

PERSPECTIVE

Have you ever noticed how a person's perspective can change what they believe and how they react to situations?

For example,

A teenage girl's boyfriend is the quarterback of the football team. When their relationship breaks up, her reaction is that the world has finally come to an end and there is no reason to live on any further.

But her parents, who have the advantage of experience, see this as just one of many adolescent lessons that she will learn from.

The fall of man from the presence of God, because of Adam's disobedience, caused our mind to become the preeminent part of our lives. It's the part of our lives where we receive all of the input of our senses.

What things look like, sound like, and feel like, determine what we believe in what we perceive as reality.

Although our soul has the ability to perceive the facts about natural situations, it is totally unreliable at giving us the revelation of who we are in Christ.

In today's society, we also have the misconception that the truth is the accumulation of all the facts. By our natural senses we acquire, accumulate, and process the facts, thinking that we now have the truth.

But Jesus said, I AM the truth and my words are spirit and they are life. And according to 1st Corinthians 2.14, the natural man cannot even understand the things of the spirit because they are foolishness to him.

This reliance on our natural senses to find the truth has led man, with the help of Satan, to believe and propagate many myths, misconceptions, and outright lies.

The natural perception of our personal history, our current situation, the way things appear to us, and how we feel about them, is completely unreliable to give us the vision of our destiny as God's children.

Let me give you a great example of this. I'll start with the facts.

After the mob came and took Jesus away, the apostle Peter went to where Jesus was being accused. When one of the servant girls standing by recognized him as one of Jesus's disciples, he denied 3 times even knowing Jesus. This fulfilled Jesus's prophecy to him, that before the cock crowed, he would deny Him. Those are the facts.

I've been a Christian a very long time, and I've heard many people who interpret these facts with their natural minds, saying that Peter was a coward.

Peter was the exact opposite of a coward. He was brave, courageous and fearless. Cowards don't jump out of the boat and walk on the water. Cowards don't tell Jesus, I'm ready to die with you. Cowards, when they're overmatched by an angry mob, don't pull out their sword and start swinging. Peter was not a coward, but he was terribly self confident.

When Jesus told His disciples that the Pharisees would hand him over to the Romans to be crucified, Peter protested, saying, that's not gonna happen. He thought as long as I have this sword, I'm not gonna let it happen.

Jesus said to him, you know that revelation you just got about Me being the Christ, that came to you from my Father. These words that just came out of your mouth, came from your flesh and he rebuked him.

I believe that Jesus set him up to fail, so that he would never again put any confidence in his flesh. He did that so that the Holy Spirit could fulfill God's ultimate plan for his life.

Would you indulge me for a moment to share my personal opinion of this entire situation? I have no scripture to back this up, just my personal perception of Peter's personality, attributes and history.

Have you ever wondered why Peter was the only one who followed Jesus to the place He was being held? I personally believe that Peter went there undercover with the intention of trying to set Jesus free from their custody.

I believe that he probably had his sword under his coat. When the servant girl said, you're a Galilean and you're one of his disciples, he told her to shut up, you're blowing my cover. Then when she kept pressing him, he began to curse and deny ever knowing Jesus to get her to back off. Then Jesus looked at him with a look that said, see Peter, I told you your natural efforts wouldn't accomplish the will of God. Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Let's look at this situation from Peter's point of view for a minute.

He probably thought, I've left everything I know to follow this carpenter all around the country. I've seen the signs and wonders and miracles that He performs. I got the revelation from God that He is the Messiah that has been prophesied for generations to save us. I told him that I was willing to die for Him and then I denied ever knowing Him. My life is over. Even if I went back to those other disciples, they wouldn't receive a betrayer like me. I guess I'll just go back to fishing.

Then Jesus met him out of the lake. He asked him 3 questions that He already knew the answer to. Peter do you love me more than these? Feed my sheep.

Jesus was effectively saying to Peter, you may think your life is over but I've got you standing up on the day of Pentecost and speaking my word, so that 8000 people can come into the kingdom in the first 2 days.

I've got a man, crippled from birth, waiting at the beautiful gate, for you to come and raise him up to create a testimony for Me among the people in Jerusalem.

I'm going to use you to raise up My church, which is the instrument that I'm going to use to establish My Kingdom in this world.

You're also the one that I'm going to send to the house of Cornelius to pour out my spirit on the Gentiles. You're going to walk in amazing signs and wonders that normal men can't do.

You may think that your life is over, but My thoughts are not your thoughts and My ways are not your ways. You're going to walk in everything that the Father has created you for.

Jesus said, it's the spirit who gives life, your flesh profits absolutely nothing.

If we leave this right here, this may seem like a history lesson with a little bit of my opinion thrown in. You may say, this is a bit interesting, but what has this got to do with me?

Let me back up a bit as I try to explain why I'm sharing this with you.

God created Adam and Eve in His image and gave them the authority to rule over this world. Of all of His creations, man was the supreme creation to manifest God's life and authority on the planet. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, submitted to Satan's lie, and ate the fruit, their spirits died.

Although God sent them out of the garden so that man would not stay in that spiritually dead state forever, God never lost sight of His original created vision for man.

The gospel is God's plan to restore man back to that original destiny. The gospel is not a religion. It's the supernatural act of God to make man one with Him again.

When God created each of us, He looked at us, He smiled and said, that's what this one's gonna be good for. I created this one to manifest my love in my life to the entire world.

Now we may have had a 50 year track record of exhibiting all of the weaknesses and character flaws of our fallen nature, and all of the sins and failures that they produce. But God has never lost sight of His original vision for us.

Unfortunately, Satan has never lost sight of that vision either. He has worked relentlessly all of our lives to keep us focused on the facts, the failures, and every negative experience that we have been through.

He has tried to keep us focused on our spiritually dead, useless lives that we inherited from Adam and Eve, to keep us from having faith and laying hold of that which God has originally created us to be. He wants us to believe the lie that only what we can see, hear, taste, and touch is real.

In 2nd Peter 1.1, Peter writes, Simon Peter, a bond servant and a apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

God not only created us to walk in His calling, and for us to manifest His life to the whole world, He actually gave us the faith to believe it and lay hold of it as our own reality.

Look at Hebrews 11.1.

The amplified version reads,

Now faith is the assurance, the confirmation, the title deed of things we hope for, being the proof of things we do not see and the conviction of their reality. It's faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses.

Faith is not something that we work up in our flesh. It's a divine impartation from God of the ability to see what is not revealed to our natural senses. The ability to see and possess our inheritance as God's children.

Look at Ephesians 1.11.

I'll read it from the amplified Bible.

In Him we also were made God's heritage, His portion, and we obtained an inheritance, for we have been foreordained, chosen and appointed beforehand, in accordance with His purpose, who works out everything in agreement with the council and design of His own will.

So that we who first hoped in Christ, who first put our confidence in Him, and have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of His glory!

In Him you also who have heard the word of truth, the glad tidings, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in and adhered to and relied on Him, were stamped with the seal of the long promised Holy Spirit.

That spirit is the guarantee of our inheritance, the first fruits, the pledge and foretaste, the down payment on our heritage, in anticipation of its full redemption and our acquiring complete possession of it, to the praise of His glory.

God is determined and unrelenting in His desire that we lay hold of what He has made available to us. He has not only given us Himself as our inheritance, He has also given His Holy Spirit to guarantee that we possess it.

In God's plan of restoration for us, the Gospel, He put all of mankind in Christ. So that when Christ was crucified, buried, raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit, and seated at the right hand of God, everything that happened to Christ also happened to us.

Look for a minute at Romans 6.10. The amplified version reads,

For by the death He died, He died to sin, ending His relation to it, once for all of us, and the life that He lives, He is living to God in unbroken fellowship with Him.

Even so, because of this, consider yourselves also dead to sin and your relation to it broken, but alive to God living in unbroken fellowship with him, in Christ Jesus.

This is the revelation of the Holy Spirit that Satan is trying relentlessly to stop us from receiving. He continually tries to keep us focused on our old crucified, sinful nature and all of its weaknesses and failings.

The Holy Spirit has been given to us by God, to reveal our new nature, with its unbroken fellowship with God and impart to us the ability to lay hold of it by faith and make it our ever-increasing reality.

Romans 8 says,

The mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.

So how do we thwart Satan's relentless efforts to keep us imprisoned in the death that our old crucified nature produces and possess the Eternal Life that our death and resurrection with Christ saved us into?

The apostle Paul gives us two words of instruction.

To the Colossians he writes,

If then you have been raised with Christ, to a new life, thus sharing His resurrection from the dead, aim at and seek the rich eternal treasures that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

And set your minds and keep them set on what is above, the higher things, not on the things that are on the Earth, for as far as this world is concerned, you have died, and your new, real, life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in the splendor of His glory.

Paul also instructed the Romans to,

present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship, and do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

I've learned by revelation of the Holy Spirit and by 58 years as a Christian, that if we're not continually feeding our spirits with the truth, the reality of what God has recreated us to be in Christ, we will gravitate to the faulty perception of our senses, that only produces death.

Jesus said, I AM the truth and it's the truth that sets you free. Please note that He did not say, My teachings will set you free. It's the reality of who I AM and who I have made you in Me, that set you free.

There are only two choices. Truth or facts. Life or death.

Choose to receive and manifest His eternal life to this entire world.

It's what we were created for.

God bless you.