

Equipped to Make a Difference

Perspective matters.

Erwin Lutzer, in his book, *Failure: the Back Door to Success*, illustrates this by sharing this little story:

A man who was losing his memory went to the doctor for advice. He received this diagnosis from the doctor, “We cannot help your memory without impairing your eyesight. Now the choice is yours. Would you rather be able to see or to remember?” The man thoughtfully replied, “Frankly, I’d rather have my eyesight than my memory. You see, I’d rather see where I am going than remember where I’ve been.”

While the man’s perspective seldom crosses our mind, the hope of our glorious future with Christ infinitely eclipses the stuff that this world has to offer. This perspective affects the way we navigate the troubles and heartaches of life, either increasing our anxiety or improving our resolve.

Our perspective also has a bearing on ministry. According to Ephesians 4:11-16, believers are to be equipped for the “work of the ministry” or service. In order to be a difference-maker in serving God and others, it requires asking some tough questions and answering them with unflinching fearless honesty. The questions that we need to ask ourselves are, “Am I a getter or a giver?”, “Will I consume or contribute?”, and “Do I expect others to serve me or look to serve others?” How you answer these questions make your ministry perspective crystal clear. If you desire to contribute, give, and serve, stewarding your God-given gifts and talents for His kingdom, your ministry perspective is **theocentric or “God-centered”**. If, on the other hand, you simply plan to consume, get, and be served, your ministry perspective is **egocentric or “self-centered”**, leading to a lonely life devoid of joy and meaning.

May our “God-centeredness” be demonstrated in Christlikeness, stability, cooperation, as well as truth joined to love. These will establish lasting fruit and an eternal reward coming from the lips of our Master: “Well done!”

1 Corinthians 3:12-15 (NIV) - *“Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw - each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. **If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward.** If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.”*