

## Christian Perspectives: Become more aware

I was challenged a while back by one of my mentors to consider the possibility that if I depend only upon my eyes in the making of decisions, I will be deceived many times. Truth is not always as it appears. What is reality is often quite different from perception. God's Word says in 1 Samuel 16:7, "The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

Unfortunately many people, whether followers of Jesus or not, make an automatic decision to instantaneously judge another person based on outward appearance. In such a situation the judgment is often arrived at as a result of what we think and believe based on preconceived notions and past experiences which we group together forming our current actions. While there are those who would say, and have the opinion, this is practical and provides a safe mechanism of living in our world, it may not have anything with any specific and current reality.

Jesus says in Luke 6:37, "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven." It would be good for us to look for the reason behind such a command. Jesus said in Matthew 7:2, "For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." There is a universal principle that applies to every person as part of creation, you reap what you sow. There are consequences for the choices you make in life. Do not blame someone else for what you are responsible. We are called upon to be aware of our thoughts, words, and actions because we will give an account of them.

When it comes to our words and actions what has been described as "The Golden Rule" makes sense when you understand you get back what you give out. Jesus said in Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets."

As a result of what I have briefly shared here, I made the decision a month ago to do a three to four month experiment to change my appearance. I do not know what the end result of my appearance will be at the end of this experiment, but I know the journey will be interesting. There are a number of specific things I am looking at as part of this experiment, but one item I am looking at is the impact this has on how others judge and respond to my outward appearance. The journey has already provided some interesting lessons on love, critical attitudes, judgementalism and other things.

It leaves me with the challenge to seek to be more accepting and loving of people. It helps me to understand the importance of finding out where a person is coming from and what is really going on in their life before jumping to conclusions.

Perhaps you might want to consider being involved in some type of experiment, whatever it might look like, as a means of engaging in a process to help you be more sensitive and aware of others. Engaging in such an action might make it easier to look beyond the obvious and see a completely different truth. It might even help you to be more like Jesus and, at least from my perspective, that would be a good thing!

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