming near to us in Christ; seeing our ailments of mind, body, and spirit; and, with your love, setting us free for new life in you. Amen.*

Jonette Blakney, '14  
Co-Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Tacoma,  
Wash.