

Oaks-West Church of Christ

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Looking Through Our Lenses

by Rickie Jenkins

A few thoughts running through my mind. Who controls what I think? I get to choose. It has taken me years to learn and apply this. I spent years letting others control my thought process and what I thought about myself. Now, don't get me wrong. I am still thin skinned and can be hurt easily, but I respond much better and recover quicker.

Let's apply this; no one gets to tell us what we think. We get to choose how we respond, what we say or even how we act. See, little minds think they get to control others. When anyone begins to act, or speak, in such a way as to try to tell others what to do or how to live their lives, we stop seeing them as a person and treat them as an object to be controlled.

We all look through our own lenses.

That is very subjective! We fail to see the beam in our own eye.

My point is, we get to choose our attitude and response toward the other person. When we let them control our thinking, they have control of our life and our heart. It is subtly about "who" controls. When we must have it our way or no way, it is about our control. If we do not bow to another's control, then we are a challenge to their control.

We have more control when we let someone think they control us, and our thinking. How? We maintain the control by the choice we make. Now here is the challenge; how do we do that? Let's go to the One who has the answers.

First, I can love them, treasure or esteem them of great value. I can do that

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because that makes me like God, who sends the rain on the just and unjust. When I am more like God, His spirit is controlling my mind and what I think. I can pray for them. I can pray out all my frustration, etc. I can speak well of them. My speech about them is not based on what they say about me. It grows out of my likeness of God. I can find a way to do them good. I can sacrifice myself for their good. See, all that takes the focus off me and puts it on the other person. Then, what they may say or do is not personal because I am trying to be like God.

Second, look at the heart and character of God: Longsuffering, kind, not puffed up, does not envy, is not selfish, does not behave rudely, takes no offense of wrongs (does not keep the books), believes all things (gives the benefit of the doubt), hope all things (hope against hope, never gives in to despair), endures all things (like the roof keeps the rain out). Then, the clincher - love never fails. Think about how God 's love for us never fails. He is all of these with us. These make me like Him. The more I am being transformed to be like Him, the less what others say affects me personally.

Third, the new man is finished with bitterness, wrath, anger, clamoring, and evil speaking with all malice. The new man is kind to others, tenderhearted and forgiving as Christ has forgiven us. Think of all the evil

things Joseph's brothers said and did to him. Think of all the evil things men said and did to Jesus. Think about all the evil things men speak and say about God. Yet, God chooses to be like this. So did Joseph. So did Christ. So, can I. So, can you.

In none of these has God asked of us something impossible to do. When I do this, I see myself becoming more like Him and not what others say. Their prejudices, slights and accusations do not define me. They do not tell me what to think. They do not address my heart and character.

God's thoughts can become our thoughts. His ways can become ours. Satan can use those closest, and even some we respect, to hurt us.

We are not conformed to man. We are conformed to the image of the Son. That changes how we look at people and the world. It changes how we see ourselves. We see ourselves as God sees us.

We get to choose.

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.



Upcoming Ladies' Bible Classes - cancelled until further notice.

All services are cancelled until further notice.

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.



Please remember the following individuals in your daily prayers:

June Owens

Jack Wilson

Jerry Richardson

Karen Hallmark

Shirley Perkins' brother, Leon

Margaret Vanaman

Dinah Williams

And continue to pray for each other

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

We have many that face challenges on a daily basis and need your prayers as well.

“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

