

Our Lives Under Construction Returns

A series on building healthy relationships in our marriages, our homes, our workplaces, our friends, and our world!

“Looking In, Looking Out: Seeing Ourselves Clearly”

Part 6 – Windows

“Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you – unless of course, you fail the test?” 2 Corinthians 13:5

A. “Looking in” must be a natural process of the Christian life...

“Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you – unless of course, you fail the test?” 2 Corinthians 13:5

1. When we look into ourselves we should honestly look at who we are.

“For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.” Romans 12:3

2. It is natural to see our own needs.

“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.” Philippians 2:4

3. See yourself as one God values.

“But I do not think I am in the least inferior to those ‘super-apostles.’ I may not be a trained speaker, but I do have knowledge.” 2 Corinthians 11:5-6a

4. Love others as you would love yourself.

“However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.” Ephesians 5:33

B. “Looking out” is directly affected by how clearly we are “looking in”...

“For a man’s ways are in full view of the Lord, and He examines all his paths.” Proverbs 5:21

1. When we realize our strength comes from God we can value others in the same way.

“Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God.” 2 Corinthians 3:5

2. We are all different and should never fall into the trap of comparison.

“We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves

and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.”

2 Corinthians 10:12

3. We must look at others with the reality of sin and the gift of the grace of God.

“But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.” 1 Timothy 1:6

4. God loves us at our worst to bring us to His best!

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

C. Seeing myself clearly affects how I see others...

“So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” 2 Corinthians 5:16-17

1. See others with the attitude of Christ.

“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:” Philippians 2:5

2. See others with weaknesses as your opportunity to serve.

“We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.” Romans 15:1

3. The Word of God gives us a clear view of ourselves when we sincerely look into our lives.

“But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.” James 1:24

4. See each other through the “one anothers” of the Word!

“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.” Romans 12:10

“Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.” Romans 12:16

“Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother’s way.” Romans 14:13

“Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” Romans 15:7

“...serve one another in love.” Galatians 5:13

“...bearing with one another in love.” Ephesians 4:2

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Ephesians 4:32

“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” Ephesians 5:21

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.” 1 Thessalonians 5:11

“...live in harmony with one another...” 1 Peter 3:8

“Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.” 1 Peter 4:9

A Biblical Self-Image (Adapted from Keith Todd)

1. Hate your sin, but never hate yourself. *“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.” Romans 12:9*
2. Be quick to repent. *“...I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.” Acts 26:20b*
3. When God gives you light, walk in it! *“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7*
4. Stop saying negative things about yourself. God loves you and it’s wrong to hate what He loves. He has great plans for you, so you’re in conflict with Him when you speak negatively concerning your future. *“And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.” 1 John 4:16*
5. Never be afraid to admit that you’ve made a mistake and don’t always assume that when things go wrong, it must be your fault. *“Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity.” Psalm 32:5a*
6. Don’t meditate excessively on what you’ve done, right or wrong; both of these activities keep your mind on you! Center your thoughts on Christ. *“He will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in You.” Isaiah 26:3*
7. Take good care of yourself physically. Make the best of what God gave you to work with, but don’t be obsessed with your appearance. *“For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.” 1 Timothy 4:8*
8. Never stop learning but don’t allow your education to become a point of pride. God doesn’t use you because of what’s in your head; He uses you because of what’s in your heart. *“...We know that we all ‘possess knowledge.’ Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know. But the man who loves God is known by God.” 1 Corinthians 8:1b-3*
9. Realize that your talents are a gift, not something you have manufactured yourself; never look down on people who can’t do what you do. *“We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.” Romans 12:6a*
10. Don’t despise your weakness; they keep you dependent on God! *“But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.” 2 Corinthians 12:9*