

## “TAKE OFF YOUR GLASSES, PLEASE”!

If you wear reading glasses and look at objects far away or, if you wear glasses for driving and look at objects close at hand, they will appear out of focus, distorted. When I wear my reading glasses, people faraway look strange to me. Why? Because my reading glasses distort my vision, how I see reality.

If we think of glasses in a metaphorical way, then I suggest that everyone wears glasses. Because everyone looks at the world through distorted lenses and fails to see what is really there – or what God sees. They do not perceive reality or see the truth. They do not see creation or the Creator. This is due to sin.

These distortions happen because our glasses, so to speak, function as sinful biases, worldviews, and idolatries. The Bible says that human beings have a severe vision problem. Sin affects how and what we see or how and what we think, commonly called the noetic effect of sin. (The term, noetic, is derived from the Greek verb, *noeō*, and refers to intellectual activity, such as, understanding, conceiving, considering, and pondering.) For this reason, also, we do not *want* to see clearly (John 3:19-20).



The Bible teaches, therefore, that we need radical surgery to fix our sight and thinking. For those who follow Christ, this is *already* happening. Slowly, our vision is being restored and one day in eternity we will see everything clearly, including ourselves (1 Cor 13:12). Until that time, God provides corrective lenses, so to speak, to help us see and think more clearly. And, what are these?

The scriptures, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, provide the God-sanctioned assumptions by which to view the world and operate in it (Ps 16:11; 119:105).

Or, think of it this way, using another metaphor based on computers. Human beings, created as the image of God, are hard-wired for seeing. Our hard drive is factory installed by the Creator. The glasses that we use are the software through which we interpret what we see. The problem is that someone has damaged our software by inserting a virus and programming errors. And, we know who that is. (Hint: Satan.)

By way of example, think about how people view the Bible. When you look at the information and the worldview represented there as a follower of Jesus, you have a software fix *already* at work. Or, to use the other metaphor, you have corrective lenses. You are inclined to look favorably on the Bible and to value its worldview. You see its beauty. You hear the voice of God in the word. You are learning the truth. You see reality. You understand the Bible's relevance for you and for society.

But, imagine how an unbeliever views the information and worldview of the Bible. His/her faulty software is still operating. He/she views the same information, but with their sinful biases, presuppositions, and erroneous worldviews. They cannot see what you see. They do not hear God speaking in the text.

Therefore, when we present the Bible to unbelievers, we must not forget how sinful bias affects spiritual vision. If we talk about the Bible's relevancy for society or as a revelation from God for our souls, we must always recognize the influence of sin upon vision. Of course, we hope and pray that the Spirit works through the text to their open eyes and heal their sight. Or, when we focus on the biblical worldview as a framework for interpreting human experience, we cannot forget the intellectual impact of the fall. Still, God willing, we aim to provide corrective lenses so that people can perceive God's voice in his Word.

So, when we read the Bible, we should -- *also* -- remove *our* “glasses.”

And, when we share the Bible with non-believers, we should say to them: “Take of your glasses, please.”