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Myopia: "abnormal vision, objects not seen clearly."

Have you ever heard the phrase "They look at life through rose coloured glasses?" The truth is that this condition is common to us all, not that we only view or understand life as through "ROSE COLOURED" glasses but rather by our very nature we distort everything we see and hear. It's a direct consequence of our inherited sin nature. This sin nature has turned us from being God centred to self centred resulting in all of our experiences being coloured from the perspective of self.

Because self is front and centre we cannot experience a clear view of anything, particularly each other. A case in point; as we shared leading a meeting together I thought I saw clearly the shortcomings of others but failed in the eyes of some to see my own. This now leads us to the heart of the issue; was I correct or were they? If guilty, are we prepared to admit our failures and learn from each other?

We might then ask as did Pilate of Jesus, "What is truth?" In light of the fact that all of us see to varying degrees of distortion, can we ever reach a full understanding of, or with each other? There is an inherent disconnect between us all which appears to be an unbridgeable gap. How can we see clearly and communicate the truth if our hearing receptors and vision is so distorted?

Enough questions; the answers originate in the failure of both Adam and Eve. They listened to a distorted understanding of God by the tempter himself; "Hath God said?" He suggested that God was withholding the full truth from them and that lie has distorted our understanding of the very nature of God Himself as well as our relationship with Him.

God has taken the initiative to restore the clear vision through Jesus Christ who stated that He was the "The Light of the World." But you might ask how then can we see clearly because of this light? Jesus told a university graduate in theology the following; "I tell you the truth, NO ONE CAN SEE the Kingdom of God, unless he is born again." We need to start from a new God centred position to be able to see ourselves and life clearly. Viewing life from only a position in the valley is very different to seeing things from the mountain top.

The priority for us then is learning to see life from God's point of view until we behave like Jesus who only did what He saw the Father doing. The pattern is set out for us in the scripture as follows;

1. Recognise that we all suffer the effects of the sin nature which causes myopia.
2. Repent of the sin caused by our blindness to both God and others.
3. Become humble enough to admit we need God's help, even if it comes via others.
4. Desire a pure heart with no self centred agendas; "It is the pure in heart who can see God."
5. Accept God's grace to walk "in the Spirit" instead of "in the flesh."
6. Be "led by the Spirit" not by our carnal nature.
7. Manifest the "fruit of the Spirit."

One of the worst forms of myopia is in religion, and I include Christianity under this generic umbrella. Unless we are prepared to see what we believe from God's revelation and not ours we murder those who oppose our understanding. Jesus is the classic case of the ultra religious attempting to kill truth by killing the purveyor of it. This regrettably, is also the history of the church; Catholics believe they are justified in burning Protestants for heresy. Protestants in turn drown Anabaptists because they believe in total immersion not sprinkling. Baptists consider Charismatics demon possessed and so on it goes.

Even our local churches are not immune from the disease of myopia. In fact this article is a direct result of this very experience. That is why we need to walk in the Spirit, be led by the Spirit, produce the fruit of the Spirit, and walk in the unity of the Spirit...

Shalom.

Ron Harris

