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--Soul Peace.11 --

Soul Glasses

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Have you ever had the experience of discussing a past event with family or friends only to find that they don't remember the situation as you do? Social Psychology Research has documented that this does happen.

For example, all of you were there and experienced the same circumstance. But some people may have remembered a different set of people present than you do. Another may remember a different conversation with different results. Still another remembers a different order of events, or even a different event. The discussion can become quite heated if the people involved expect that everyone should experience the situation as they did.

On the other hand, the opposite can also be true. Recounting an event not remembered by others may provide needed joy or laughter or confirmation to their lives concerning family past history. Sharing family times is the way the older generations teach the younger ones about the family in which they live. This can be an enriching experience.

Yet, this can seem crazy. How can a group of people go through an event together and come out with such opposite memories? How can a participant - - maybe even incessantly - - state something happened that you didn't experience?

The answer is that this is a result of being human. It is due to soul glasses, or soul filters. Because of the filters, we should be more amazed that another actually experienced what we did, than to be amazed that they didn't experience what we did. It almost seems that no one fully sees reality--just their own version of it. Some people's versions are sometimes closer to reality than others in some situations. More about this later.

Remember, the soul is composed of the intellect, the will, and the emotion. Each of these three has a filter. These filters are individual to each person: We each make them up as we go along in life. We do this by taking our life experiences and determining what we think about them, what we feel about them, and what we will do about them. In the process, we are creating what we believe about ourselves, the way we see others, and what we believe about these life events. The filters also influence our range of appropriate emotional response, our interpersonal functioning, and our control of our impulses. Our own filters are actually different from other person's, even in the same family. Our soul glasses or filters are far reaching; they affect everything about us.

Situations in which we have negative emotions of anger, rage, hate [especially self-hate], and inadequacy, will greatly color the reality that we experience. These emotions and thoughts will take us farther away from reality. So when we

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Integrating the soul with body and spirit for peace in all areas of life - -business,
Personal, marriage, family, and relationships.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of Hosts."

Zechariah 4:6

experience these negatives, we need to remember that we can't trust our reality at that moment. And we need to deal with these negatives.

Why do I say "especially self-hate?" The Bible says that we love others, [and God] as we love ourselves. For example, if we have a soul filter that causes us to see ourselves as ugly, no good, never able to succeed, and unlovable, or if we have anger, hate, or disgust towards ourselves, then we will interpret all of our life experiences in harmony with those words---even if they are the opposite of what we want. And we will only allow those negatives to happen to us, as much as it distresses us. So it is important to let God heal our filters so that we will love ourselves, God, and others. That way we allow ourselves to be loved.

Another example: Let's say that you believe that people are out to hurt you. You will have a negative filter that turns even a simple non-threatening comment, action, or occurrence into a hostile one. When others view this same incident - -who do not have this negative distrust - - they may interpret the occurrence in a fun or positive way. They may look at you with disbelief that you see things as you do. You may look at them with incredulity that they have missed the gravity of the situation that you perceive. Another example: There are some other people who make it a point to turn everything into the positive, even when it is not, and to those we give the statement, "They see through rose-colored glasses." Around both negative and falsely positive attitudes, people may feel unheard, or unappreciated, or pushed away.

So how else can we deal with these important filters? The Bible speaks of people strengthening people. When we realize that there are different interpretations than ours, this is an occasion for our soul to grow, to be strengthened. We must learn to hear others. We can't manipulate, control, or require others to agree with us. That is never God's way. But we can learn from them. We can realize that we all see things differently. Our own interpretation is probably not as accurate as we would like. We can listen with value to another's opinions. We can good naturedly agree to disagree.

On the personal side, it also helps to be aware of how our filters affect our spirit and body. We are a spirit that lives in a body that has a soul. Our soul has the capacity to filter what we hear in our spirit, as well as what we think we are experiencing in the world. We have discussed above how not all of what we think and feel is true. It is important to "reality test" by asking those around us how they see the situation. We need humility and grace with our selves and with others, because we are all dealing with filters.

Now, let's connect this information on "Soul Glasses" with previous articles about how our bodies will carry out negative attitudes and emotions in negative actions. In "Soul Interactions/Integration" we talked about having only 1/3 of a second to change negative attitudes and emotions with applied trust in God's character. After that, our Will would become engaged and we would hurt ourselves with anxiety or depression, or hurt another by acting out or withdrawing. The longer a negative thought or emotion remains, the more power it accumulates as a filter, and the more work it takes to sink into God's character of loving care for each of us.

Also, in "Soul Truth", we discussed the fact that the Truth of God's character is always greater than any reality that we may have. The Lord Jesus said we were not to worry about tomorrow, because each day had enough evil with which to deal. As we wrestle to control our negative thoughts, behavior, and emotions, in agreement with God's promises for us, we calm ourselves. Calmness in the Lord brings clearer reality to us. That allows more of His blessings to come to us.

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