

Perception (it's not always what it looks like)

How we see will describe what we are - Matt 6:22-23 - 22 "The eye is the lamp of the body. IF your eyes are good, your whole body WILL BE full of light. 23 But **IF your eyes are bad, your whole body WILL BE full of darkness. IF THEN THE LIGHT WITHIN YOU IS DARKNESS, HOW GREAT IS THAT DARKNESS!**

There is only one True light - John 1:1-4 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was THE LIGHT of men.

***Unfortunately Everyone has fleshly discernments based on their point of view.**

A few things that could affect where your Point of view is:

Situation	Gender
Race	Experiences
Relationship	Desires

We all have our own points of view but it's usually dangerously wrong when treated as the absolute right - Prov 14:12
There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.

Our purpose will truly define our perception - Prov 21:2 All a man's ways seem right to him, but the LORD weighs the heart.

God says you are a fool if you look at things only through your point of view - Prov 12:15 The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice.

All "disputable" scenarios are relative - Prov 18:17 The first to present his case seems right, till another comes forward and questions him.

The things man looks at are not what God looks at -1 Sam 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. **The LORD does not look at the things man looks at**. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

What and how we see depends on what our minds are focused on - Mark 8:33 But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

Our perception could truly make us Blind and make us lead others astray - Matt 15:14 Leave them; they are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit."

Emotions clouds Perception -Prov 29:11 A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back. NKJV

Any fights or arguments and some declined requests to God are because of you and your perception -James 4:1-3 - **What causes fights and quarrels among you?** Don't they come from YOUR DESIRES that battle within you? 2 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. 3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

If we don't get our perceptions in check we will miss out on blessings -Heb 12:11 No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for **those who have been trained by it**.

Path to deal with perceptions

We must Focus using the correct lens - 2 Cor 5:7 We live by **FAITH, NOT** by sight

RECOGNIZE, THE ONLY Absolute Truth is Christ - John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am **THE way** and **THE truth** and **THE life**. No one comes to the Father except through me.

All Christian are to be of the SAME MIND, that mind is Christ

1 Peter 3:8-9 - 8 Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. 9 Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. ESV ***homophron** (hom-of'-rone); like-minded, i.e. harmonious:

Phil 2:2-4 - 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. 3 **DO NOTHING** out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Following Jesus, our attitude must be towards the will of God not towards our desires - 1 Peter 4:1-2 - Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. 2 As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.

Do not expect a non-Christian to understand the correct way of dealing with issues - 1 Cor 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Know there is no way we can see or help the wrong in someone else unless we see and acknowledge the wrong in us - Luke 6:41-42 - 41 "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? 42 How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

Concerning disputable matters mature Christians at times must give in - Rom 14:1-4 - **Accept him whose faith is weak**, without passing judgment on disputable matters. 2 One man's faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. 3 The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. 4 Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

Disputable matters must NEVER be a deciding factor in a Believer's life

Rom 14:15 If your brother is distressed because of what you eat, YOU ARE NO LONGER ACTING IN LOVE. Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died.

1 Cor 8:9-13 - 9 Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. 10 For if anyone with a weak conscience sees you who have this knowledge eating in an idol's temple, won't he be emboldened to eat what has been sacrificed to idols? 11 So this weak brother, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. 12 **WHEN YOU SIN AGAINST YOUR BROTHERS IN THIS WAY AND WOUND THEIR WEAK CONSCIENCE, YOU SIN AGAINST CHRIST**. 13 Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall.

In order to truly win them for Christ I have to put myself in their shoes - 1 Cor 9:19-23 - 19 Though I am free and belong to no man, **I make myself a slave to everyone, TO WIN AS MANY AS POSSIBLE**. 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

We need to let go of our perception and gain true wisdom - 1 Cor 3:18-19 – 18 **Do not deceive yourselves**. If any one of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age, he should become a "fool" so that he may become wise. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight. As it is written: "He catches the wise in their craftiness"

The key to clear vision - Prov 3:5-8 – 5 **Trust in the LORD** with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; 6 in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. 8 This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones. NIV

We need to continuously stop and know who it's all about - Ps 46:10 **Be still**, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth. ASV

Put everything to the test - 1 Thess 5:21-22 -21 Test everything. Hold on to the good. 22 Avoid every kind of evil.

***dokimazo (dok-im-ad'-zo)to test (literally or figuratively); by implication, to approve:**

