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Perspective and Perception

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Perspective and Perception

What is the Truth?

How can you separate fact from fiction?

What is really going on?

Who can you believe?

Today's choices are the building blocks of your future.

Supernatural living uses truth as its foundation.

Can you think of a situation you are facing that really concerns you?

Wouldn't it be great to know your decision making is based on truth instead of presumption?

It all starts with perspective.

Defining the Terms

Perspective

The vantage point that enables you to see or the point of view that enables you to understand.

(physical or mental position)

Perception

What you see or understand.

(physical sight or mental insight)

Comparing Perspective and Perception

- They are different sides of the same coin.
- They are like eyes and sight—one is the means and the other is the result.

Comparing Physical and Mental Perspective

- You select a physical perspective by moving your body to a particular location.
- You select a mental perspective by adopting core beliefs about life.

Perspective

The starting point of everything.

We all have a natural perspective consisting of core convictions which have been developed by our education, experiences, and circumstances of life.

Perspective is the way we look at life that helps us make sense of it. Perspective is our world view.

Knowledge, Experiences, Circumstances

Perspective Perception

Our perspective is made up of core convictions which establish our point of view. Perception is the observation of life through this filter of core convictions.

Beliefs/Values

Our perspective is made up of core convictions which establish our point of view.

Decision-Making

Our decisions in life are based on the beliefs and values that we have accepted as true.

Quality of Life

Our choices become the building blocks for our future. Ultimately the quality of our life is determined by the benefits or consequences from decisions we have made.

1. Perspective is a matter of choice.

To change your perception you must first choose a different perspective.

“The eye is the lamp of the body. If then your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is diseased, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!” – Matthew 6:22-23

Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is diseased, your body is full of darkness. Therefore see to it that the light in you is not darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, with no part in the dark, it will be as full of light as when the light of a lamp shines on you.”
– Luke 11:34-36

- What is the result of having a good perspective?
- What is the result of having a bad perspective?

Light makes physical sight possible so we are able to move and do things without endangering ourselves. Truth is like light for the reasoning process.

- Why are we to be careful that the light within us is not darkness?

Are you willing to look at your current situation from God's perspective and then make decisions based on that reality?

2. Perspective determines perception.

Our perspective dictates what we are able to see and understand.

Perception is dependent upon perspective. You can only see what you focus your eyes on.

Now the king of Aram was at war with Israel. After conferring with his officers, he said, "I will set up my camp in such and such a place."

The man of God sent word to the king of Israel: "Beware of passing that place, because the Arameans are going down there." So the king of Israel checked on the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he was on his guard in such places.

This enraged the king of Aram. He summoned his officers and demanded of them, "Will you not tell me which of us is on the side of the king of Israel?"

"None of us, my lord the king," said one of his officers, "but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom."

"Go, find out where he is," the king ordered, "so that I can send men and capture him." The report came back. "He is in Dothan." Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city.

When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked.

"Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

“Now the king of Syria was at war with Israel. He consulted his advisers, who said, ‘Invade at such and such a place.’ But the prophet sent this message to the king of Israel, ‘Make sure you don’t pass through this place because Syria is invading there.’ So the king of Israel sent a message to the place the prophet had pointed out, warning it to be on its guard. This happened on several occasions. This made the king of Syria upset. So he summoned his advisers and said to them, ‘One of us must be helping the king of Israel.’ One of his advisers said, ‘No, my master, O king. The prophet Elisha who lives in Israel keeps telling the king of Israel the things you say in your bedroom.’ The king ordered, ‘Go, find out where he is, so I can send some men to capture him.’ The king was told, ‘He is in Dothan.’ So he sent horses and chariots there, along with a good-sized army. They arrived during the night and surrounded the city. The prophet’s attendant got up early in the morning. When he went outside there was an army surrounding the city, along with horses and chariots. He said to Elisha, ‘Oh no, my master! What will we do?’ He replied, ‘Don’t be afraid, for our side outnumbers them.’ Then Elisha prayed, ‘O Lord, open his eyes so he can see.’ The Lord opened the servant’s eyes, and he saw that the hill was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.”

- 2 Kings 6:8-17

Human Perspective

Elisha’s Servant - Aramean Army

➤ How do you think the servant felt when he first saw the Aramean army?

Divine Perspective

Elisha’s Perception - God - Angelic Army - Aramean Army

➤ How do you think the servant felt after God enabled him to see into the spirit realm?

➤ Had the situation changed or just the servant’s perception of the situation? ➤ Why did the servant’s perception change?

➤ From what perspective do you think Elisha was viewing the situation?

Are you asking God to open your eyes so you may see the truth about your current situation?

3. Perception presumes truth.

Seeing is believing even if what we perceive is wrong.

We assume that our viewpoint gives us accurate perceptions of reality.

“When the residents of Gibeon heard what Joshua did to Jericho and Ai, they did something clever. They collected some provisions and put worn-out sacks on their donkeys, along with worn-out wineskins that were ripped and patched. They had worn-out, patched sandals on their feet and dressed in worn-out clothes. All their bread was dry and hard. They came to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal and said to him and the men of Israel, ‘We have come from a distant land. Make a treaty with us.’ The men of Israel said to the Hivites, ‘Perhaps you live near us. So how can we make a treaty with you?’ But they said to Joshua, ‘We are willing to be your subjects.’ So Joshua said to them, ‘Who are you and where do you come from?’ They told him, ‘Your subjects have come from a very distant land because of the reputation of the Lord your God, for we have heard the news about all he did in Egypt and all he did to the two Amorite kings on the other side of the Jordan—King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan in Ashtaroth. Our leaders and all who live in our land told us, ‘Take provisions for your journey and go meet them. Tell them, “We are willing to be your subjects. Make a treaty with us.”’ This bread of ours was warm when we packed it in our homes the day we started out to meet you, but now it is dry and hard. These wineskins we filled were brand new, but look how they have ripped. Our clothes and sandals have worn out because it has been a very long journey.’ The men examined some of their provisions, but they failed to ask the Lord’s advice. Joshua made a peace treaty with them and agreed to let them live. The leaders of the community sealed it with an oath. Three days after they made the treaty with them, the Israelites found out they were from the local area and lived nearby.” - Joshua 9:3-16

- > What did the Gibeonites do to deceive the Israelites?
- > What did the Israelites do to determine whether or not the Gibeonites were telling the truth?
- > What should they have done?

You See Your Situation

Our perspective is limited to appearances and surface issues.

Your Seek God - Your Situation

God wants us to seek His perspective because it is not limited by anything. God sees it all.

Are you being careful to avoid deception by seeking God's perspective, even on matters that you feel you can evaluate on your own?

4. God's perspective reveals truth.

True spiritual perspective is only possible by believing God about what He sees and knows.

"Then Pilate said, 'So you are a king!' Jesus replied, 'You say that I am a king. For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world—to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.'" - John 18:37

"Jesus replied, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" - John 14:6

"Then Jesus said to those Judeans who had believed him, 'If you continue to follow my teaching, you are really my disciples and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'" - John 8:31-32

"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. For he will not speak on his own authority, but will speak whatever he hears, and will tell you what is to come." - John 16:13

How is God revealing the truth to you about your current situation?

5. Truth demands action.

When we are exposed to truth, it solicits a response—either application or evasion.

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who suppress the truth by their unrighteousness, because what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, because they are understood through what has been made. So people are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God or give him thanks, but they became futile in their

thoughts and their senseless hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for an image resembling mortal human beings or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles.

Therefore God gave them over in the desires of their hearts to impurity, to dishonor their bodies among themselves. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creation rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

For this reason God gave them over to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged the natural sexual relations for unnatural ones, and likewise the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed in their passions for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what should not be done. They are filled with every kind of unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, malice. They are rife with envy, murder, strife, deceit, hostility. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, contrivers of all sorts of evil, disobedient to parents, senseless, covenant-breakers, heartless, ruthless. Although they fully know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but also approve of those who practice them." - Romans 1:18-32

Sequence Outline

Romans 1:18-32

God made the truth about Himself understandable.

Creation reflects God's invisible qualities:

- His eternal power
- His divine nature

They did not apply this revealed truth.

- By glorifying Him as God
- By giving thanks to Him

Instead, they abandoned God.

- Their thinking became futile (senseless)
- Their foolish hearts were darkened
- They became fools who believed they were wise
- They exchanged the reality of a magnificent God for man-made substitute gods

Therefore God abandoned them to the degrading power of sin.

- They suppressed the truth. So God gave them over to sinful desires for sexual impurity
- They exchanged the truth for a lie. So God gave them over to shameful lusts
- They did not retain the knowledge of God. So God gave them over to a depraved mind